



ASK SHIP

YOUR MONTHLY MEDICARE Q&A

LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

Q: I was interested in becoming a SHIP Counselor, but then the pandemic began. Is SHIP still offering help with Medicare questions? Are they still looking for new volunteer counselors?

A: Yes! SHIP is still very busy assisting Medicare beneficiaries with the questions. And, yes! SHIP is always looking for new volunteers.

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 more than 100 sites throughout the state of Indiana and more than 425 volunteers.

During COVID, SHIP has modified some of its counseling methods to ensure the safety of our counselors and our clients. SHIP offers its volunteers choices on how they would like to volunteer.

Below are just a few of the volunteer opportunities SHIP offers.

Personal Counseling - 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 with proper distancing and PPE, via virtual meeting, or by phone.

Special Events/Presentations - Educating through presentations, health fairs, and other events geared toward Medicare recipients.

Administrative Support Aide - This role involves such work as copying, filing, data entry, scheduling appointments, and placing phone calls in support of SHIP activities. Volunteers who work in this role do not field questions from the public.

To become a SHIP counselor, you must:

- Complete a 28-hour basic training which includes using a computer (these are currently being held virtually)
- Complete hands-on volunteer shadowing
- Want to help people with Medicare questions in your community
- Attend two regular half-day training sessions per year (these are currently being held virtually)
- 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.