



RRB News

U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

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Medicare Part B Premiums for 2019

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has announced that the standard monthly Part B premium will be \$135.50 in 2019, a slight increase from \$134.00 in 2018. However, some Medicare beneficiaries will pay slightly less than this amount. By law, Part B premiums for current enrollees cannot increase by more than the amount of the cost-of-living adjustment for social security (railroad retirement tier I) benefits.

Since that adjustment is 2.8 percent in 2019, about 2 million Medicare beneficiaries will see an increase in their Part B premiums but still pay less than \$135.50. The standard premium amount will also apply to new enrollees in the program, and certain beneficiaries will continue to pay higher premiums based on their modified adjusted gross income.

The monthly premiums that include income-related adjustments for 2019 will range from \$189.60 up to \$460.50, depending on the extent to which an individual beneficiary's modified adjusted gross income exceeds \$85,000 (or \$170,000 for a married couple). The highest rate applies to beneficiaries whose incomes exceed \$500,000 (or \$750,000 for a married couple). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services estimates that about 5 percent of Medicare beneficiaries pay the larger income-adjusted premiums.

Beneficiaries in Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage plans pay premiums that vary from plan to plan. Part D beneficiaries whose modified adjusted gross income exceeds the same income thresholds that apply to Part B premiums also pay a monthly adjustment amount. In 2019, the adjustment amount ranges from \$12.40 to \$77.40.

The Railroad Retirement Board withholds Part B premiums from benefit payments it processes. The agency can also withhold Part C and D premiums from benefit payments if an individual submits a request to his or her Part C or D insurance plan.

The following tables show the income-related Part B premium adjustments for 2019. 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 Internal Revenue Service. For 2019, that will usually be the beneficiary's 2017 tax return information. If that information is not available, SSA will use information from the 2016 tax return.

Those railroad retirement and social security Medicare beneficiaries affected by the 2019 Part B and D income-related premiums will receive a notice from SSA by the end of the year. The notice will include an explanation of the circumstances where a beneficiary may request a new determination. Persons who have questions or would like to request a new determination should contact SSA **after** receiving their notice.

Additional information about Medicare coverage, including specific benefits and deductibles, can be found at www.medicare.gov.

(See reverse side for accompanying tables.)

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2019 PART B PREMIUMS

| Beneficiaries who file an individual tax return with income: | Beneficiaries who file a joint tax return with income: | Income-related monthly adjustment amount | Total monthly Part B premium amount |
|---|---|---|--|
| Less than or equal to \$85,000 | Less than or equal to \$170,000 | \$0.00 | \$135.50 |
| Greater than \$85,000 and less than or equal to \$107,000 | Greater than \$170,000 and less than or equal to \$214,000 | \$54.10 | \$189.60 |
| Greater than \$107,000 and less than or equal to \$133,500 | Greater than \$214,000 and less than or equal to \$267,000 | \$135.40 | \$270.90 |
| Greater than \$133,500 and less than or equal to \$160,000 | Greater than \$267,000 and less than or equal to \$320,000 | \$216.70 | \$352.20 |
| Greater than \$160,000 and less than \$500,000 | Greater than \$320,000 and less than \$750,000 | \$297.90 | \$433.40 |
| \$500,000 and above | \$750,000 and above | \$325.00 | \$460.50 |

The monthly premium rates paid by beneficiaries who are married, but file a separate return from their spouses and who lived with their spouses at some time during the taxable year, are different. Those rates are as follows:

| Beneficiaries who are married, but file a separate tax return, with income: | Income-related monthly adjustment amount | Total monthly Part B premium amount |
|--|---|--|
| Less than or equal to \$85,000 | \$0.00 | \$135.50 |
| Greater than \$85,000 and less than \$415,000 | \$297.90 | \$433.40 |
| \$415,000 and above | \$325.00 | \$460.50 |