

Department On Aging To Provide Medicare Counseling During Open Enrollment Period

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SPRINGFIELD - With the Medicare open enrollment period set to begin on Sunday, Oct. 15, older adults looking to make changes to their Medicare coverage can receive trusted, unbiased, one-on-one counseling and assistance through the Illinois Department on Aging's (IDoA) Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP).

“This is an exciting time for Medicare; with new drug price reductions on the horizon, it is imperative that you compare your current Medicare coverage to the 2024 options for Medicare health and drug coverage,” **said Illinois SHIP Director Sandy Leith.** “SHIP offers personalized service with your best interest in mind. Let our passionate and caring

counselors give you peace of mind that you are making the most of your Medicare experience.”

The Medicare Open Enrollment period begins annually on Oct. 15 and runs through Dec. 7. During this time, people with Medicare have the opportunity to review, renew, and/or change their current Medicare health or drug plan for the upcoming year.

To help beneficiaries compare available plans and make an informed decision about which option best meets their needs, Illinois’ Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) provides trusted, unbiased, Medicare counseling at no cost to people with Medicare, their family members, and caregivers. Counseling services are offered at [more than 300 locations](#) statewide. The SHIP counselor workforce of 1,000 local assistors recently completed specialized training on Medicare cost-savings updates and the types of changes beneficiaries can make during Open Enrollment. Beneficiaries are encouraged to schedule an appointment with a local SHIP counselor to review their current plan, costs, and health needs, then see how other plan options compare.

SHIP counselors can also answer questions about the best time to enroll in Medicare, how Medicare works with your retirement insurance, Medicare supplement insurance options, Medicare Advantage plans and Medicare drug plans. There are various ways to save money with your Medicare and if you qualify, you may save money on premiums and copayments through the Medicare Savings Programs. See your SHIP counselor for more information.

To find a SHIP counselor near you, call the statewide Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966 or email AGING.SHIP@illinois.gov. For general information about SHIP, please visit <https://ilaging.illinois.gov/ship.html>. You can also compare details of Medicare plans at <https://www.medicare.gov/plan-compare/#/?lang=en&year=2023>.

About IDoA

IDoA serves and advocates for older Illinoisans and their caregivers by administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity, and quality of life. For information about the Department’s programs and services for older adults and persons with disabilities, visit <https://ilaging.illinois.gov/> or contact the Senior HelpLine toll-free at 1-800-252-8966, Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.