

Alaska Carpenters Trust Funds

Health and Welfare – Defined Benefit – Defined Contribution

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Administered by
Labor Trust Services, Inc.

October 12, 2023

TO: All Active and Retired Participants
Alaska Carpenters Health and Welfare Trust Fund

RE: Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare Creditable Coverage – Notice

Important Notice from Alaska Carpenters Health and Welfare Trust Fund About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare

This Notice applies to Active and Retired Participants who are or will be eligible for Medicare in 2024. Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with Alaska Carpenters Health and Welfare Trust Fund (the “Trust”) and about your options under Medicare’s prescription drug coverage. This information can help you decide whether or not you want to join a Medicare drug plan. If you are considering joining, you should compare your current coverage, including which drugs are covered at what cost, with the coverage and costs of the plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area. Information about where you can get help to make decisions about your prescription drug coverage is at the end of this notice.

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. You can get this coverage if you join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or join a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO) that offers prescription drug coverage. All Medicare 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. The Alaska Carpenters Health and Welfare Trust Fund’s Board of Trustees has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by the Alaska Carpenters Health and Welfare Trust Fund is, on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out as much as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage pays and is therefore considered Creditable Coverage. Because your existing coverage is Creditable Coverage, you can keep this coverage and not pay a higher premium (a penalty) if you later decide to join a Medicare drug plan.

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.

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 are covered by the Trust as an active employee or dependent of an active employee, and you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan, your coverage under the Trust will not change. The Trust will continue to be your primary coverage for prescription drugs.

If you are covered by the Trust as a retiree, or dependent of a retiree, you have the following options for retiree prescription drug coverage:

- 1) Keep Trust coverage and elect not to join a Medicare drug plan. Because the Trust's coverage is considered Creditable Coverage, you can keep Trust coverage and not pay a higher premium (penalty) if you later decide to join a Medicare drug plan.
- 2) Keep Trust coverage and join a Medicare drug plan. If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan, the Trust will **not** pay benefits for prescription drugs. However, you will still need to pay the full required monthly contribution if you want to continue retiree medical coverage with the Trust. This means you will be paying two premiums for prescription drug coverage.
- 3) Drop your Trust coverage and join a Medicare drug plan. Please be aware that if you drop your Trust coverage you will no longer have medical or prescription drug coverage from the Trust and you may not 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 current coverage with Alaska Carpenters Health and Welfare Trust Fund and don't join a Medicare drug plan within 63 continuous days after your current coverage ends, you may pay a higher premium (a penalty) to join a 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 October to join.

For More Information About This Notice Or Your Current Prescription Drug Coverage...

Contact the Trust Office if you have specific questions about your prescription coverage at (800) 478-4431 press option "0" for operator assistance. **NOTE:** You'll get this notice each year. You will also get it before the next period you can join a Medicare drug plan, if this coverage through Alaska Carpenters Health and Welfare Trust Fund changes. You also may 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 drug plans.

For more information about Medicare prescription drug coverage:

- Visit www.medicare.gov
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see the inside back cover of 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.

If you have limited income and resources, extra help paying for Medicare prescription drug coverage is available. For information about this extra help, visit Social Security on the web at www.socialsecurity.gov, or call them at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

Remember: Keep this Creditable Coverage notice. If you decide to join one of the Medicare drug plans, you may be required to provide a copy of this notice when you join to show whether or not you have maintained creditable coverage and, therefore, whether or not you are required to pay a higher premium (a penalty).

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Sender:	Alaska Carpenters Health and Welfare Trust Fund
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