

Getting Extra Help With Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs Information For American Indians And Alaska Natives

2010



Social Security and the *Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services* are working together to get you Extra Help with your Medicare prescription drug plan costs. If you have limited resources and income, you may qualify for Extra Help with the costs—monthly premiums, annual deductibles, and prescription co-payments—related to a Medicare prescription drug plan.

By filing an *Application for Extra Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs* (Form SSA-1020), Social Security will determine if you are eligible for the Extra Help. Social Security will need to know the value of your savings, investments and real estate (other than your home), and your income. Most of the questions on the application deal with resources and income. Social Security will not ask for documentation initially to support the information you provide, but will match your information with data available from other Federal agencies.

What is the resource limit?

To qualify for Extra Help, your resources must be limited to \$12,510 for an individual (\$25,010 for a married couple living together). Resources include the value of the things you own. Some examples are:

- Real estate (other than your primary residence);
- Bank accounts, including checking, savings and certificates of deposit;
- Stocks;
- Bonds, including U.S. Savings Bonds;
- Mutual funds;
- Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs); or
- Cash at home or anywhere else.

What does not count as a resource?

Social Security will not count:

- Your primary residence;
- Your personal possessions;
- Your vehicle(s);
- Resources you could not easily convert to cash, such as jewelry or home furnishings;

- Property you need for self-support, such as rental property or land you use to grow produce for home consumption;
- Non-business property essential to your self-support;
- Life insurance policies
- Burial spaces;
- Interest earned on money you plan to use for burial expenses;
- Certain distributions received by an Alaska Native from an Alaska Native Regional and Village Corporation;
- Land held in trust by the United States for an individual Indian or Tribe;
- Funds held in trust by the Secretary of the Interior for an Indian Tribe and distributed per capita to members of the Tribe;
- Certain other money you are holding is not counted for nine months, such as:
 - Retroactive Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments;
 - Housing assistance;
 - Tax advances and refunds related to earned income tax credits and child tax credits;
 - Compensation you receive as a crime victim; and
 - Relocation assistance from a state or local government.

You should contact Social Security for other resource exclusions.

What is the income limit?

To qualify for Extra Help, your annual income must be limited to \$16,245 for an individual (\$21,855 for a married couple living together).

Even if your annual income is higher, you still may be able to get some help. Some examples where your income may be higher include if you or your spouse:

- Support other family members who live with you;
- Have earnings from work; or
- Live in Alaska or Hawaii.

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