

# **Medicare Fraud Prevention Week 2024**

## **How to Prevent Medicare Fraud**

Medicare fraud is a serious problem. Medicare loses an estimated \$60 billion each year to fraud, errors, and abuse. Every day, these issues affect people across the country and can lead to identity theft and cost you money. The good news? Some simple tips can help you protect yourself.

### **Watch for warning signs of a scam.**

- Unsolicited calls, emails, or visits – someone contacting you out of the blue, claiming to be from Medicare and offering free services.
- Requests for personal information – a demand for your Medicare number, Social Security number, or other personal information.
- Pressure to act quickly – any threat that you'll lose benefits or face other consequences if you don't comply with a deadline, often by paying or providing personal information.
- Billings with errors – charges for services or supplies that weren't ordered, were never received, or that Medicare already covered.
- Suspicious websites or mailings – fake websites created to look like official ones but that have inconsistencies, errors, or other odd elements.

### **Reduce your risk.**

- Only share your Medicare and Social Security numbers with people you trust.
- Carry your Medicare card only when you need it.
- Keep a record of all your medical visits and procedures.
- Carefully review Medicare statements for mistakes and charges you don't recognize.
- Trust your instincts and report any suspected fraud.

### **Ask for help.**

If you have questions about how to protect yourself, need to report fraud, or want help determining whether you've been a victim, Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) can help.

SMP provides free, unbiased, one-on-one assistance to Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers. SMP has offices in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Local team members teach people how to prevent fraud, assist beneficiaries with billing errors and disputes, and help to report suspected fraud to the correct state and federal agencies. SMP is a national program of the Administration for Community Living, an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The most effective way to combat fraud is to prevent it from happening. Discover more prevention resources and find your local SMP at [smpresource.org](https://smpresource.org).