

Signing Up for Medicare After Jail or Incarceration

Did you miss your chance to sign up for Medicare because you were in jail or incarcerated? If you were released from custody on or after January 1, 2023, you now have a Special Enrollment Period to sign up for Part A (Hospital Insurance), Part B (Medical Insurance), or both without paying a late enrollment penalty.

How do I sign up?

You can sign up by filling out form CMS-10797 at [CMS.gov/files/document/application-medicare-part-part-b-special-enrollment-period-exceptional-conditions.pdf](https://www.cms.gov/files/document/application-medicare-part-part-b-special-enrollment-period-exceptional-conditions.pdf) and mailing or faxing it to your local Social Security office. You can also visit your local Social Security office. Find your closest location at [SSA.gov/locator](https://www.ssa.gov/locator).

When will my coverage start?

You have 2 options for your Medicare coverage start date:

- The first day of the month after you sign up
- Retroactive coverage up to 6 months in the past (but not before the month you're released)

If you sign up for Medicare	Your coverage will start	You'll be responsible for paying Medicare premiums
Within the first 6 months of your release	The first day of the month following the month you sign up. If you choose retroactive coverage, your coverage will start back to the beginning of the month of your release.	Starting from the date your Medicare coverage begins
7-12 months after your release	The first day of the month following the month you sign up. If you choose retroactive coverage, your coverage will start 6 months before the month you sign up.	Starting from the date your Medicare coverage begins

When can I sign up?

You're eligible for the Special Enrollment Period starting the day you're released from custody. You'll have 12 full months from the day you're released to sign up for Medicare and avoid a late enrollment penalty. However, if you choose to start your coverage retroactively, you'll owe Medicare premiums back to the date your coverage began.

What if I miss my chance to sign up?

If you don't sign up during this Special Enrollment Period, you'll be able to sign up for Part A, Part B, or both during the General Enrollment Period (GEP), which runs from January 1–March 31 each year. If you sign up during the GEP, your coverage will start the first day of the month after the month you sign up, and you may have to pay a late enrollment penalty.

Want to learn more about Medicare coverage?

- Visit [Medicare.gov](https://www.Medicare.gov).
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.



Medicare

You have the right to get Medicare information in an accessible format, like large print, braille, or audio. You also have the right to file a complaint if you feel you've been discriminated against. Visit [Medicare.gov/about-us/accessibility-nondiscrimination-notice](https://www.Medicare.gov/about-us/accessibility-nondiscrimination-notice), or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) for more information. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

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