

SeniorALERT



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

NEW MEDICARE PLAN HELPS PAY FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Be on guard against scams

MEDICARE PART D, a new insurance plan offered by Medicare to help people pay for their prescription drugs, will start up on January 1, 2006. If you are on Medicare, this coverage is available to you. You can sign up for it starting November 15, 2005. This is a voluntary plan and free to sign up for. Do not let someone talk you into paying a fee to sign up.

If you already have a plan that helps cover your prescription drugs, you may choose to continue with your current plan instead. If you choose to join the Medicare drug plan, you will have to pay a monthly premium.

The Medicare-approved private companies that are going to offer benefits under this plan will begin their campaigns this month by telephone and mail. You will want to weigh your options carefully and be on guard for scam artists seeking to cash in on the situation.

- Do not allow a salesperson to talk you into a decision about what coverage is right for you. Take your time in choosing the right plan for you.
- Do not provide your personal information (Medicare number, Social Security number, credit card number or bank account number) to someone who calls you.
- Do not pay anyone a fee to assist you or sign you up. If you are confused, STOP and get help from one of the sources below or from someone you know.
- Do not pay over the phone or the Internet when you sign up. Make the plan send you a bill. Be extra cautious in dealing with someone who has called you.

Greg Abbott, Office of the Attorney General
P. O. Box 12548, Austin, TX 78711-2548
800-252-8011 or www.oag.state.tx.us

Free assistance is available. In the fall of 2005 the handbook, *“Medicare & You 2006”* will be mailed out. This handbook will list the Medicare prescription drug plans available in the area. You will be able to get free personalized information at www.medicare.gov or by calling 1-800-633-4227. The Social Security Administration website has information at www.ssa.gov. The State Health Insurance Assistance Program at the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services can help with questions about choosing a health plan at (800) 252-9240.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Abbott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Greg Abbott
Attorney General of Texas

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