New Medicare Cards â?? What You Need to Know

Description

Did Medicare tell you that **new Medicare cards** were coming? Did you receive a notice to be on the lookout for it? Do you know what to do with your old Medicare card? Know when to start using the new one?



With the ever-increasing incidence of personal identity theft, Medicare is finally taking action to remove Social Security numbers from Medicare cards. They are doing this by issuing new Medicare cards with new Medicare numbers. This plan was put into place several years ago, but it has taken some time to implement the change. The new Medicare cards will finally begin going out by mail in **April 2018**.

We fully expect this change to result in much hassle for seniors, doctors, and us. However, it is certainly far overdue and is a change that had to be made. Here are the bottom-line FACTS that you need to know about the new Medicare cards changeover:

When Will the New Medicare Cards Be Sent Out?

The new Medicare cards be begin to be mailed out in April of 2018. They are being sent out in waves, a few states at a time. The first wave of cards will go out between April 2018 and June 2018. They will be sent to residents of the following states: Alaska, American Samoa, California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Guam, Hawaii, Maryland, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

Other states will fall into other groups (total of 7 groups), and their cards will be mailed out in subsequent months. Those have not been publicly announced yet, but it would be after June 2018. The mailings of the new Medicare cards will be complete by April 2019. If you want to know exactly when your Medicare card will be sent, you should periodically check the CMS website.

Do I Need to Do Anything Before the New Medicare Cards are Sent?



You should always make sure that your mailing address is correct with Social Security. If you currently receive mail from them, then it should be correct. But if your address needs to be corrected, contact Social Security at ssa.gov/myaccount or 800.772.1213.

Also, it is important to note that there will likely be many unscrupulous scam attempts as a result of this change. Do not give out personal or private information to anyone who contacts you about your new Medicare card. Social Security/Medicare will never ask for your personal information or require you to give anything in order to get your new Medicare card.

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Again, and we cannot reiterate this enough, you should never give out your personal information by phone to anyone claiming to be from Social Security or Medicare. This includes your Social Security number, Medicare claim number and any other personal information. Medicare will not ever call you to obtain this information.

What Changes with the New Medicare Cards?

The new Medicare cards are part of a â??fraud prevention project that removes Social Security numbers from Medicare cards to help combat identity theft and safeguard taxpayer dollars.â?• **Your Medicare benefits will not change in any way as a part of this change**.

What will change is the identification number that is listed on your Medicare card. It will no longer be tied to your, or a spouseâ??s, social security number. On the contrary, it will be a **unique number that is 11 digits and is alpha-numeric**. This number will be unique to you.

What Should You Do When You Get Your New Medicare Card?

When your new Medicare card arrives by mail (between April 2018 and April 2019), you should destroy your old card and start using your new card right away.

It is important to take care when destroying the old card. Remember, the reason for this change is to remove personal, sensitive information from the Medicare card, so take care in your final step of destroying the card to avoid your personal information is not still accessible (i.e. donâ??t just throw the whole/complete Medicare card in your household trash).

Does Anything Change As Far as How You Use Your Medicare Card?

No, the new Medicare cards will be tied to your personal Medicare account. You will just start using the new Medicare card right away and providers will be able to use the new identification number as a way to file claims and communicate with Medicare about your benefits.

It also does not affect anything about Medigap/Medicare Supplement insurance or Medicare Advantage insurance. You would keep using those cards as you do now, and no identification numbers on those cards are changing.

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If you have any questions about this change or if we can help you with anything related to this process or Medicare/Medigap itself, you can contact us here or by calling 877.506.3378.

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1. Medicare current events
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