

## When Is the Medicare Open Enrollment Period?

### Description

The **Medicare Open Enrollment Period** is the annual period during which you can make certain changes to your Medicare plans.

Although most people refer to it as the "open enrollment" period, the correct name is the Annual Election Period (AEP). The name open enrollment is confusing and misleading because it is not open enrollment for all plan types. Also, there is a separate, [true open enrollment period](#) when a Medicare beneficiary turns 65 or starts on Medicare. This is initial open enrollment, a beneficiary can truly choose either Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage plan without any



underwriting or health questions.

## When Is the Medicare Open Enrollment Period in 2024?

The annual election period (AEP) runs from October 15 to December 7 for 2023. Any changes made during that time period would take effect with the 2024 calendar year on 1/1/2024.

The plan information for the plans that can be changed during the election period does not get released until on or around October 1. So any plan information that you see prior to that date would be for the 2024 calendar year plans.

## What Changes Can You Make During the Medicare Enrollment Period?

During the annual Medicare enrollment period, there are a few different types of changes that can be made. First and foremost, this is the time of year that you can change your Medicare Part D (prescription coverage) plan. It is very important that you evaluate/re-evaluate your Part D coverage at least every few years, if not every year.

Part D plans change every year. Not only do they change premiums, but they also update their formularies, change pharmacy networks or preferred pharmacy arrangements, deductibles and co-pays

change, and more! There are many variables to consider with Part D, and it is the most important part of Medicare to evaluate annually.

The suggested method of [comparing Part D plans](#) is to use Medicare.gov and the Medicare Plan Finder. The plan finder gets updated with 2024 plans on or around October 1. After that date, you can run a comparison, using your medications, dosages, and preferred pharmacies. The Medicare Plan Finder will rank the plans in order of lowest overall annual cost to you, which takes into account the premiums, deductibles and co-pays for all the different plans. Any Part D changes you make between October 15 and December 7 will take effect 1/1/2024.

The other type of plan change that can be made during the Medicare enrollment period is that you can enroll in or disenroll from a Medicare Advantage plan. This means that you can shop plans and change to a different Advantage plan. The Advantage plans, like the Part D plans, change each year, so it is wise to keep an eye out for your notice of plan changes (comes in late Sept/early Oct). Then, you can compare other options.

**Many people mistakenly believe that the Medicare enrollment period is the time that you can also change from one Medicare Supplement (Medigap) plan to a different Medicare Supplement plan. This is not accurate.** You can [change Medigap plans](#) at any time of the year. That said, any time that you change plans, you do have to answer medical questions and get approved. Incidentally, this is why it is so important to understand the plans and make a prudent choice when you are first signing up for a plan.

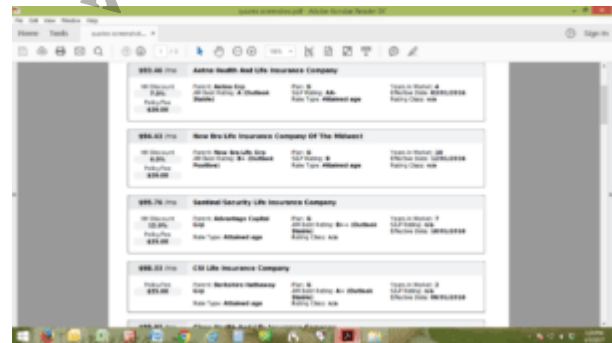
[List of Medicare Supplement options for your age and zip code, delivered by email](#)

## Get a List of Plans for Your Zip Code

Complete the form to receive the information via email

[si-contact-form form=9] Information will be delivered by email, typically within a few minutes of the request

[No, thanks](#)



## How Do You Make Changes During the Enrollment Period?

There are several ways to make changes during Medicare's open enrollment period. These are outlined below:

1. Use an independent broker to make changes. Whether it is us or someone else, this is our recommendation. This enables you to compare all of the options in a centralized place and make an informed choice using the free expertise of an unbiased resource. If you have a broker already, he or she should contact you during this time. Or please let us know if you would like our help ( [Get plan information by email](#) ).
2. The other option for making changes at the end of the year would be to contact the specific companies directly. You can compare the plans online on the various company websites, then

contact the one that you wish to sign up with. You will get directed to an agent that works for that company and can sign up for a plan that way. The downside of this would be that you are talking to someone that works specifically for one company, as opposed to an independent agent. But this is definitely an option if you want to do it this way.

3. The final option for making changes during the Medicare Open Enrollment period is what I would call the "self-directed" method. You can go on Medicare.gov and compare all of the plans and make any changes you wish to make directly on Medicare's website. This would be a method I would recommend for Part D drug plans - you can enter medications and make pretty concrete comparisons about Part D plans on there (after October 1). However, this method may be a little difficult to use for health plans. And, it is not possible to [compare Medicare Supplement plans](#) (Medigap) on Medicare's website.

If you have any questions about the Medicare Open Enrollment Period, please contact us online or by phone at 877.506.3378.



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