

How to Apply for Medicare

You can sign up for Medicare by phone, online or in-person at your local Social Security Administration office.



Call

800-772-1213
(TTY) 1-800-325-0778



Online

[socialsecurity.gov](https://www.socialsecurity.gov)



In-person

Visit your local
Social Security office.

Here's what you should have with you when you apply:

- An original certified copy of your birth certificate or other proof of birth
- Proof of U.S. citizenship or legal residency, if not born in the U.S.
- Your social security card if you're already receiving benefits
- Copy of your W-2 form(s) and/or self-employment tax return for the last year
- U.S. military discharge papers if you served before 1968
- Health insurance information—type of coverage and start date/end date for your group or individual coverage
- Date and place of birth, if born outside of the U.S., you will need your birth country and Permanent Resident card number

If you're planning to enroll in person, making an appointment is recommended.*

Set yourself up for success before you enroll



Learn

Starting on your 64th birthday, you should get to know:

- The parts of Medicare
- What Original Medicare is and what it covers
- What are Medicare Supplement plans and Medicare Advantage plans



Shop

Starting when you are 64½, you should:

- Start shopping for a Medicare plan
- Compare Medicare Advantage plans with Medicare Supplement plans



Enroll

Your initial election period lasts for seven months:

- Begins 3 months before your 65th birthday
- Continues through your birthday month
- Ends 3 months after your 65th birthday

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