

Moving to Medicare from the Marketplace

Qualified Health Plans (QHPs) are health insurance policies that meet protections and requirements set by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Specifically, QHPs must:

- Follow federally established cost-sharing limits
- Provide essential health benefits

QHPs are sold in federal- or state-run forums (referred to as Marketplaces or Exchanges), and you can shop for coverage online or over the phone.

If you currently have a QHP and are becoming eligible for Medicare, in most cases you should disenroll from your QHP and enroll in Medicare. Generally, if you qualify for premium-free Part A, you should not continue using the Marketplace to get health and drug coverage. Enroll in Medicare when you are first eligible and disenroll from your QHP in a timely manner to avoid paying extra premiums.

To disenroll from QHP coverage:

- Notify a state or federal Marketplace representative of your intent to disenroll from your QHP at least 14 days before your Medicare coverage begins.
 - If you are enrolled in a QHP through the federal Marketplace, contact the Marketplace Call Center at 800-318-2596 or visit www.healthcare.gov.
 - If you are enrolled in a QHP through your state's Marketplace, contact it to learn how and when to disenroll from your plan.
 - Ask for disenrollment steps from a Marketplace representative if you are enrolled in a family plan.

To enroll in Medicare:

- Initial Enrollment Period (IEP): You can enroll in Medicare at any time during this seven-month period, which includes the three months before, the month of, and the three months following your 65th birthday. The date when your Medicare coverage begins depends on when you sign up.
- General Enrollment Period (GEP): If you did not enroll in Medicare when you originally became eligible for it, you can sign up during the GEP. The GEP takes place January 1 through March 31 each year. Coverage begins the first of the month after the month you enroll. You may incur a Part B late enrollment penalty and face gaps in coverage if you sign up during the GEP.

Terms to know

Affordable Care Act (ACA): Signed on March 23, 2010, the ACA works to expand health coverage to eligible Americans, control health care costs, and improve the health care system. It also created state marketplaces where people can go to buy health insurance.

Marketplace (also known as an Exchange): Forum established by the ACA where you can shop for health coverage. Generally, people eligible for Medicare should not buy Marketplace health insurance.

General Enrollment Period (GEP): Enrollment period that takes place January 1 through March 31 of each year. During this period you can enroll in Medicare Part B.

Late enrollment penalty (LEP): A 10% premium penalty for each 12-month period you delay enrollment in Medicare Part B, unless you have insurance based on current work or are eligible for a Medicare Savings Program.