

Important Health Insurance & Medicare Dates

Open Enrollment for Individual & Family Health Insurance (In or Out of Covered California): October 15 to January 15

The only time that individuals and families can buy an insurance plan outside of open enrollment is to qualify for a Special Enrollment Period (SEP). Some examples of Qualifying Events are:

- Losing your job
- Moving to a new state
- Getting married or divorced
- Becoming a widow or widower
- Aging off your parent's plan
- Having a new baby

Note: These are only a few examples of Qualifying Events (there are many more, call us to discuss your unique circumstance)

Note: You won't be eligible for a SEP if you lost your previous health plan because you failed to pay monthly premiums or if you voluntarily cancel coverage.

Initial Coverage Election Period (ICEP) for Medicare Advantage (MA) only

Initial Enrollment Period (IEP) for Stand-Alone Prescription Drug Plans or Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug Plan

The period allowing consumers newly eligible for Medicare to make an initial election to enroll in a Medicare Advantage Plan or Prescription Drug Plan.

- ICEP is for consumers newly eligible for Medicare Parts A and B* who elect an MA-only Plan
- IEP is for consumers newly eligible for Medicare Parts A & B who elect a stand-alone PDP ~or~ MA PDP plan

For Medicare Advantage (MA) and Prescription Drug Plans (PDP)*, a consumer has a 7 month enrollment period that includes the three months prior to their month of eligibility, the month they became eligible, and the three months following the month of eligibility.

** Call us with questions about how not enrolling in Medicare Part B or a Part D Prescription Drug Plan may affect your premiums in the future.*

Annual Election Period (AEP): October 15 to December 7

AEP is also called Medicare Open Enrollment as it is the period each year when any Medicare consumer can enroll or disenroll from a Medicare Advantage or Prescription Drug Plan. All AEP enrollment elections become effective January 01 and all disenrollments become effective December 31

Medicare Medigap (Supplement) Open Enrollment

The best time to buy a Medigap policy (also referred to as a Medicare Supplement) is during your six month open enrollment period. During that time you can buy and Medigap/Supplement policy sold in your state even if you have health problems. This period automatically starts the month you're 65 and enrolled in Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance). After this enrollment period you may not be able to buy a Medigap policy. If you're able to buy one, it may cost more.

If you apply for Medigap coverage after your open enrollment period, there's no guarantee that an insurance company will sell you one if you don't meet the medical underwriting requirements.

California Medigap (Supplement) Birthday Rule

California's Medicare Supplemental Insurance Law, also known as the "Birthday Rule" allows Medigap members to switch to a different Medigap carrier or plan of equal or lesser value annually in their birthday month. Members who take advantage of this "switching" law cannot be turned down for the new plan because of a pre-existing condition. To take advantage of this rule you must:

- Live in California
 - Have an active Medigap plan
 - Switch to a Medigap plan with same or lesser benefits
 - Be within 30 days of your birthday month
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