



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Medicare Cost Plans Overview & Enrollment

Medicare Cost Plans are private health insurance coverage approved by Medicare that beneficiaries can enroll in to limit the costs of Original Medicare. These plans offer benefits within their provider network, similar to a Medicare Advantage Plan, while also providing coverage under Original Medicare for services received outside the plan's network.

If an individual goes to a provider who does not belong to their plan's network, they will be required to pay Original Medicare deductibles and copayments, unless they receive a qualifying provider referral. If an individual goes to a provider within the plan's network, they will be responsible for the plan's required cost sharing, amounts vary from plan to plan.

#### Medicare Advantage

- 'Replaces' Original Medicare.
- Many plans have \$0 or low premiums.
- Some plans do not allow providers outside of the provider network to be seen or it comes at a higher cost.

#### Medicare Cost Plans

- Beneficiaries still have Original Medicare.
- Can have an additional premium, but typically lower than Medicare Supplement Policies.
- Providers outside of the plan network are covered by Original Medicare.

#### Medicare Supplement Policies

- Beneficiaries still have Original Medicare.
- A significant premium in addition to your Medicare Part B premium.
- Does not include prescription coverage.
- Can go to any provider that accepts Medicare assignment.





While they often offer more flexibility than Medicare Advantage, Medicare Cost Plans are not available in every county within Wisconsin. If a plan is available in your county, to enroll in a Medicare Cost Plan you must meet the following conditions:

- Enrolled in Medicare Part B.
- Find a Medicare Cost Plan that is accepting new members.
- Complete an application during the plan's enrollment period.
  - **Examples of Potential Enrollment Periods:**
    - Initial Enrollment Period (New to Medicare Part B)
    - Annual Enrollment Period (Oct 15<sup>th</sup> – Dec 7<sup>th</sup>)
    - Other Special Enrollment Period
- Agree to all Medicare Cost plan rules that are disclosed during the enrollment process.
  - *Contact the insurer directly to confirm the plan's rules and enrollment periods.*

Medicare Cost Plans may or may not offer prescription drug coverage within the plan. If a Medicare Cost Plan does not include prescription drug coverage, a beneficiary can enroll in a stand-alone Part D prescription plan, while maintaining their cost plan enrollment. Individuals cannot enroll in a Medicare Advantage Plan and a stand-alone Part D plan.

For further questions or assistance about Medicare-related health insurance coverage in Wisconsin, contact the Medigap Helpline at **1-800-242-1060** to speak with a counselor.

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