

Extra Help With Prescription Drug Costs: 2018 Medicare Low-Income Subsidy (LIS)

Eligible patients may be able to
access brand-name drugs for
less than \$10 per month.

Johnson & Johnson HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS INC.

Providing Services for Janssen, the Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson

Johnson & Johnson Health Care Systems Inc. has developed this guide to explain how the Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy (LIS) program (also called “Extra Help”) may be able to help with the out-of-pocket costs usually associated with Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plans (PDPs). The Medicare LIS program is designed to help people with low incomes and resources by lowering or eliminating costs for deductibles, co-pays, and premiums associated with Part D prescription drugs. This guide reviews the LIS program, describes eligibility, compares the standard PDP benefits with LIS benefits, and provides access to tools and resources for healthcare providers and patients.



Rhonda Fenwick, *Time is Now II*

Janssen is proud to feature artwork created by people affected by the illnesses and diseases we are committed to treating and preventing.

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The information provided is not a guarantee of coverage or payment (partial or full). Actual benefits are determined by each plan administrator in accordance with its respective policy and procedures. This document is presented for informational purposes only and is not intended to provide reimbursement or legal advice, nor does it promise or guarantee coverage, levels of reimbursement, payment, or charge. It is not intended to increase or maximize reimbursement by any payer. Laws, regulations, and policies concerning reimbursement are complex and are updated frequently. While we have made an effort to be current as of the issue date of this document, the information may not be as current or comprehensive when you view it. Please refer to <http://www.medicare.gov>, or contact the plan for more information about coverage or any restrictions or prerequisites that may apply. We strongly recommend you consult the payer organization for its reimbursement policies. All information is subject to change.

What Is Extra Help for Prescription Drugs?

Anyone who has Medicare can get Medicare prescription drug coverage (Medicare Part D). Some people with limited resources and income may also be able to get Extra Help to pay for the costs related to a Medicare prescription drug plan, such as monthly premiums, annual deductibles and prescription co-payments. Recently the Social Security Administration estimated Extra Help to be worth about \$4,000 a year.¹ This is an important savings – one that many qualified people don't know about.

Who Qualifies for Extra Help?

In order to qualify for Extra Help:

- **You must be enrolled in a Medicare Prescription Drug plan.** Extra Help only applies to the costs associated with Medicare prescription drug coverage. There are other programs that may help with other Medicare costs but the Low-Income Subsidy (or “Extra Help”) is **only** for Medicare prescription drug costs.
- **You must live in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia.** If you live in 1 of the 5 American territories (Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, or American Samoa), there are programs to help pay some Medicare costs. Programs vary, so call or visit your Medicaid office to learn what other help may be available.
- **You must have limited income.** To qualify for Extra Help in 2018, the annual income limit for individuals is \$18,210*, and \$24,690* for a married couple living together.² But even if your income is higher you may still be able to qualify for some help. For example, if you live in Alaska or Hawaii, or you or your spouse support other family members who live with you. Also, some cash payments **don't count** as income: food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), home energy assistance and earned income tax payments are just a few. Contact Social Security for other exclusions.
- **You must have limited resources.** To qualify for Extra Help, resources must not total more than \$14,100 for individuals and \$28,150 for a married couple living together.⁴ Countable resources include things like bank accounts and

* These income limits represent 150% of the 2018 Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for the 48 contiguous States and District of Columbia. Alaska and Hawaii have separate and slightly higher poverty levels.³



investments (eg, stocks, bonds). Your home, vehicle, furniture, personal possessions, burial plots and life insurance policies **don't count** as resources.

How Can I Get Extra Help?

Automatic: If you have Medicare and Medicaid (also called “dual-eligible”), receive Supplemental Social Security Income (SSI) benefits, or get help paying for Medicare through a Medicare Savings Program,⁵ you will automatically get Extra Help.

Apply: If you have limited income and resources, but do not meet the automatic enrollment requirements, you may apply for Extra Help by submitting an application to the Social Security Administration (SSA). To determine if you are eligible, Social Security will need your income and resource information.

Documents that may help you prepare include:

- Social Security card
- Bank account statements (savings, checking)
- Investment account statements (retirement accounts, mutual funds, etc.)
- Tax returns
- Payroll stubs
- Most recent benefits letter/statement (Social Security, Veterans, other)

How Do I Apply?

