

# **Important Notice from Wellmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare**

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with Wellmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield and about your options under Medicare's prescription drug coverage. This information can help you decide whether or not you want to enroll. At the end of this notice is information about where you can get help to make decisions about your prescription drug coverage.

**There are two important things you need to know about your current coverage and Medicare's prescription drug coverage:**

- 1. Medicare prescription drug coverage became available in 2006 to everyone with Medicare through Medicare prescription drug plans and Medicare Advantage Plans that offer prescription drug coverage. All Medicare prescription drug plans provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans may also offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.**
- 2. Wellmark has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by Cedar Falls Community School District, is on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out as much as the standard Medicare prescription drug coverage will pay and is considered Creditable Coverage. Because your existing coverage is on average at least as good as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage, you can keep this coverage and not pay a higher premium ( a penalty) if you later decide to enroll in Medicare prescription drug coverage.**

## **When Can You Join A Medicare Drug Plan?**

You can join a Medicare drug plan when you first become eligible for Medicare and each year from October 15th to December 7th. Beneficiary's leaving employer/union coverage may be eligible for a Special Enrollment Period to sign up for a Medicare prescription drug plan.

However, if you lose your current creditable prescription drug coverage, through no fault of your own, you will also be eligible for a two (2) month Special Enrollment Period (SEP) to join a Medicare drug plan.

## **What Happens To Your Current Coverage If You Decide to Join A Medicare Drug Plan?**

If you decide to join a Medicare drug plan, your current Wellmark coverage will not be affected. The entity providing the Disclosure Notice should insert an explanation of the prescription drug coverage plan provisions/options under the particular entity's plan that Medicare eligible individuals have available to them when they become eligible for Medicare Part D (e.g., they can keep this coverage if they elect part D and this plan will coordinate with Part D coverage; for those individuals who elect Part D coverage, coverage under the entity's plan will end for the individual and all covered dependents, etc.). See pages 7- 9 of the CMS Disclosure of Creditable Coverage To Medicare Part D Eligible Individuals Guidance (available at [Http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CreditableCoverage/](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CreditableCoverage/)), which outlines the prescription drug plan provisions/options that Medicare eligible individuals may have available to them when they become eligible for Medicare Part D.]

If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your current Wellmark coverage, be aware that you and your dependents will be able to get this coverage back.

## When Will You Pay A Higher Premium (Penalty) To Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

You should also know that if you drop or lose your coverage with Cedar Falls Community School District and do not enroll in Medicare prescription drug plan within 63 continuous days after your current coverage ends, you may pay higher premium or (a penalty) to enroll in Medicare drug plan later.

If you go 63 continuous days or longer without creditable prescription drug coverage, your monthly premium may go up by at least 1% of the Medicare base beneficiary premium per month for every month that you did not have that coverage. For example, if you go nineteen months without creditable coverage, your premium may consistently be at least 19% higher than the Medicare base beneficiary premium. You may have to pay this higher premium (a penalty) as long as you have Medicare prescription drug coverage. In addition, you may have to wait until the following November to join.

### For more information about this notice or your current prescription drug coverage

Contact our office for further information [or call Blue Cross Blue Shield customer service at [800-381-8596].

NOTE: You will receive this notice annually and at other times in the future such as before the next period you can enroll in Medicare prescription drug coverage, and if this coverage through Wellmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield changes. You may also request a copy of this notice at any time.

### For more information about your options under Medicare prescription drug coverage

More detailed information about Medicare plans that offer prescription drug coverage is in the “Medicare & You” handbook. You’ll get a copy of the handbook in the mail every year from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare prescription drug plans. For more information about Medicare prescription drug plans:

- Visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see your copy of the Medicare & You handbook for their telephone number) for personalized help,
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

For people with limited income and resources, extra help paying for Medicare prescription drug coverage is available. Information about this extra help is available from the Social Security Administration (SSA) online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), or you call them at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

**Remember: Keep this Creditable Coverage notice. If you enroll in one approved by Medicare drug plans, you may be required to provide a copy of this notice when you join to show that you are not required to pay a higher premium amount. Please print this notice for your records.**

Date:	October 1, 2023
Name of Entity/Sender:	ISEBA through Wellmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield
Contact--Position/Office:	Customer Service Department
Phone Number:	800-381-8596