



RRB News

U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

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RRB Will Mail New Medicare Cards

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) will send new Medicare cards to its beneficiaries in the coming weeks. The primary benefit of the new cards is that it makes identity theft much less likely, since they will no longer include the beneficiary's social security number.

This initiative results from the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015, which required the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to develop a new card that does not contain an individual's social security number. By improperly obtaining someone's social security number, a dishonest individual can more easily commit acts of fraud and identity theft in the beneficiary's name.

Instead, the new Medicare cards will contain a Medicare number. This will be a randomly assigned 11-digit combination of numbers and upper-case letters. In addition, the new cards will no longer indicate the beneficiary's gender.

At the time they receive their new Medicare card, people will be instructed to safely and securely destroy their old Medicare card, and to keep their new Medicare number confidential. The new card and number will not affect Medicare benefits, and CMS has been working with medical providers to ensure a smooth transition to this new system.

The one exception involves people enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan, also known as Medicare Part C. These individuals will continue to use their plan's identification card for access to Medicare benefits, as these cards already have a unique identification number that is not the social security number.

The RRB will mail the new Medicare cards to about 450,000 beneficiaries in early June. CMS is also beginning to mail new cards to its much larger group of non-railroad beneficiaries that same month, but will stagger them over a 12-month period.

(More)

If a railroad Medicare beneficiary has a lost or damaged Medicare card, they can request a new one by calling the RRB's toll-free number (1-877-772-5772) or going to the Benefit Online Services section of the agency's website at **www.rrb.gov**. They can also print out a new card at home by setting up an online account at **www.mymedicare.gov**. This feature will be available after their new card has been mailed.

If people have questions or need additional information about this initiative, they can access a web page developed by CMS on the subject at **www.cms.gov/newcard**.

Note: A sample of the [new Medicare card](#) can be accessed at this link.

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An independent Federal agency based in Chicago, the RRB pays almost \$12.6 billion a year in benefits under the Federal Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts covering the nation's railroad workers and their families.