

## New Medicare Cards Are Coming Soon

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is in the process of issuing new Medicare Beneficiary Identifiers (MBI) and Medicare cards to help protect the identities of Medicare beneficiaries. Here is a summary of the changes and information on what people with Medicare can expect.

### Why?

The Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA) of 2015 requires CMS to remove beneficiaries' Social Security Numbers (SSNs) from Medicare cards by April 2019 to mitigate risk of medical identity theft. To do this, CMS is replacing beneficiaries' SSN-based Health Insurance Claim Numbers (HICN), which are currently used to process claims and determine eligibility, with non-SSN based Medicare Beneficiary Identifiers (MBI). CMS will generate MBIs for all existing (current, deceased, and archived) and new beneficiaries.

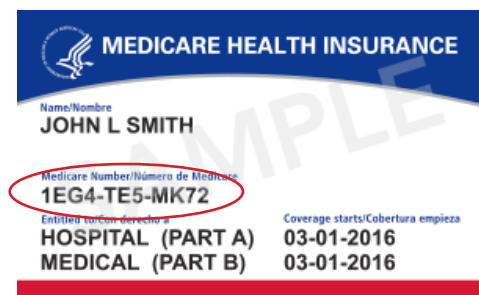
### Who?

All Medicare beneficiaries will be receiving new Medicare cards with their MBI. Current beneficiaries will be mailed a replacement Medicare card and instructions, while individuals who are new to Medicare in or after April 2018 will receive a new Medicare card with their MBI upon enrollment.

### What?

Each beneficiary will be assigned a unique Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI). The MBI will be printed on the beneficiary's new Medicare card and available to Medicare providers for claims processing. The new card design no longer includes the beneficiary's Social Security Number, sex, or signature.

The MBI does not change Medicare benefits. Beneficiaries will use their card and MBI when getting care through Original (Fee-for-Service) Medicare, and can also use it to enroll in Medicare Part C (Medicare Advantage) or a Part D prescription drug plan (PDP). Medicare Advantage plans and PDPs will still issue insurance cards which enrollees should use when getting health care or filling prescriptions.



*New MBI*

### When?

CMS will be mailing new Medicare cards to beneficiaries in **April 2018**. The cards will be mailed in seven waves by groups of states over the next year. **All beneficiaries should receive a new card by April 2019**. The [mailing schedule](#) and status of card mailings will be available on [Medicare.gov](#). To prepare, beneficiaries should **contact Social Security to make sure their current mailing address is on file**.

Medicare enrollees may start using their new Medicare cards and MBIs as soon as they receive them. The effective date of the new cards is the date the beneficiary became eligible for Medicare.

During a transition period from April 2018 through December 2019, CMS will recognize both MBIs and Health Insurance Claim Numbers (HICN). After January 1, 2020, beneficiaries, providers, and plans will no longer be able to use HICNs except for claims appeals and a few other limited purposes.

## Additional Resources

CMS has created a [webpage](#) with information and resources for a variety of audiences, including beneficiaries, partners and providers. The resources include “[10 Things to Know about Your New Medicare Card](#)” and other consumer-facing materials in English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Arabic.

**Helping a client with Medicare questions?** Justice in Aging provides legal professionals with advice on Medicare and other programs as part of NCLER’s case consultation service. Through this service, Justice in Aging, the National Consumer Law Center, and the ABA Commission on Law and Aging provide free case consultations to legal and aging network professionals on a range of legal issues impacting older adults.

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