There is no cost to apply for Extra Help. Even if you are not sure if you are eligible, go ahead and apply. Social Security will review your application and determine if you qualify and determine the level of assistance you can receive. If you find that you are not eligible when you first apply, you can reapply for Extra Help at any time if your income and resources change.

There are a number of ways to apply:

- To apply online, visit: <https://secure.ssa.gov/i1020/start>. This application may be filled out online or completed and mailed to the SSA office. The website includes instructions in multiple languages.
- To apply by telephone, mail a paper application, or make an appointment at the local SSA office, call **1-800-772-1213** (TTY users should call **1-800-325-0778**).
- To apply through the State Medical Assistance (Medicaid) office, visit <https://www.medicare.gov/contacts/> to get the contact information for the state office, or call **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)** and say “Medicaid” to obtain the telephone number (TTY users should call **1-877-486-2048**).

The Social Security Administration will verify with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) the financial information you submit with your application. If you are eligible for Extra Help, Medicare will notify you and the Part D plan in which you are enrolled.

When Should I Apply?

You can apply for Extra Help at anytime. If you find that you are not eligible when you first apply, you can always reapply if your income and resources change.

How Does Extra Help Work?

When you apply for Extra Help the SSA will first determine your eligibility for the program and then the level of assistance for which you qualify. In other words, how much the Extra Help program will pay toward your Medicare prescription drug costs is determined by your financial need and eligibility for other government assistance such as the Medicare Savings Program. There are 2 levels of Extra Help: full subsidy and partial subsidy. Here is a quick look at the different benefit levels:

Summary of 2018 Medicare Part D Benefit Levels for Extra Help⁶

Level of Extra Help	Eligibility	Benefit
FULL Low-Income Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare + Medicaid, Medicare Savings Program or SSI • Income levels at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)* • Resources that do not exceed the SSA limitations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premium: 100% coverage • Deductible: \$0 • Co-payment for generic drugs: as low as \$0 • Co-payment for brand-name drugs: as low as \$0
PARTIAL Low-Income Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare only • Income level above 135% but below 150% of the FPL • Resources that do not exceed the SSA limitations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premium: 25%-75% coverage • Deductible: \$83.00 • Co-insurance: 15% up to Out-of-Pocket Threshold

*Federal Poverty Level (FPL): A measure of income issued every year by the Department of Health and Human Services. Federal poverty levels are used to determine your eligibility for certain programs and benefits, including savings on Medicare prescription drug costs.

What if I Don't Qualify for Extra Help?

If you don't qualify for Extra Help there may be other ways to lower your prescription drug costs:

- Your state may have programs to help with some of the costs. You can contact your Medicaid office or your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) at: <https://www.shiptacenter.org/> for more information.
- When selecting a Part D plan, you can use the Medicare Plan Finder at: <https://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan/questions/home.aspx> to compare Medicare drug plans to find a plan with lower costs.
- You may also find out if the company that makes your drug offers any help paying for it.

If you believe that your request for Extra Help was incorrectly denied, you may appeal the decision. You will need to complete the SSA form “Appeal of Determination for Extra Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs” which can be found, along with instructions for completion at: <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/prescriptionhelp/forms.html>. Remember, you can also reapply for Extra Help at any time if your income and resources change.

I Want to Apply. What Should I Do Next?

Remember, if you have Medicare and Medicaid (dual-eligible), have Medicare and receive Social Security Income (SSI), or belong to a Medicare Savings Program (QMB, SLMB or QI), you will get the Extra Help automatically and do not need to apply. If you are not eligible for automatic enrollment and want to apply, here are some steps to help you prepare:

- Identify things you own alone, with your spouse, or with someone else, but do not include your home, vehicles, burial plots, life insurance policies or personal possessions.
- Identify your income from all sources: wages, Social Security benefits, pensions and any other, but do not include food stamps, energy assistance or other income exclusions.
- Gather your records: bank statements, tax returns, payroll slips and any other statements or certificates that show your income and resources.
- Visit the Social Security Administration (SSA) website to review the Extra Help application and instructions: <https://secure.ssa.gov/i1020/start> or call the SSA office **1-800-772-1213** (TTY users should call **1-800-325-0778**) for a paper application. You can also get an application at your local SSA office.
- Apply: complete the online form, mail a paper application or complete the application at your local SSA office.

