



Timeline for Medicare Part D¹

- March 15, 2005 The Social Security Administration (SSA) will mail a low-income subsidy letter and application to 2000 beneficiaries in 41 zip codes. This mailing is a test run to measure the effectiveness of the letter by how many applications are returned.
- March 23, 2005 Prescription drug plans (PDPs) and Medicare Advantage prescription drug plans (MA-PDs) deadline to submit formal applications to provide drug benefits in 2006.
- March 28 –
April 18, 2005 Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) accepts 2006 formularies from PDPs and MA-PDs.
- April 2005 Information on low-income subsidy eligibility published on Medicare.gov.
- May-August 2005 SSA will send notices to 20 million Medicare beneficiaries (half of all Medicare beneficiaries) informing them of the low-income subsidy to provide premium and copayment assistance. The mailing will also include an application form for the subsidy. Beneficiaries may complete and submit the form for future evaluation by SSA or their state Medicaid agency.
- Late May 2005 CMS will mail notices to beneficiaries who are deemed eligible for the low-income subsidy telling them they do not have to apply for the subsidy.

¹ Information adapted from Kaiser Family Foundation timeline, CMS timeline and Center for Medicare Advocacy materials. Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act (MMA) Key Implementation Dates: January 2005-December 2006, Kaiser Family Foundation, revised March 2005, available at http://www.kff.org/medicare/medicare_timeline.cfm; Key Projected Dates in the Implementation of Title I and Title II, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, revised March 1, 2005, available at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/mma-t1t2-calendar.pdf>; Vicki Gottlich, Mark Your Calendars! A Timetable for Medicare Part D Implementation, Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc., February 18, 2005, available at http://www.medicareadvocacy.org/PrescDrugs_PartDTimeline.htm.

June 6, 2005	Part D bids are due for all qualified plans offering Part D benefits.
June 20-30, 2005	CMS mails informational letter to dual eligibles regarding transition to Medicare plans.
July 1, 2005	SSA offices and state Medicaid agencies will begin making eligibility determinations on applications for the low-income subsidy. Individuals may apply via phone or online.
July 1, 2005	Deadline for CMS to establish requirements and procedures for coordination between Part D plans and SPAPs and other insurers (Medicaid, group health plans, etc.).
Fall 2005	Medicaid agencies will send notices to dual eligibles that they will be losing their Medicaid prescription drug coverage on January 1, 2006, and will be automatically enrolled in a Medicare Part D plan.
October 13, 2005	Materials describing Part D plans will be provided to all Medicare beneficiaries, through mail, 1-800-MEDICARE, Plan Comparison Web Tool and Medicare Personal Plan Finder on Medicare.gov.
October 27- November 10, 2005	CMS will notify dual eligibles of the Part D plan into which they will be auto-enrolled as soon as enough information about Part D plans are available.
November 15- December 31, 2005	Open enrollment period for dual eligibles initially seeking to switch prescription drug plans.
December 31, 2005	Medicaid drug coverage for dual eligibles ends. Medicare discount drug card program ends.
January 1, 2006	The Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit begins.
May 15, 2006	Existing Medicare beneficiaries must enroll in a Part D plan by this date or they must pay a penalty for late enrollment (unless they can show they had creditable drug coverage under another plan).