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State Health Insurance Assistance Program provides free help with Medicare enrollment decisions

Virtual Welcome to Medicare Fair to provide local trusted assistance

HONOLULU – Are you turning age 65 soon? Learn about signing up for Medicare from the comfort of your home or office. The Hawaii State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) is here to help you navigate the complexities of Medicare and avoid late enrollment penalties. If you are becoming eligible for Medicare because of a disability, this event is for you, too.

During the pandemic, State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) are providing local, trusted, and unbiased Medicare help in safe and socially distanced ways. Hawaii SHIP is partnering with the SHIP National Technical Assistance Center on **Wednesday, June 23, 2021 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Hawai'i Time** at the Welcome to Medicare Virtual Fair. Participants may attend for any length of time. Visit www.shiphelp.org for more details, to see the agenda, and to register.

This event is government funded, and there is no cost to attend part or all of the virtual fair. There will be general sessions with expert presenters on Medicare eligibility, enrollment, costs, and coverage options. The general sessions will offer subtitles in English and a live transcript in Spanish. The event will also feature state-specific virtual exhibits and the opportunity to chat with local staff about how the SHIP program can help with individual Medicare enrollment questions. Join from your computer or mobile device anytime between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Hawai'i Time.

Hawaii SHIP is part of the national SHIP network, funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Office of Healthcare Information and Counseling. In Hawai'i, SHIP goes by

Hawaii SHIP. In other states, SHIP services may be provided under other names, such as CHOICES, HICAP, SHINE, or an Area Agency on Aging. Regardless of the name, State Health Insurance Assistance Programs share a national mission: to empower, educate, and assist Medicare-eligible individuals, their families, and caregivers through objective outreach, counseling, and training to make informed health insurance decisions that optimize access to care and benefits.

SHIP experts will explain who is eligible for Medicare and when, how to sign up for Medicare, and what to do if you are still working when you are eligible for Medicare. They will also discuss Medicare costs, especially the importance of avoiding late enrollment penalties. Learn how to navigate your Medicare coverage options and how Medicare works with other insurances, such as employer insurance, Medigap supplemental insurance, and retiree insurance.

At any time during the virtual fair, visit the Hawaii SHIP exhibit and learn about what to consider when making your individual Medicare enrollment decisions or when helping a friend or loved one make their Medicare enrollment decisions. Medicare-certified counselors will be available to answer general questions face-to-face through Zoom. You can also watch short, pre-recorded videos on aspects of Medicare or download educational materials.

The event will conclude with national presenters discussing the federal government's role in Medicare, avoiding Medicare fraud, and the available Medicare assistance programs that help with Medicare costs.

Visit www.shiphelp.org to register and to see more event details.

You do not have to wait for this event to get Medicare help from our program. To find out more about SHIPs, go to www.hawaiiiship.org or www.shiphelp.org.

About Hawaii SHIP

The national SHIP mission is to empower, educate, and assist Medicare-eligible individuals, their families, and caregivers through objective outreach, counseling, and training to make informed health insurance decisions that optimize access to care and benefits.

Hawaii SHIP, State Health Insurance Assistance Program, is federally funded by the Administration for Community Living and administered by the Hawaii Department of Health, Executive Office on Aging. Our Medicare-certified counselors provide free, unbiased, local, one-on-one Medicare counseling to beneficiaries, their loved ones, caregivers, and soon-to-be retirees. We also offer free, virtual presentations on Medicare-related topics and participate in virtual fairs and exhibits that caters to Medicare-eligible individuals.

About The SHIP National Technical Assistance Center

The SHIP National Technical Assistance Center (SHIP TA Center) is a central source of information for and about the national program. The Center provides training, technical assistance, and additional resources in support of SHIPs across the nation. Individuals may visit

the SHIP TA Center website to find their local SHIP and to learn more about SHIP volunteer opportunities, counseling or outreach provided in their community. Learn more at www.shiphelp.org.

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