RESOURCES

Extra Help Forms

For the Extra Help application and instructions for completion, please see:

<https://www.ssa.gov/medicare/prescriptionhelp/forms.html>

You may also call Social Security at **1-800-772-1213** (TTY **1-800-325-0778**) to apply over the phone or to request an original paper application or apply at your local Social Security office.

Understanding Extra Help

For more details on the Extra Help Program, including how to determine your resources, what counts as income and choosing a Medicare prescription drug plan, please see “Understanding The Extra Help With Your Medicare Prescription Drug Plan,” available at the Social Security website:

<https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10508.pdf>

Medicare Information

For information on all parts of Medicare, including Part D, Extra Help and the Medicare Savings Programs, please see Medicare & You 2018, available at:

<https://www.medicare.gov/pubs/pdf/10050-Medicare-and-You.pdf>

To receive a print copy of this publication, call **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)** TTY users, call **(1-877-486-2048)**

Medicaid Information

To find information on Medicaid in any state, visit: <https://www.medicaid.gov>

State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs)

The State Health Insurance Assistance Program is a national program that offers one-on-one counseling and assistance to people with Medicare and their families. For more information, and to find your local SHIP branch, please see:

<https://www.shiptacenter.org>

Medicare Part D 2018 Prescription Drug Benefit Low-Income Subsidy Parameters^{2,6}

Category	Eligible for Both Medicare and Medicaid (Dual-Eligible)		Eligible for Medicare and Medicare Savings Programs (QMB, SLMB, QI) or SSI	Eligible for Medicare Only
	≤100% FPL	>100% FPL	≤135% FPL	≤150% FPL
Income Eligibility	≤100% FPL	>100% FPL	≤135% FPL	≤150% FPL
Resource Limits*	Subject to Medicaid Resource Test	Subject to Medicaid Resource Test	≤\$9,060 (individual) ≤\$14,340 (married)	≤\$14,100 (individual) ≤\$28,150 (married)
Premium Subsidy	100%	100%	25% - 75% depending on income and resources	none
Deductible	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$83.00
Co-payment/ Co-insurance	\$1.25 Generic \$3.70 Brand \$0 if institutionalized†	\$3.35 Generic \$8.35 Brand \$0 if institutionalized†	\$3.35 Generic \$8.35 Brand	15% up to Out-of-Pocket Threshold
Maximum Catastrophic Co-payment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3.35 Generic \$8.35 Brand

*All resource limits in this chart include the \$1,500 per person burial exclusion.

†Institutionalized, or those who would be institutionalized if not receiving home- and community-based services.

REFERENCES

¹Social Security Administration. Understanding the Extra Help With Your Medicare Prescription Drug Plan. 2017. <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10508.pdf>. Accessed March 14, 2018.

²Social Security Administration. Program Operations Manual System (POMS). HI 03001.005 Medicare Part D Extra Help (Low-Income Subsidy or LIS). <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lnx/0603001005>. Accessed March 18, 2018.

³Department of Health and Human Services. Annual Update of the HHS Poverty Guidelines. Notice, 83 Fed. Reg. 2,642-2,644 (Jan. 18, 2018).

⁴Medicare Plan Payment Group. 2018 Resources and Cost-Sharing Limits for Low-Income Subsidy (LIS). <https://www.medicare.gov/state-resource-center/state-operations-and-technical-assistance/downloads/sota-update-20171213.pdf>. Accessed March 14, 2018.

⁵Medicare Savings Programs help qualified beneficiaries pay for Medicare Parts A and B costs, and include: the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program (QMB); Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary Program (SLMB); and Qualifying Individual Program (QI). For more information, please see: <https://www.medicare.gov/your-medicare-costs/help-paying-costs/medicare-savings-program/medicare-savings-programs.html>. Accessed March 14, 2018.

⁶Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Announcement of Calendar Year (CY) 2018 Medicare Advantage Capitation Rates and Medicare Advantage and Part D Payment Policies and Final Call Letter and Request for Information, Table VI-I. <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Health-Plans/MedicareAdvSpecRateStats/Downloads/Announcement2018.pdf>. Accessed March 14, 2018.

