

## **Important Notice From**

### **The UA LOCAL 190 PLUMBERS/PIPEFITTERS/SERVICE TECHNICIANS/GAS DISTRIBUTION HEALTH CARE PLAN**

#### **About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare**

Please read this notice carefully, and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with the UA Local 190 Plumbers/ Pipefitters/ Service Technicians/ Gas Distribution Health Care Plan (UA Local 190 Health Care Plan) and new prescription drug coverage available soon for people with Medicare. It also tells you where to find more information to help you make decisions about your prescription drug coverage.

**1. Medicare prescription drug coverage became available to everyone with Medicare through Medicare prescription drug plans in 2006. All Medicare prescription drug plans provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans may also offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.**

**2. The Local 190 Health Care Plan has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered in the Local 190 Health Care Plan is, on average for all plan participants, NOT expected to pay out as much as the standard Medicare prescription drug coverage will pay.**

**This is important, because for most people, enrolling in Medicare prescription drug coverage means you will get more assistance with drug costs.**

**3. You have decisions to make about Medicare prescription drug coverage that may affect how much you pay for that coverage, depending on if and when you enroll.**

**Read this notice carefully- it explains your options.**

You may have heard about Medicare's new prescription drug coverage, and wondered how it would affect you. Starting January 1, 2006, prescription drug coverage became available to everyone with Medicare through Medicare prescription drug plans. All Medicare prescription drug coverage will provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans might also offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.

**You might want to consider enrolling in Medicare prescription drug coverage.**

Because the Prescription Medicine Benefit coverage you have with the Local 190 Health Care Plan is on average for all plan participants, NOT expected to pay out as much as the standard Medicare prescription drug coverage will pay, you might want to consider enrolling in a Medicare prescription drug plan. Individual's can enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan when they first become eligible for Medicare and each year from November 15<sup>th</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**This is important, because if you do not get Medicare prescription drug coverage (or equivalent coverage) when you are eligible to enroll, you may have to pay a higher premium if you join later. You will pay that higher premium as long as you have Medicare prescription drug coverage.**

If you go 63 days or longer without prescription drug coverage that is at least as good as Medicare's prescription drug coverage, your premium will go up at least 1% per month for every month after May 15, 2006 that you were eligible for that coverage but did not have that coverage. You will have to pay this higher premium as long as you have Medicare prescription drug coverage. For example, if you go nineteen months without coverage, your premium will always be at least 19% higher than what most other people pay.

**If you don't enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan when you first were eligible to enroll, you may also have to wait to enroll. For 2009 Medicare Prescription Drug coverage, you generally need to enroll by December 31, 2008 to satisfy this requirement.**

**The Local 190 Health Care Plan has been modified to work with the Medicare prescription drug plan, so that Medicare eligible members whose medications cost more than the Health Care Plan's Prescription Medicine Benefit will come out ahead by enrolling in the Medicare prescription plan.**

The premiums you pay for Medicare prescription coverage are now eligible for reimbursement from your Prescription Medicine Benefit under the Local 190 Health Care Plan. This means you will get the Medicare coverage at very little cost to you, plus most of the Prescription Medicine Benefit you had before.

- Most people whose prescription medicine costs usually exceed the Prescription Medicine Benefit limit will come out ahead.
- If your Medicare prescription drug plan premium and prescription medicine costs do not exceed the Prescription Medicine Benefit limit, you might pay slightly more than before, but the difference should be small.
- You will pay slightly higher co-pay (25% instead of 20%) under part of the Medicare prescription plan. This may be offset by lower prescription prices.

This is a small price to pay to make sure that you have the extra coverage offered by Medicare and do not have to pay extra for the Medicare plan later.

