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## PRESS RELEASE

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# IL Department on Aging to Offer Enrollment Assistance for Medicare Eligible Illinois Residents

*Virtual 'Welcome to Medicare Fair' Open for Registration Now Through June 21<sup>st</sup>*

**Springfield, IL** – The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) today announced it will assist eligible residents navigate the complexities of Medicare and avoid late enrollment penalties through the department's virtual 'Welcome to Medicare Fair'. IDoA's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) is partnering with the SHIP National Technical Assistance Center on Wednesday, June 23, 2021 from 2:00 - 6:00 p.m. to provide persons ages 60 and older and persons with disabilities ages 18-59, local, trusted, and unbiased Medicare help in safe and socially distanced ways.

This free virtual event will offer general sessions with expert presenters on Medicare eligibility, enrollment, costs, and coverage options. SHIP experts will explain Medicare coverage options and how Medicare works with other insurances, such as employer insurance, Medigap supplemental insurance, and retiree insurance, and state Medicaid. General sessions will offer subtitles in English and a live transcript in Spanish. There is an Illinois state-specific virtual exhibit that can be accessed at any time during the event. Pre-recorded videos, educational materials, and a chat feature will be available during the fair that can assist with individual Medicare enrollment questions. [Click here for more information](#), the agenda, and to register for the event. You may also register at <https://www2.illinois.gov/aging/AboutUs/calendar/Pages/Medicare-Virtual-Fair.aspx>. Registration is limited, and you must register by Monday, June 21, 2021.

IDoA's SHIP Program is part of the national SHIP network, funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Office of Healthcare Information and Counseling. The State Health Insurance Assistance Programs share a national mission: to empower, educate, and assist Medicare-eligible individuals, their families, and caregivers through objective outreach, counseling, and training to make informed health insurance decisions that optimize access to care and benefits.

"With 147 Medicare Advantage plans available, and 30 stand-alone Part D Prescription drug plans, there are many different options to choose from, all of which can be overwhelming and confusing," **said Paula Basta, Director of IDoA.** "Our SHIP counselors are ready to help you make sense of the complicated Medicare system and to make the best choices for your healthcare as we prioritize planning for tomorrow."

Medicare assistance is always available. To find out more about IDoA's SHIP Program, visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/aging/ship>, call 1-800-252-8966, or email SHIP at [Agging.SHIP@illinois.gov](mailto:Agging.SHIP@illinois.gov).

SHIP is not affiliated with any insurance company, and counselors do not sell or solicit any type of insurance. SHIP counselors work in the field to help seniors and people with disabilities on Medicare understand the options available to them. They also educate and answer questions about Medicare plans and options.

Respect for yesterday. Support for today. Planning for tomorrow.

[www.illinois.gov/aging](http://www.illinois.gov/aging)

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel you have been discriminated against, call the Senior Helpline at 1-800-252-8966; 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)