Premiums for 2019 weren’t collected for some Medicare Advantage Plans and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans

There was an issue with Social Security payments that affected how premiums are withheld. Some 2019 Medicare plan enrollees didn’t have their Medicare Advantage Plan or Medicare Prescription Drug Plan premiums taken out from their monthly Social Security benefit check beginning in February 2019, as the enrollees had requested.

Who is affected?
You may be affected if you enrolled either in a Medicare Advantage Plan or in a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan for coverage starting January 1, 2019, and you asked to have your plan premiums taken out of your Social Security payments.

Your Medicare Advantage Plan or Medicare Prescription Drug Plan may send you a bill for any premiums that wasn't taken out of your Social Security payments.

What should I do now?
Follow any instructions from your Medicare plan regarding your premiums. The systems issue has been corrected. Unless you told your plan you now want to pay your premiums a different way, your plan premiums will be taken out properly from your Social Security payments beginning in June or July 2019 through the rest of the year.

If you receive a bill from your plan, your plan must offer you a “grace period” to repay your premium payments that were missed. This period must last at least as long as the delay in billing.

Contact your Medicare plan directly with any questions or concerns. If you aren’t sure which Medicare plan you’re enrolled in, check your plan card or materials. You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

Jamie Cooley is a Regional Manager for the Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Arkansas. She began as a Case Manager 11 years ago with the company, helping people with applying for public benefits, being an advocate for them, and working as a SHIIP Counselor. As the years passed, Jamie stepped into leadership roles with the company and now supervises the Case Management/Care Coordinators as well as the In-Home Services RNs in her 4-county region of the Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Arkansas.

Even working as a supervisor in the Agency, Jamie still has the opportunity to work one-on-one with clients from time to time. “Time spent with the clients is motivating and energizing and reminds me why the work our agency does is so important to the community. We really provide a great public service,” she said. Jamie has many duties in her role as Regional Manager, but in the field of SHIIP, Jamie coordinates SHIIP/MIPPA enrollment events, provides training and education to staff as well as community outreach. She also assists with the SHIIP data reporting, problem solving and program development.

For the last 27 years, Hilda Hodnett has helped countless seniors and families in her role as a Case Manager with the Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Arkansas. Working out of the Baxter County Branch Office in Mountain Home, Hilda serves as an advocate, a coordinator, a counselor and a guide through the complexities that many people face when it comes to aging, applying for public benefits and getting their affairs in order. Her mission is to educate people and equip them with the tools they need to make knowledgeable decisions and remain in their own homes as long as possible. Hilda is a Licensed Social Worker, and also serves in the capacity of a Volunteer Backup Ombudsman, assisting with conflict resolution in long-term care facilities in the area.

Hilda was one of the pioneers of the SHIIP program, helping people with Medicare Part D enrollment from its beginnings in 2006. She says the program has definitely evolved in the last 13 years. Her role in the SHIIP program has evolved over the years as well. Being bilingual has been an asset to the northwest area of the state. She helps many Spanish-speaking people navigate the Medicare maze, and in more recent years, she has been taking calls from people all across the state to help them with their Medicare questions as well.
Meet our Newest SHIIP Volunteer

Aliza Elliott

She is an Elder Care Coordinator for a law firm: her responsibilities include coordinating their clients’ health and long-term care, to serve as an advocate and empower their clients with the knowledge they need to make the right decisions for themselves or loved one in varying circumstances. She has worked with seniors for 11 years. She truly enjoys helping others and becoming a SHIIP volunteer is another opportunity to do so.

She is originally from California. Aliza and her family moved to Arkansas 15 years ago. She is married and has four wonderful sons. Two are in college, one lives and works in Mountain Home, AR and one lives in Seattle; it’s far away, but it gives us a great place to vacation!
Arkansas SHIIP Newsletter
Healthy Eating Recipe

Fresh Fruit Parfait

Healthy living is not a diet

Ingredients
3 cups vanilla nonfat yogurt
1 cup fresh or defrosted frozen strawberries in juice
1 pint fresh blackberries, raspberries or blueberries
1 cup good quality granola

Directions
Layer 1/3 cup vanilla yogurt into the bottom each of 4 tall glasses. Combine defrosted strawberries and juice with fresh berries. Alternate layers of fruit and granola with yogurt until glasses are filled to the top. Serve parfaits immediately to keep granola crunchy.

Enjoy!
Save the Dates!

Mark your calendar
September 11th & 12th, 2019
Holiday Inn-Presidential Hotel-Downtown, 600 Interstate 30, Little Rock, Arkansas 72202.

Please Join Us