



# Medicare 101 Northern California Pipe Trades Trust Funds For UA Local 342





# The Basics of Medicare





# What is Medicare?

Medicare is a federal health insurance program that provides health care coverage to millions of Americans. It's part of Social Security and is designed to protect the health and well-being of those who use it.

## Who can enroll in Medicare?

### You're eligible for Medicare if you:

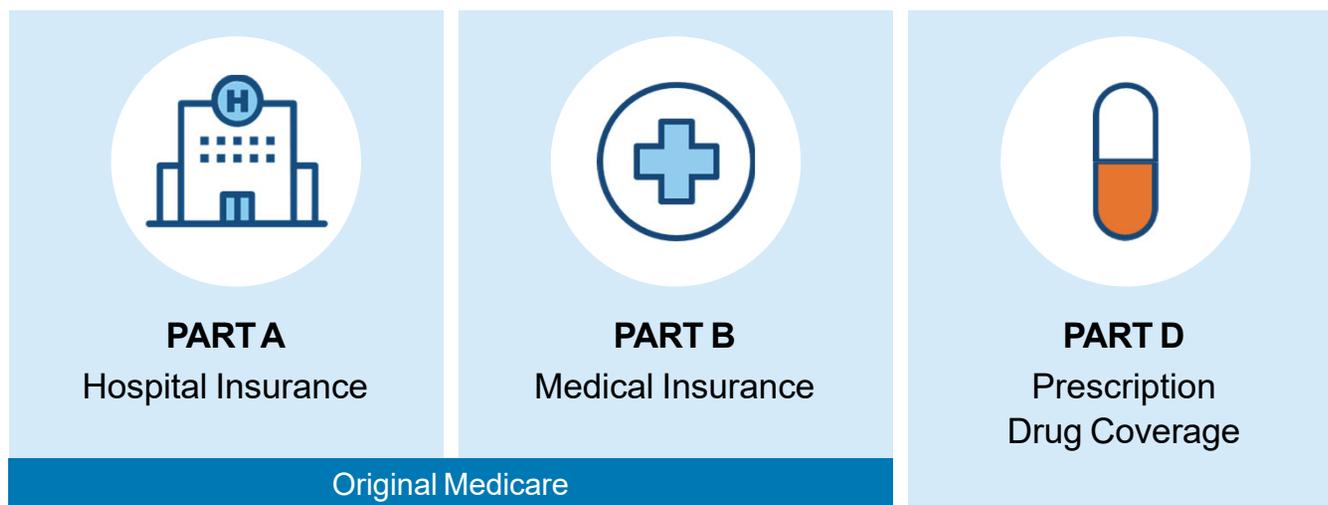
- Are 65 or older
- Are under 65 but live with a disability
- Have end-stage renal (kidney) disease (ESRD)
- Have amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)

You also need to be a U.S. citizen or a permanent legal resident for at least 5 years.





## What are the 3 parts of Medicare?



# Hospital insurance

## Part A



### What it covers

- Hospital
- Hospice
- Skilled nursing care
- Some home health care

### Cost

- No premium if you or your spouse worked at least 10 years and paid Medicare taxes
- Monthly premium of **\$565** (set by Medicare formula) if you worked fewer than 10 years\*

\*Amount is for **2026**.





# Medical insurance

## Part B



### What it covers

- Outpatient hospital care
- Lab and X-rays
- Ambulance
- Dialysis
- Preventive care
- Durable medical equipment
- Mental health

### Cost

- Based on household income reported on retiree tax return 2 years earlier
- Usually deducted from Social Security check

### 10% lifetime penalty

If you delay enrollment, your Part B premiums will increase 10% every 12 months, and the higher rate lasts as long as you have Part B coverage. The penalty won't be imposed if you continue to work for and get your health coverage from an employer or trust fund with 20 or more employees.

# 2026 Monthly premiums<sup>1</sup>



## Part B



Your yearly income <sup>2</sup>		You pay
Single-standard <sup>3</sup> Married couple-standard <sup>4</sup>	\$109,000 or less \$218,000 or less	\$202.90 <sup>5</sup>
Single Married couple	\$109,000 - \$137,000 \$218,000 - \$274,000	\$284.10
Single Married couple	\$137,000 - \$171,000 \$274,000 - \$342,000	\$405.80
Single Married couple	\$171,000 - \$205,000 \$342,000 - \$410,000	\$527.50
Single Married couple	\$205,000 - \$500,000 \$410,000 - \$750,000	\$649.20
Single Married couple	Above \$500,000 Above \$750,000	\$689.90

Your yearly income <sup>6</sup>	You pay
<b>If you're married but file a tax return separately from your spouse</b>	
\$109,000 – or less standard <sup>7</sup>	\$202.90 <sup>8</sup>
\$109,000 – less than \$391,000	\$649.20
Greater than or equal to \$391,000	\$689.90

1. The above dollar amounts are for 2026 and may change in 2027. 2. Modified adjusted gross income as reported on your 2024 IRS tax return. 3. You will pay this standard amount if you enroll in Part B for the first time in 2024, do not get Social Security benefits, and are directly billed for your Part B premiums. See [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) for complete details. 4. See note 3. 5. See note 3. 6. See note 2. 7. See note 3. 8. See note 3.

