



May 2018 Fraud Prevention Fact

Distribution of the new Medicare cards with unique numbers is starting. However, we probably will not receive any replacement cards in Missouri for several months. Federal officials are being a bit vague about exactly when the cards are coming because of the potential for scammers staking out mailboxes and stealing the cards. Missouri is in the last group of states in the schedule to receive the cards, so you need to be patient. It will be at least June and probably later. However, there are a couple of things you can do to get ready. One is to make sure that your address is up to date with the Social Security Administration so that you receive your card when it's mailed. If you are an Internet user, you can establish an account on the My Medicare.gov website. If you set up that account, you can monitor the progress of the card distribution state by state. When it's time for Missouri's distribution, you can set your Medicare account to alert you when your card is actually mailed.

Here are a few things you do NOT want to do: Do NOT worry if a neighbor, relative or friend gets his card before you do. They are NOT being mailed according to ZIP codes etc. Do NOT give anyone your personal information over the phone. Medicare will NOT call you to request your Medicare number or any other information. Do NOT believe anybody who tells you that they can get your card faster if you pay them a fee. That is NOT going to happen and you will waste your money. Do NOT believe an insurance agent who tells you that she can get your card faster if you do business with her. That agent probably wants to get your ear to try to sell you an Advantage or Medicare supplement plan.

As always, report suspected Medicare fraud to the Missouri SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) at (888) 515-6565.

This project was supported, in part by grant number 90MP0204, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living policy.