

Issue

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Information for the
Human Resource
Professional to assist
your employees.

social security tips

Expanded Office Hours

Social Security offices nationwide will be open to the public on Wednesday afternoons.

This change restores Wednesday public service hours that were last in place in late 2012. Currently, a field office is generally open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to Noon on Wednesdays. Beginning on January 8, 2020, offices will remain open until 4:00 p.m. on Wednesdays, with typical field office hours from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

While the agency continues to improve both the access to and the experience with its services, it is important to note that most Social Security services do not require the public to take time to visit an office. People may create a *my Social Security* account, a personalized online service, at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.



Do your employees think their Medicare income-related premium is wrong?

Social Security cares about accuracy. We want to ensure that your employees get the exact benefit amount that they deserve. Changes in the law affect how we calculate monthly Medicare Part B (medical insurance) and Medicare prescription drug coverage premiums.

- Medicare Part B provides coverage for physician services, outpatient hospital services, certain home health services, durable medical equipment, and other items. Most beneficiaries will pay a standard premium for Part B coverage. Some beneficiaries may also pay a late enrollment surcharge. **A small number of beneficiaries with higher incomes** will pay a higher Part B premium based on their income.
- Medicare prescription drug coverage helps pay for prescription drugs. Plan costs vary depending on the plan, and on whether you get Extra Help with your portion of the Medicare prescription drug costs. **A small number of beneficiaries with higher incomes** will pay a higher prescription drug premium based on their income.

If you have an employee that receives a letter from Social Security indicating they must pay more for their Medicare Part B or Medicare prescription drug coverage premium because of their income, and they disagree with the decision, they may request an appeal. The fastest and easiest way to file an appeal is by visiting www.socialsecurity.gov/disability/appeal.

Additional information is at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/EN-05-10125.pdf.

If their income has gone down due to certain specific circumstances, or if they filed an amended tax return, they can ask for a new decision without having to file an appeal. See our fact sheet, *Medicare Premiums: Rules for Higher-Income Beneficiaries* (SSA Publication No. 05-10536) at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/EN-05-10536.pdf. They don't have to file an appeal to get a new decision.