

Medicare Part D Extra Help

The Medicare Part D Extra Help Program helps Medicare consumers dramatically lower their prescription drug costs and can help save them thousands of dollars per year.



Remember, anyone who has Medicare and gets **any** help from the Medical Assistance program (even if it's just payment of the Medicare Part B premium) should automatically get the full Extra Help and doesn't need to apply. Any other Medicare beneficiary will need to apply to get this help.

How to Qualify:

Individuals must meet income and resource guidelines to qualify for Extra Help. Below are the **2015** guidelines. Please note that if someone's income and resources exceed the amounts listed below, she could still qualify for a subsidy because SSA may not count all of her income and/or resources.

Full Subsidy: Countable Income must be below 135% FPL (see table below)
Countable Resources* must be below \$8,780 (if single) / \$13,930 (if married)

Partial Subsidy: Countable Income must be below 150% FPL (see table below)
Countable Resources* must be below \$13,640 (if single) / \$27,250 (if married)

2015 Federal Poverty Levels (FPL)		
Household Size	135% (monthly income)	150% (monthly income)
1	\$1,324	\$1,471
2	\$1,792	\$1,991
3	\$2,260	\$2,512
4	\$2,729	\$3,032

*The amounts listed **include** the \$1500 per person disregard given to applicants who plan to use their assets for funeral/burial expenses.

Household size: If an applicant has a relative living with her (other than a spouse) who depends on the applicant for at least half of their financial support, this should be noted on the application. SSA will then count that person in the applicant's household but will not count the dependent relative's income (if any).

How is income counted?

All income must be reported on the Extra Help application (unless the application specifies not to report it-i.e., interest income), but some income may not be counted when SSA determines Extra Help eligibility.

- *Unearned income:* Unearned income must be reported on a monthly basis before any deductions are taken out (such as the Medicare Part B premium, child support, etc). When determining Extra Help eligibility, SSA will not count the first \$20/month of unearned income.
- *Earned income:* Earned income must be reported on a yearly basis with consumers projecting the gross amount (before taxes or deductions are taken out) they expect to earn that year. If earnings fluctuate during the year, figure the average monthly income and multiply it by twelve to project the yearly amount. When determining if the applicant meets the Extra Help income limits, SSA will not count the first \$65 of earned income and ½ of the remaining gross monthly earnings reported.

How are resources counted?

SSA asks for information about certain resources owned by an applicant/her spouse on the Extra Help application. However, SSA will not necessarily count all those resources (or the entire value of the resource) when determining whether someone qualifies for Extra Help.

- **SSA will count :**
 - Any real estate or property that someone owns that is not their primary residence
 - Liquid resources (i.e., stocks, bonds, IRAs, CDs, 401ks, annuities) unless an applicant can show that a resource cannot be converted to cash within 20 days.
- **SSA will not count:**
 - Certain resources such as the applicant's primary residence, motor vehicles, burial plots/spaces, irrevocable burial accounts, and life insurance.
 - \$1500 of liquid resources for the applicant (and \$1500 for her spouse) **unless** the individual states on the application that he/she does **not** plan to use resources to pay for funeral or burial expenses.

How to apply?

- APPRISE works with the Benefits Data Trust (BDT) to submit Extra Help applications electronically. APPRISE workers and volunteers as well as Community Partners can download a copy of the application at www.ssa.gov/prescriptionhelp and complete the paper application with the consumer.
 1. Community Partners will forward the completed paper applications every 2 weeks to the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Local APPRISE programs will forward the completed applications to BDT every two weeks.
 2. BDT will input the information from the paper application into the online application and submit the online application directly to SSA.

Remember to put the APPRISE PSA on the Extra Help application (bottom right of the first page) so that it can be tracked!!

- Local APPRISE programs and Community Partners can also refer consumers to the PACE Application Center (1-800-866-1807) or contact the Application Center with the

client. The Application Center is staffed by BDT and they will complete and submit the online application.

SSA does not require applicants to submit verification of the information reported. If SSA needs documentation to finish processing the application, they will contact the applicant by phone or by mail.

Application Tips:

- Review the application thoroughly to be sure that all questions are answered before submitting it to the local APPRISE program (if a Community Partner) or to BDT (if APPRISE staff/volunteer). Incomplete applications will result in delayed processing.
- Keep a copy of the completed application that is submitted. This is a grant requirement but also will be helpful if any problems arise.
- Although most applications will be submitted to BDT, in limited circumstances it may be best to submit an online application directly.
 - Make sure to note the Reentry number that will be generated so that you can get back into the application in case you are not able to complete it all at one time.
 - You will also need the applicant’s Social Security Number to access the application again. Also, make sure to keep a copy of the online application and the confirmation form (you will have the opportunity to print this once the application is submitted). The local APPRISE programs must keep the confirmation form.

Where to call if you have problems?

Contact SSA with questions or to follow-up on the status of the application-1-800-772-1213.

After the Extra Help application is processed, SSA will send a written notice telling the applicant if they qualify for Extra Help and how much help they will get. If an individual does not agree with the SSA determination, they can appeal. If someone is approved, SSA will also notify Medicare so Medicare can update their system.