



SOCIAL SECURITY

Name
Address

Need Help Paying for Your Prescription Drugs? Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Cards Begin June 2004

Recently, a new law was passed that provides improved Medicare coverage by adding prescription drug benefits. The ongoing prescription drug coverage begins in 2006, but by June 2004 you may be eligible for a new prescription drug discount card approved by Medicare. The Social Security Administration has a role in the new law. We are sending you this letter to provide information about the assistance you may be eligible to receive under the Drug Discount card program if you have low income.

You can get a prescription drug discount card by contacting a Medicare-approved company. Although you have until December 31, 2005 to apply, the sooner you apply, the sooner you may receive assistance. If your income is low and you apply in 2004, you may get a \$600 credit on your drug discount card in 2004 and another \$600 in 2005 to help you pay for your prescriptions.

To obtain information about **Medicare-Approved companies in your area** and to find out if you are eligible for the \$600 credit or **to answer any questions you have**, you can:

- **Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). Hearing-impaired/TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.**
- **Visit www.medicare.gov on the Internet.** Select “Prescription Drug and Other Assistance Programs.”

There is no enrollment fee if you qualify for the \$600 credit. If you do not qualify for the \$600 credit, you will need to pay an annual enrollment fee of \$30 or less for the prescription drug discount card.

To get the \$600 credit, you have to enroll with a Medicare-Approved company and all the following must be true. (Note: Income limits are slightly higher in Alaska and Hawaii.)

- You have Medicare Part A and/or Part B coverage, **and**
- Your annual income is \$12,569 or less if you are single, or \$16,862 or less if you are married (this includes your income and your spouse's income), **and**
- You do not have Medicaid outpatient prescription drug coverage.

If you think you might be eligible for the \$600 credit or if you are not sure, call one of the toll-free numbers listed above, or visit www.medicare.gov right away.

We will provide you with more information next year on the new voluntary Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage program that begins in 2006 and how you may be able to get help paying for this new program.

Jo Anne B. Barnhart
Commissioner