

A New Medicare Charge is Coming: Here's How to Lessen the Blow

For high-income Americans covered by Medicare, now is the time to make tax moves to minimize an increase in premium surcharges. Starting in 2018, households with income more than \$85,000 (singles) or \$170,000 (couples), will be picking up an even greater share of the costs. For example, a single person with an income between \$133,500 and \$160,000 is expected to pay 30% more in 2018 for their Medicare Part B premium- an increase from \$2,856 to \$3,720 per year.

Here are some ways to reduce your exposure:

- Revamp charitable contributions: Consider donating appreciated assets, such as stock instead of cash. This often helps avoid capital-gains tax.
- Look to a Roth IRA: Payouts from a Roth IRA often aren't taxable, so they don't raise your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI).
- Manage capital gains and losses: Capital gains raise Adjusted Gross Income (AGI), but capital losses can offset gains plus \$3,000 of other income in a year.
- Time the receipt of income: Time the sale of an asset or payment to be split over two years, to keep your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) lower.
- Look to work-related savings: Medicare recipients who are still employed can lower than Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) by contributing to 401(k) plans or traditional IRAs.

If you have questions about this, consider contacting your financial planner. Commonwealth Financial Network® (or your firm) does not provide legal or tax advice. You should consult a

legal or tax professional regarding your individual situation.
Allen Financial: 31 Chestnut St., Camden, ME 04843 Phone:
207-236-8376.

Fixed Insurance products and services offered through Allen Insurance and Financial, L.S. Robinson Co. or CES Insurance Agency.

Medicare Matters: Open Enrollment Starts 10/15

When it comes to Medicare, one size doesn't fit all. While everyone has the same benefits available to them through Original Medicare, Medicare Advantage and prescription drug plan benefits vary by county and are subject to change from one year to the next.

If your health needs have changed in the last year, it's important that we review your coverage. At Allen Insurance and Financial, our goal is to help you find the best plan that fits your needs and supports the way you live.

Oct. 15 to Dec. 7 is the open enrollment period for Medicare coverage in 2017. Plan changes take effect Jan. 1, 2017.

Plan information for 2017 will become available Oct. 1. By that time you should have received your Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) from your insurer to explain how your plan will be changing for 2017. If you have questions about your coverage or need to make a change, open enrollment is a great opportunity to do this.

Please feel free to call us with your questions at 855-710-5700.

[Read our September 2016 Medicare newsletter. \(PDF, new window\)](#)

Live Well, Work Well – September 2016

Health and wellness tips for your work and your life. In the September edition:

- Green Tea
- Taking Responsibility for Your Retirement Fund
- Pokemon Go: Advice for Parents
- Summer Squash, Italian Style

[Live Well Work Well – September 2016 \(PDF, new window\)](#)

Jeremy Pickford Earns AAI Designation



Jeremy
Pickford

Allen Insurance and Financial is pleased to announce that Jeremy Pickford, a member of the business insurance team in the company's Camden office, has earned an Accredited Adviser in Insurance designation from the American Institute for Chartered Property Casualty Underwriters.

Designations such as AAI demonstrate an insurance broker's tested knowledge in their field. Allen Insurance and Financial supports all its employees in their efforts to continue their education.

The AAI program requires nine separate exams; the course outlines risk analysis techniques and tools, while providing an in-depth understanding of commercial insurance products and services.

Auto Insurance Back to School ProTip

Parents of college students: If a licensed driver in your household (on your policy) is heading off to college more than 100 miles from home – without a vehicle – you should give us a call. You may save some money on your car insurance. If your licensed driver is taking a car to school, we should know that, too.

A Best Place to Work in Maine – 5 Years Running

For the fifth consecutive year, Allen Insurance and Financial has been named as one of the Best Places to Work in Maine. The

awards program was created in 2006 and is a project of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) – Maine State Council and Best Companies Group.

This statewide survey and awards program was designed to identify, recognize and honor the best places of employment in Maine, benefiting the state's economy, its workforce and businesses. The 2016 Best Places to Work in Maine list is made up of 75 companies in three size categories: small (15-49 U.S. employees), medium (50-249 U.S. employees) and large (250+ U.S. employees).

Allen Insurance and Financial, with 68 employees in offices in Rockland, Camden, Belfast and Southwest Harbor, is in the medium category, which is the largest of the three categories, with 36 businesses making the list.

Companies from across the state entered the two-part process to determine the Best Places to Work in Maine. The first part consisted of evaluating each nominated company's workplace policies, practices, and demographics. This part of the process was worth approximately 25% of the total evaluation.

The second part consisted of an employee survey to measure the employee experience. This part of the process was worth approximately 75% of the total evaluation. The combined scores determined the top companies and the final rankings. Best Companies Group managed the overall registration and survey process in Maine and also analyzed the data and used their expertise to determine the final rankings.

Allen Insurance and Financial will be recognized and honored at the Best Places to Work in Maine awards ceremony on October 4. The final rankings will be announced at the event. Partners endorsing the program include: Mainebiz, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and Maine HR Convention.

Rule of 72: The Sooner You Start an Investing Strategy, the Sooner You Can Put Your Money to Work for You

By [Abraham Dugal](#)

When you embark on a professionally managed financial strategy, you might wonder when your money is really going to kick into high gear and start paying off for you. Well, the **rule of 72** can help you figure it out.

