



**To Protect Your Benefits
You Must Enroll in Medicare Parts A and B**

According to the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) enrollment records, you will soon reach age 65 and your enrollment status is one of the following:

- a) Retired employee or dependent of retired enrollee
- b) Dependent survivor
- c) Dependent of a former employee in Vestee status
- d) Covered under Preferred List Provisions or dependent of Preferred List enrollee
- e) Domestic partner* of an active enrollee

If this is not correct, please write to the State of New York Department of Civil Service, Employee Benefits Division, Albany, NY 12239 immediately and provide all the information necessary for us to correct your record.

We are sending you this letter for two reasons; first, to remind you that you must be enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B; and second, to notify you that your reimbursement of the standard premium for the cost of Part B will begin automatically. See page 2 for additional reimbursement information.

You must have Medicare Parts A and B in effect on the first day of the month in which you reach age 65.** Or, if your birthday falls on the first of a month, you must have your Medicare coverage in effect on the first day of the month before you turn age 65. To maintain full NYSHIP benefits, you must enroll in Medicare Parts A and B even if you also have coverage through another employer's group plan. If you have not received information from the Social Security Administration (SSA) about your enrollment in Medicare, contact the SSA at 1-800-772-1213 at least three months before your 65th birthday. Do not delay in signing up because it may take several months for Part B to become effective. If you are not enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B, your benefits will be drastically reduced.

Do not decline enrollment in Medicare Part B. Under New York State law governing NYSHIP, the HMOs and Empire Plan carriers do not pay for any medical expenses that would have been paid by Medicare *whether or not* you are actually enrolled in Medicare. If you fail to enroll in Medicare or are in a waiting period for Medicare to go into effect, *you will be responsible for Medicare's share of your bills.*

If you are Medicare primary and enrolled in The Empire Plan prescription drug program, you will automatically be enrolled in Empire Plan Medicare Rx (PDP), a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan.

All NYSHIP HMOs automatically enroll you in their Medicare Advantage plan when you become Medicare primary. Medicare Advantage Plans include Medicare Parts A, B and D coverage.

When Medicare becomes primary (pays first) to NYSHIP at 65, the enrollee will automatically be reimbursed for the standard cost of Medicare Part B for themselves and any Medicare-eligible covered dependent. There is usually no cost for Part A. Premium costs may be found on the Medicare web site (www.medicare.gov) or you may call Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for assistance. TTY users please call 1-877-486-2048. *Costs may change yearly.*

For enrollees who pay for NYSHIP coverage by pension deduction, reimbursement for the enrollee and/or dependent is added to the enrollee's monthly State pension check. For enrollees who make direct payments to the Employee Benefits Division for NYSHIP coverage, the standard Medicare reimbursement is applied as a credit on monthly premium statements. If your Medicare credit exceeds the premium due, the balance will be refunded to you quarterly.

Information for a Rehired Retiree or a Dependent of a Rehired Retiree

If a New York State retiree returns to work with New York State in a benefits-eligible position, NYSHIP remains primary for the retiree and, in most cases, for covered dependents, regardless of age (except for domestic partners who are age 65 or older, or enrollees eligible for Medicare due to end-stage renal disease). You may postpone enrolling in Medicare Part B until leaving the payroll. Be sure Medicare Part A and Part B are in effect for you or your Medicare-eligible dependents at the point you are no longer covered as an active employee. **Read this letter carefully. To avoid claims problems, be sure to notify your current agency Health Benefits Administrator that you are a rehired NYS retiree.**

Note: If you are a rehired retiree and NOT employed in a benefits-eligible position, and have not yet enrolled in Medicare Part B, please contact the Social Security Administration immediately and apply for enrollment in Medicare. You must be enrolled in Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B.

The enclosed flyer answers many frequently asked questions. Please read it carefully. If you still have questions, call the Employee Benefits Division at 518-457-5754 (Albany area) or 1-800-833-4344.

We want your birthday to be a happy one, with full health protection.

*Domestic partner: Medicare is primary at age 65 regardless of the employment status of enrollee.

**The rules regarding primary Medicare eligibility due to end-stage renal disease (ESRD) are unique. If you or your dependent is Medicare-eligible due to ESRD, you should check with the Employee Benefits Division regarding Medicare primacy.

Enclosures:
NY/PE Notice of Creditable Coverage 09/2023
Medicare & NYSHIP for NY/PEs

NY/PE 65th Birthday Letter NF0681