**If you are a retiree or the spouse of a retiree and you enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan, here is how your Local 190 Health Care Plan Prescription Medicine Benefit will work:**

1. The total coverage amount will stay the same. This is currently a maximum of \$1,440.
2. The Local 190 Health Care Plan will reimburse premiums you pay for your Medicare prescription drug plan, up to 100% of the current annual standard Medicare Part D premium for the year (expected to be under \$32 for 2009). This amount will be treated as an eligible prescription drug expense and will count toward the annual \$1,440 limit the same as any prescription drug expense.
3. The Local 190 Health Care Plan will coordinate benefits from your Medicare prescription drug plan with the Local 190 Health Care Plan as a secondary payer (i.e., the Local 190 Health Care Plan will pay only after Medicare), subject to the following rules:

- The Local 190 Health Care Plan will treat your Medicare Part D deductible, up to a maximum of \$275 per year (2009), as a reimbursable expense, paid 80% by the Plan and 20% by you. The Trustees of the UA Local 190 Health Plan are currently reviewing increasing the maximum deductible for 2009. A separate notice will be mailed prior to January 1, 2009 if there is change in the deductible.
- The Local 190 Health Care Plan will not reimburse any of your Medicare prescription drug plan co-pay expense (typically 25% of medication costs).
- Once you reach a point where Medicare no longer pays for your prescription drug expense (the so-called “donut hole”), the Plan will reimburse 80% of your prescription expenses until the \$1,440 maximum is reached.

FOR EXAMPLE: Assume you are a single retiree and enroll in a basic Medicare prescription drug program patterned exactly after the Part D law, effective January 1, 2009. Assume the monthly Medicare prescription drug premium is \$32. Assume that in 2009 you incur \$4,100 of Medicare-eligible prescriptions, and the last \$270 of expense is incurred after the December Part D premium is paid. Also assume that you use your entire Miscellaneous Account (and Individual Health Account, if any) on other medical expenses. Here is what you would be reimbursed:

	Paid By Medicare	%	Paid By Local 190 Health Care Plan	%	Paid By You	%
Premiums: \$32 X 12 = \$384	\$0.00	0%	\$384.00	100%	\$0.00	0%
\$4,100 Medicare-covered drugs:						
First \$275	\$0.00	0%	\$220.00	80%	\$55.00	20%
Next \$2,510	\$1,882.50	75%	\$0.00	0%	\$627.50	25%
Next \$1,045	\$0.00	0%	\$836.00	80%	\$209.00	20%
Next \$270	\$0.00	0%	\$0.00	0%	\$270.00	100%
TOTAL	\$1,800.00		\$1,440.00		\$1,161.50	

In this example, the portion shown as “Paid by Medicare” is extra benefit you would not receive unless you elected Part D. After accounting for the premiums deducted from your account, you would receive \$1,416 more by being covered by the Medicare prescription drug plan than if you were only covered by the Local 190 Health Care Plan’s Prescription Medicine Benefit.

Not shown in this example is the fact that once your total “out-of-pocket” non-premium prescription expense (the “Paid By You” column) equals \$4,050, the Medicare “catastrophic” prescription coverage kicks in, and eligible prescriptions are paid 95% by Medicare after a small \$2 - \$5 deductible is paid on each prescription.

**Your current Local 190 Health Care Plan coverage pays for other health expenses, in addition to prescription drugs. You will still be eligible to receive all of your current health benefits if you choose to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan.**

**You need to make a decision. For more information about this notice or your current prescription drug coverage contact the Fund Office at 1-888-390-7473.**

When you make your decision, you should compare your current coverage, under which all medically necessary drugs are covered, with the coverage and cost of the plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area. Contact the Fund Office for further information at 1-888-390-7473.

NOTE: This notice is intended for retired members who are Medicare-eligible and their spouses. **If you are a Medicare eligible member who has not retired, or a Medicare eligible spouse of a member who has not retired, please contact the Fund Office for more information.**

NOTE: You may receive this notice at other times in the future such before the next period you can enroll in Medicare prescription drug coverage, and if this coverage changes. You also may request a copy.

**For more information about your options under Medicare prescription drug coverage.**

More detailed information about Medicare plans that offer prescription drug coverage is in the “Medicare & You” 2008 handbook from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare-approved prescription drug plans. You'll get a copy of the handbook in the mail. You can also get more information about Medicare prescription drug plans from these places:

- Visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) for personalized help,
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see your copy of the Medicare & You handbook for their telephone number)
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

For people with limited income and resources, extra help paying for a Medicare prescription drug plan is available. Information about this extra help is available from the Social Security Administration (SSA). For more information about this extra help, visit SSA online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), or call them at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

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