The rule gives you a rough approximation of how long it will take an investment that earns compound interest—whether it's a simple savings account or a complex investment portfolio—to double.

Simply divide 72 by the annual percentage of interest you expect to earn on the investment. The result is the number of years it will take to double your money.

Let's say we have a hypothetical investment that currently returns 6.50 percent annual compound interest:

$72 \text{ divided by } 6.50 = \text{just over } 11 \text{ years to double}$

And we have a second hypothetical investment that returns 7 percent annual compound interest:

$72 \text{ divided by } 7 = \text{about } 10 \text{ years and three months to double}$

You can see how the slightest difference in interest rates can

have a pronounced effect on how quickly your money might grow. Of course, interest rates can and do fluctuate, and taxes can take a chunk, too—so that's why it's important to stress this is only a rough approximation. Also, note that the hypothetical illustrations are not predictions of investment performance; investment principal and interest are not guaranteed and are subject to market fluctuation.

But the larger point to make is that the sooner you start an investing strategy, the sooner you can put your money to work for you.

Abraham Dugal is a registered financial advisor with Allen Insurance and Financial, 31 Chestnut St., Camden, Maine, 04843. 207-236-8376. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser.

Independence Day Safety Tips

Memorial Day might be the unofficial start of summer, but Independence Day is when the season truly kicks into high gear. July 4 is a holiday that has something for everyone, whether you like to host (or attend) backyard barbecues, get out on the water or just hang out at home and watch the “bombs” bursting in air once the sun sets.

As you celebrate America this year, however, keep safety in mind – those fireworks aren't the only holiday staple that can be dangerous.

Along with using plenty of sunblock and staying hydrated, follow these tips to help ensure that you, your loved ones and your friends all have a great Fourth.

Food Safety

Whether you're hosting a gathering or attending one, you'll want to make sure the food you're serving – and eating – is safe. The following U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines can help:

Cook food thoroughly. Steaks, chops and roasts (beef, pork or lamb) should have a minimum internal temperature of 145 degrees Fahrenheit before being removed from the heat source. Ground meats need to be at 160 degrees and poultry at 165.

Keep hot food hot and cold food cold. You can keep cooked meats warm by placing them to the side of the grill rack, in a warm oven or in a chafing dish. Place dishes holding cold foods on ice.

Bringing food to the party? Use an insulated cooler with ice or ice packs to minimize the growth of bacteria.

On the Road

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the July 4 holiday period ranks as the nation's deadliest in terms of people killed by drunk drivers. So, if you're heading somewhere to enjoy the fireworks or just driving to a friend's get-together, plan ahead: Have a designated driver or don't drink at all.

On the Water

Spending the holiday on a boat? Lucky you. Just make sure all the equipment is operating properly and that you have the right supplies on board. Here are two more recommendations from the Coast Guard:

If you're driving the boat, don't drink or use drugs. That should go without saying, but it's still a problem – alcohol use is involved in about a third of all recreational boating deaths. Everyone needs a life jacket. A boat needs a Coast Guard-approved life jacket for each person aboard. Kids need their own

– adult-sized jackets will not work for them.

Fireworks

Thousands of people are hurt each year by fireworks. In the month around the July 4 holiday, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 240 people go to the emergency room daily with a fireworks-related injury. Don't be one of them. Check out these quick tips, along with our fireworks safety post from last year, for some general guidelines:

- Find a safe place, and be prepared. Always have a bucket of water or a garden hose at the ready. And, never point fireworks at a person, animal, home, tree or car.
- Make sure adults are present. Kids should never play with fireworks.
- Don't stand too close. The most injured body parts in fireworks accidents are the hands and fingers (36 percent), head, face and ears (22 percent) and eyes (16 percent), the commission says. All are pretty important, don't you think?

While these tips are great, perhaps the best thing about them is this: You can follow them and still have a wonderful holiday with family and friends. Here's to America – and to you!

From our partners at Safeco.

Brandy Schofield Earns

Consumer Directed Health Care Certification

✖ Allen Insurance and Financial of Camden is pleased to announce that Brandy Schofield has successfully completed the National Association of Health Insurance Underwriter's Consumer Directed Health Care Certification Course.

The Consumer Directed Health Care Certification provides account manager professionals with strong technical knowledge of the rules and regulations pertaining to various types of consumer directed health care options and proven methods for communicating those options to employers and employees in a compelling way.

Consumer directed health care options, including those for Health Savings Accounts (HSAs), Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) and Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRAs), have opened new opportunities for consumers and created new responsibilities for agents and brokers.

Schofield participated in the NAHU program under the auspices of Allen's in-house education program which emphasizes continuing education for all of the agency's 68 employees.

She is an account manager in Allen Insurance and Financial's insured benefits division.

Jo-Ann

Neal

Earns

BAM

Designation



Jo-Ann Neal

Allen Insurance and Financial of Camden is pleased to announce that Jo-Ann Neal has successfully completed the National Association of Health Insurance Underwriter's Benefits Account Manager Certification Course.

The Benefits Account Manager Certification provides account manager professionals with an understanding of the complex and critical role an account manager plays in the health and benefits arena.

Neal participated in the NAHU program under the auspices of Allen's in-house education program which emphasizes continuing education for all of the agency's 68 employees.

Neal is an account manager in Allen Insurance and Financial's insured benefits division.

Neal joined the company in 2013 and works with clients on group benefits. She also assists individuals enrolling in Medicare and individual health insurance.