

Your Guide to

Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment for 2022

RetireGuide's 2022 Guide to Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment is designed to help you prepare ahead of the upcoming open enrollment period. Our Medicare experts give you the tools to navigate your Medicare Advantage plan options with confidence.

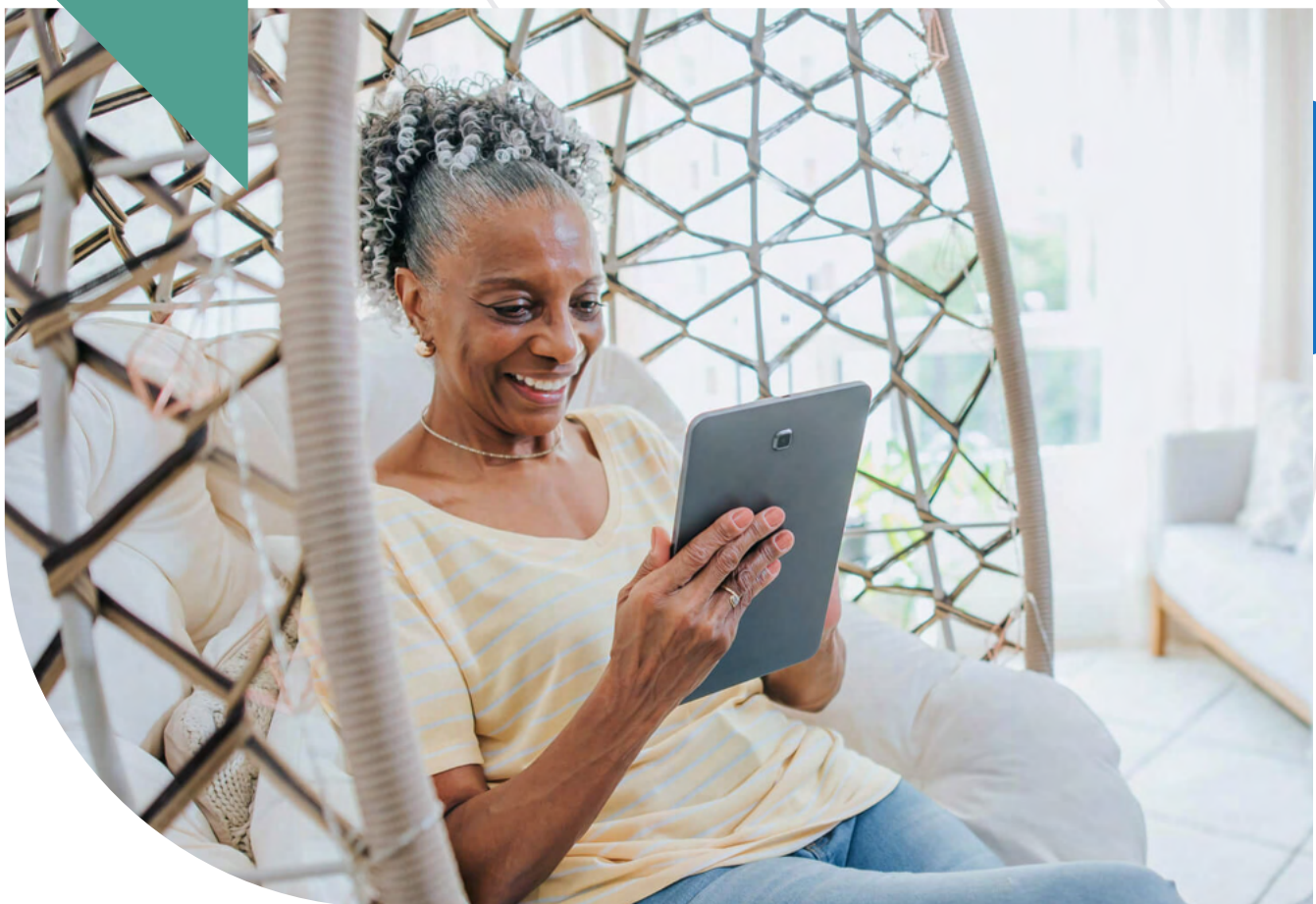




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This guide will help you:

- **Plan ahead** for the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment period.
- **Gather the information you need** to choose the best Medicare Advantage coverage for your specific medical needs.
- **Save money** by making the appropriate choice for your financial situation.



Introduction to Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment

The Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment period for 2022 runs from Jan. 1 to March 31.

During this period, you can evaluate your coverage needs and choose to make changes to your current plan or shop for additional coverage options. Depending on your needs, this may include switching to a different Medicare Advantage plan, adding a Part D prescription drug plan or moving over to Original Medicare.



You qualify for a Medicare Advantage Plan if you:

- Have Original Medicare (Parts A and B).
- Are a U.S. citizen or lawfully live in the U.S.
- Live within the service area of the plan you choose.

Source: U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Medicare Open Enrollment vs. Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment

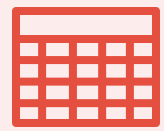
Medicare Open Enrollment	Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment
Enrollment is Oct. 15 – Dec. 7 each year.	Enrollment is Jan. 1 – March 31 each year.
Anyone who already has Medicare coverage of any kind can make changes to their coverage for the upcoming year.	Only people who already have Medicare Advantage plans can change plans.
You can switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage plan or from a Medicare Advantage plan back to Original Medicare.	You can disenroll from your Medicare Advantage plan and return to Original Medicare, but not vice versa.
You can join a Medicare drug plan whether you're enrolled in Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage plan.	You can't join a Medicare drug plan if you're enrolled in Original Medicare.
You can make unlimited changes.	You can only make one change.