## Part A & B: Original Medicare Coverage Cost



Part A costs: What you pay in 2026	
Deductible	<p><b>\$1,736</b> for each inpatient hospital benefit period, before Original Medicare starts to pay. There's no limit to the number of benefit periods you can have in a year. This means you may pay the deductible more than once in a year.</p>
Inpatient stay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Days 1-60:</b> \$0 after you pay your Part A deductible.</li> <li>• <b>Days 61-90:</b> \$434 copayment each day.</li> <li>• <b>After Day 91:</b> \$838 copayment each day while using your 60 lifetime reserve days</li> <li>• <b>After lifetime reserve days:</b> You pay all costs.</li> </ul>
Part B costs: What you pay in 2026	
Deductible	<p><b>\$283, before Original Medicare starts to pay.</b> You pay this deductible once each year.</p>
General costs for services (coinsurance)	<p>Usually 20% of the cost for each Medicare-covered service or item after you've paid your deductible (and as long as your doctor or health care provider accepts the Medicare-approved amount as full payment – called "accepting assignment").</p>



# When to enroll in Medicare Parts A and B

## Initial enrollment

**Turning 65** — You have a 7-month window to sign up for Parts A and B when you turn 65. The window starts 3 months before your birthday.

## Special enrollment

**When you retire** — You can enroll in Medicare Parts A and B without a late-enrollment penalty for 8 months after your retirement date.

## General enrollment

**January 1 to March 31** — Your coverage starts the first day of the month after you sign up.





## Enrolling in Medicare Parts A and B when you're first eligible



### Initial enrollment period

You can first sign up for Medicare Parts A and B during this 7-month period around your 65th birthday.

- 3 months before your 65th birthday
- The month of your 65th birthday
- 3 months after your 65th birthday





## Working past 65? Enrolling in Medicare Parts A and B after you retire



### Special enrollment period

- This is an 8-month period in which you can enroll if you retire after you turn 65 or lose your job's health care coverage.
- Your coverage typically begins the month after Social Security gets your completed request.
- Usually, you won't pay a Part B late-enrollment penalty if you sign up during the 8-month special enrollment period.



## Enrolling late in Medicare Parts A and B



### General enrollment period

- If you didn't enroll during the initial enrollment period or don't qualify for the special enrollment period, you can enroll during the general enrollment period.
- The period **starts January 1** and **ends March 31** every year.
- Your coverage begins the first day of the month after you sign up.

### Late-enrollment penalty for Part B

If you enroll in Part B during the general enrollment period because you didn't enroll when you were first eligible, then you'll likely pay a late-enrollment penalty for as long as you have Part B coverage.



# Medicare Part D



# Prescription drug coverage

## Part D



### What it covers

- Outpatient prescription drug coverage
- Available as part of health plan coverage or through a stand-alone prescription drug plan

### Cost

- Cost may vary depending on plan and drugs covered

### Late-enrollment penalty

If you delay enrolling in a Medicare Part D plan or aren't covered by a drug plan that meets Medicare's standard prescription drug coverage, then you'll likely pay a Part D late-enrollment penalty.



# Income-related monthly adjustment amount (IRMAA)

## Part D



Income-related monthly adjustment amount (IRMAA): The Part D IRMAA premium is in addition to your Part B premium. The amount you pay is determined according to formulas set by federal law.

Based on your 2024 yearly income, your 2026 Part D monthly cost is:

File individual tax return	File joint tax return	2026 monthly Part D IRMAA premium
\$109,000 or less	\$218,000 or less	No Part D IRMAA premium
\$109,000 - \$137,000	\$218,000 - \$274,000	\$14.50
\$137,000 - \$171,000	\$274,000 - \$342,000	\$37.50
\$171,000 - \$205,000	\$342,000- \$410,000	\$60.40
\$205,000 - \$500,000	\$410,000- \$750,000	\$83.30
Above \$500,000	Above \$750,000	\$91.00

These amounts change yearly based on your income and the federal formula.

## Medicare Part D Extra Help low-income subsidy program

- Aids Medicare beneficiaries who have limited income and resources and are enrolled in Part D
- Helps pay Part D premiums and outpatient drug copays
- Administered by your Medicare health plan for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- Application available through Social Security or your state's Medicaid office



MEDICARE FOR GROUP MEMBERS

# Northern California Pipe Trades Trust Funds for UA Local 342 Retiree Enrollment



## Enroll in Medicare Parts A and B



## Enroll in Medicare Parts A and B

- **If you're getting Social Security or Railroad Retirement Benefits (RRB) at age 65**, in most cases you'll be automatically enrolled in Part A and Part B starting the first day of the month you turn 65, or if your birthday is on the first of the month your coverage starts the month before you turn 65
- **If you're not getting Social Security or RRB benefits**, you'll need to sign up for Parts A and B:

**Apply online at [socialsecurity.gov](https://www.socialsecurity.gov)**

**Visit your local Social Security office**

**Call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778)**



# Get the information you need

If you have questions about the Northern California Pipe Trades Trust Funds for UA Local 342 (NCPTTF) Medicare health plans, contact your Eligibility Department.



**Northern California Pipe Trades Trust Funds for UA  
Local 342: 925/356-8921 ext. 710** *Monday through  
Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.*

**Northern California Pipe Trades Trust Funds  
for UA Local 342: [tfo@ncpttf.com](mailto:tfo@ncpttf.com)** *24 Hours*

**Social Security:** 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778)  
*Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.*

**Medicare:** 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) TTY 1-877-486-2048  
*24 hours a day, 7 days a week.*