



ASK SHIP

YOUR MONTHLY MEDICARE Q&A

LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

Q: I have considered volunteering in my area. My neighbor is a SHIP Volunteer. Is SHIP still accepting volunteers during the COVID pandemic?

A: During the COVID pandemic, SHIP needs volunteers more than ever! SHIP has taken efforts to ensure the safety of all of our volunteers and clients, such as offering a variety of ways to get SHIP counseling virtually, by phone, or at a safe distance.

So, what is SHIP and what do counselors actually do?

SHIP, the State Health Insurance Assistance Program, is a free and impartial counseling program for people with Medicare. SHIP is provided by the Administration on Community Living and the Indiana Department of Insurance. We are part of a federal network of State Health Insurance Assistance Programs located in every state. **All of our services are free.**

SHIP offers gratifying volunteer opportunities for hundreds of people across Indiana. We provide services through many channels: seminars, local community training, one-on-one counseling, public speaking, publications, videos and more.

SHIP is driven by volunteers who are committed to helping people with Medicare determine the best healthcare choices for their individual situations and to be good consumers of Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Part D drug coverage, long term care financing, and low-income assistance programs.

SHIP has nearly 100 sites throughout the state of Indiana and offers its volunteers choices on how they would like to help. Personal Counseling

includes direct discussion with Medicare beneficiaries about their individual situations and may include review of personal information, such as Medicare Summary Notices, billing statements, and other related financial and health documents. This can take place on-site or by phone.

Our Special Events and Presentations aim to educate through presentations, health fairs, and other events geared toward Medicare recipients.

To become a SHIP counselor, you must:

- Complete a 30-hour training either virtually or in-person (as attendance and safety permit).
- Complete volunteer shadowing
- Have a desire to help Medicare Beneficiaries in your community.

SHIP is a free, unbiased counseling program provided by the Indiana State Department of Insurance.

- Participate in regular local in-service training sessions (usually two half-day sessions per year)
- NOT be affiliated with (i.e., employed by, or in a position to sell) any insurance product, agency, company or service
- Make a minimum one-year commitment to SHIP
- Be willing to assure complete confidentiality to every client
- Complete required paperwork documenting each contact

If you are interested in becoming a SHIP volunteer, or have questions related to Medicare, call SHIP at 1-800-452-4800, 1-866-846-0139 TDD or online at www.medicare.in.gov. You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.

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