

Medicare Part B Premiums for 2010

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has announced that the standard monthly Part B premium will be \$110.50 in 2010. However, most Medicare beneficiaries will not see an increase in their monthly Part B premiums in 2010 because of a “hold-harmless” provision in current law. Monthly premiums for most beneficiaries protected by the “hold-harmless” provision will be \$96.40, the same monthly Part B premium as in 2009.

Some beneficiaries will pay the new standard monthly premium of \$110.50 in 2010. These beneficiaries are not subject to the “hold-harmless” provision because they are new Medicare Part B enrollees during the year, they do not have their Part B premiums withheld from railroad retirement or social security benefit payments, or they are subject to the income-related additional premium amount (as explained below).

The Part B monthly premiums for some beneficiaries will increase again in 2010, depending on an individual’s or married couple’s modified adjusted gross income. The income-related Part B premiums for 2010 will be \$154.70, \$221.00, \$287.30, or \$353.60, depending on the extent to which an individual beneficiary’s income exceeds \$85,000 (or a married couple’s income exceeds \$170,000), with the highest premium rates only paid by beneficiaries whose incomes are over \$214,000 (or \$428,000 for a married couple). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services estimates that about 5 percent of Medicare beneficiaries with Part B will pay higher premiums in 2010 based on their incomes.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is responsible for all income-related monthly adjustment amount determinations. To make the determinations, SSA uses the most recent tax return information available from the IRS. For 2010, in most cases that will be the beneficiary’s 2008 tax return information. If that information is not available, SSA will use information from the 2007 tax return.

Those railroad retirement and social security Medicare beneficiaries affected by the 2010 Part B income-related premiums will receive a notice from SSA by December 2009. The notice will include an explanation of the circumstances where a beneficiary may request a new determination. Persons who have any questions or would like to request a new determination should contact SSA after receiving and reviewing their notice.