

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
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CMS NEWS

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CMS Offers Medicare Enrollment Relief for Americans Affected by Recent Disasters *Agency provides help to people who missed first enrollment options in Medicare Parts A and B*

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is providing immediate relief to people who want to make a Medicare Part A or Part B enrollment request, but may have been impeded by the recent hurricanes and the wildfires in California.

This important relief gives certain individuals who have been affected by these events additional time to enroll in Part B and premium-Part A if they were unable to make a request during their initial enrollment period or special enrollment period.

“CMS will ensure access to healthcare coverage for many individuals whose lives have been affected by the recent hurricanes and wildfires,” said Administrator Verma. “Through this relief, individuals who missed these important times for Medicare enrollment will still get the Medicare coverage they would otherwise have, if not for the impacts of these devastating events.”

CMS established this relief due to major devastation caused by the storms, which disrupted mail delivery, power and other enrollment operations resources necessary to deliver critical enrollment information to eligible enrollees and their ability to make a timely enrollment request. Under this relief, certain individuals impacted by these disasters can enroll in Part B and premium-Part A. In addition, individuals who were automatically enrolled in Part B may request to cancel the automatic Part B coverage.

This opportunity will apply to individuals who, at the start of the disaster, were in their initial enrollment period or a special enrollment period, and resided in an area for which the Federal Emergency Management Agency has declared a weather-related emergency or major disaster. The changes to Medicare coverage will be in effect as though the individual made their request during the required enrollment period.

Individuals who believe they are eligible for this relief should contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778) or visit their local Social Security office to make their enrollment request and mention the weather-related event.

For more information on Medicare enrollment periods:

General guidance:

<https://www.medicare.gov/sign-up-change-plans/get-parts-a-and-b/when-sign-up-parts-a-and-b/when-sign-up-parts-a-and-b.html>, and <https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/Emergency/Downloads/Disaster-Memo-Medicare-SEP.pdf>

Social Security Administration guidance:

<https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/reference.nsf/links/10252017125325PM>

CMS continues to update its emergency page (www.cms.gov/emergency) with important information on its efforts to support disaster response and recovery efforts.

For information regarding HHS disaster response activities, please visit <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news>.

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