Source: U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

How To Prepare for Open Enrollment

Four Steps to Prepare for Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment

1. **Know the Dates** — Know when you can make changes to your plan and how long you'll have to do so.



2. **Know Your Eligibility** — Make sure you are eligible for Medicare Advantage before open enrollment begins.



3. **Plan Out Your Coverage Needs** — Figure out what coverage is most important to you and what you need to prioritize based on your medical needs.



4. **Research Ahead of Time** — Don't wait for open enrollment to begin to research plans in your area.





Medicare Advantage Plans

Medicare Advantage plans cover everything that is included in Original Medicare. But, on top of what's covered in Parts A and B, Medicare Advantage plans often include additional benefits. Some of the most common extended coverage examples are vision, hearing and dental benefits.

While Original Medicare is provided by the federal government, Medicare Advantage plans are available through private insurers. These plans often require you to stay within a regional network, meaning you'll have fewer provider choices than you would with Original Medicare.

Which Companies Offer Medicare Advantage Plans?

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, Medicare Advantage enrollment has more than doubled over the past 10 years. There are plenty of provider options available to shop across the country. Several providers stand out, with UnitedHealthcare and Humana alone covering a combined 45 percent of all enrollees.



Top Medicare Advantage Providers by Enrollment

- UnitedHealthcare
- Humana
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- CVS Health (formerly Aetna)
- Kaiser Permanente

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation

Choosing a Health Care Plan

When choosing a health care plan, everyone has different needs and priorities. However, there are some things that all beneficiaries should consider before selecting a plan.



Factors To Consider When Choosing a Medicare Advantage Plan

- Availability in your area
- The plan's rating
- Any additional coverage offerings and benefits that are included
- Associated costs
- How it compares to other plans

How To Select the Right Medicare Advantage Company

Finding the right Medicare Advantage company can seem daunting, but there are a few things to keep in mind to help make the search easier. Your main priority should be identifying a plan that caters to your health care needs. If you have something in particular you want (or need) coverage for, finding a plan to meet that requirement can help narrow down your search.

Price is another important factor. Remember not to simply compare premiums, but to also consider your out-of-pocket costs and the situations where you will have to pay.

When researching a plan, also be sure to consider the size and strength of the provider as well as its ratings and availability in your area.



Out-of-Pocket Medicare Advantage Costs for 2022

2022 Medicare Advantage Costs at a Glance	
Medicare Advantage (Medicare Part C) Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Average monthly premium is \$19 (down from \$21.22 in 2021)• 59 percent of plans charge no premium• Monthly premiums vary from plan to plan — be sure to compare plan coverage and costs before purchasing or changing plans• Coinsurance and copays can vary by plan and are based on whether you use in-network or out-of-network doctors, hospitals or other health care providers
Prescription Drug (Medicare Part D) Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Average monthly premium is \$33 (up from \$31.47 in 2021)• Maximum deductible is \$480 (your plan may be lower)• Copayments for prescription drugs vary from plan to plan and cost will depend on your plan’s formulary

Source: U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the difference between Medicare Advantage and Original Medicare?

A: Original Medicare is provided by the federal government and includes Part A hospital insurance as well as Part B, which covers outpatient care and services. Medicare Advantage, on the other hand, is available through private insurers and includes everything covered under Original Medicare as well as additional benefits like vision and dental.

Q: What is the difference between Medicare Advantage and Medigap?

A: While Medicare Advantage is an alternative to Original Medicare, Medigap is a supplement to it. Also known as Medicare Supplement plans, Medigap plans help you cover some out-of-pocket costs. Medigap plans cannot be paired with Medicare Advantage.

Q: Can I see any doctor with a Medicare Advantage plan?

A: Medicare Advantage plans sometimes restrict you to seeing doctors who fall within the plan's network. This can vary depending on your specific plan.

Q: How can I compare costs based on my specific health needs?

A: RetireGuide's [Medicare Simulator](#) allows you to run through health scenarios, like a stroke or heart attack, to compare how your costs might change under different types of plans and coverage.

Get Expert Medicare Help for Free

RetireGuide's Medicare Advantage experts are available to offer you immediate help in choosing a plan before open enrollment closes. You can contact a Medicare specialist for help at 855-489-1197.

Speak with a Medicare Advantage Expert

Our Medicare experts can help you navigate Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment to choose coverage options from top plan providers that suit your health care needs and budget.

[Get Free Help Now](#)

Contributors

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Christian Simmons has worked as a professional journalist since 2016. He currently covers Medicare and retirement topics for RetireGuide. Before joining our staff, Christian worked for United Way Worldwide, the Orlando Sentinel and the South Florida Sun Sentinel. His stories also appeared in the Dallas Morning News, New Orleans Advocate and Baltimore Sun, among other publications.

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Savannah Hanson is an accomplished writer and content marketer with more than 10 years of editorial experience. She is passionate about educating RetireGuide readers on complex financial topics and guiding them toward the path of financial literacy. Savannah graduated from the University of Florida where she earned degrees in advertising and communication studies.

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