

Medicare Annual Verification Notices: Frequently Asked Questions

2008



Why did I receive another letter about my Medicare Part B premium for this year?

You received another letter about your Medicare Part B premium for this year because the amount of your Medicare Part B premium for this year changed. Although Social Security usually uses two-year-old IRS modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) data to decide if you must pay an income-related adjustment, sometimes we must use three-year-old data. Other times we may base our decision on tax information you have provided. Each fall, when we ask IRS for information to determine the next year's Part B premium, we ask IRS for tax information to verify beneficiary reports. We also ask for two-year-old IRS MAGI if we have temporarily used three-year-old MAGI. When we find a difference between IRS information and information previously used and it results in a change in your Part B premium, we notify you of the change.

When will I get my refund?

If you got a letter that said you would be getting a refund, you should have received your refund by mid to late November. If you did not receive your refund by the end of November, please call us toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** or your local Social Security office listed in the Blue Pages of your phone book. If you are deaf or hard of hearing you can call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**.

Can I appeal Social Security's decision about the money I owe? If so, how?

Yes, you can appeal the decision. You can call us at **1-800-772-1213** and we will send you a form SSA-561-U2 (*Request for Reconsideration*). When you call, we will tell you what proofs you should submit with your appeal request. If you need help completing the form, you may schedule an appointment with your local office by calling the number listed in the Blue Pages of your phone book. If you are deaf or hard of hearing you can call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**.

I don't agree with the tax information IRS gave Social Security. Can I just bring in a copy of my tax return?

If you don't agree with the tax information that IRS gave us, you will need to provide proof that you have more accurate information. More accurate information is:

- Your amended tax return, along with a letter from IRS accepting your amended return or an IRS transcript;
- A letter or statement from IRS that they have corrected your tax information and that describes what the correction was;
- Your copy of your tax return which shows an obvious IRS transcription error in tax-exempt interest income; or
- Your attestation under penalty of perjury that you lived apart from your spouse for the entire year when you filed your income tax return as Married Filing Separately.

If I owe an income-related adjustment for 2007, can I pay the amount owed by installments?

Yes, people who owe money on their premiums and state they cannot pay it in a lump sum can pay by installments. If you wish to pay by installments, please call us toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** or your local Social Security office listed in the Blue Pages of your phone book. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you can call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**.

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My income has gone down. I don't have to pay an income-related adjustment in 2008, but I owe an income-related adjustment for 2007. I can't afford to pay the money back. Can you waive what I owe?

You may request a waiver of an income-related adjustment if payment of the premiums would create severe financial hardship. If you wish to request a waiver, please call us toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** or your local Social Security office listed in the Blue Pages of your phone book. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you can call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**.

I received a notice in November 2007 telling me I must pay a higher Medicare Part B premium for 2007 based on my 2005 income. However, I got divorced in November 2007 and my income has decreased. It is now February 2008. What can I do?

We can make a new initial determination of your 2007 Medicare Part B premium. Ordinarily, we will not make a new initial determination for a prior year. There is one exception; if any "life-changing" event causing the reduction in modified adjusted gross income occurs in the last three months of the calendar year **and** the request for a new initial determination is received by March 31st of the following year, we can make a new initial determination. You will need to request a new initial determination and provide proof of the divorce (or other life-changing event) and tax information for 2007.

Life changing events include the following:

1. Death of spouse
2. Marriage
3. Divorce or annulment
4. Work reduction
5. Work stoppage
6. Reduction in income due to loss of income-producing property
7. Reduction in or loss of certain forms of pension income

If you wish to report a life changing event, please call us toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** or your local Social Security office listed in the Blue Pages of your phone book. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you can call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**.

Contacting Social Security

For more information, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov/mediinfo.htm or call toll-free, **1-800-772-1213** (TTY **1-800-325-0778**).

To learn more about Medicare Part B coverage, visit www.medicare.gov or call **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227; TTY 1-877-486-2048)**.