

# Maryland State Health Insurance Assistance Program

## Volunteer Job Descriptions

The Maryland Department of Aging administers the federally funded State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), and Medicare Low Income Subsidy (MIPPA) through grants to the local SHIP offices in every county and Baltimore city. These programs have paid and volunteer staff. Below please find brief descriptions of potential volunteer opportunities throughout the state. Note the descriptions below may vary by local jurisdiction.

### COUNSELOR

Provides free, unbiased, and confidential health benefits counseling to Medicare beneficiaries, their families and caregivers. Counselors educate, advocate, counsel, and empower people to make informed health benefit decisions. Counselors provide in-person and telephone assistance on Medicare hospital insurance, medical services, advantage and prescription drug plans and gap coverage. Counseling may also include discussions about the Medicare Summary Notice, billing statements, grievances, appeals, and fraud. Education and outreach can include “New to Medicare” seminars and primers on health benefits. Counselors are trained to discuss special programs that offer assistance for those who qualify for financial help with Medicare copayments, premiums, deductibles and copays. The position develops Medicare subject matter expertise. Medicare training is provided and a requirement for counselor certification. (This position requires the signing of a confidentiality agreement.)

### MEDICARE PART D COUNSELOR

Seasonal position that supports Medicare Annual Open Enrollment Period activities during October 15 through December 7 each year. This position provides free, unbiased, and confidential decision support for open enrollment topics that include assessment of cost, coverage, customer service, and convenience of health insurance and prescription plans. Counselors may also discuss the Medicare Summary Notice, billing statements, grievances, appeals, and fraud. Counselors can discuss programs designed to assist beneficiaries who qualify for financial help with Medicare copayments, premiums, deductibles and copays. The position develops Medicare Annual Open Enrollment subject matter expertise and assists beneficiaries with making plan comparisons using an online tool. Subject matter training is required. (This position requires the signing of a confidentiality agreement.)

### ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Performs office support that may include file management, follow-up telephone calls, schedules appointments, orders bulk educational materials, and provides logistics support for setting up community education seminars. This position does not require Medicare subject

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matter expertise, therefore does not require certification, and cannot perform Medicare counseling. Previous office administrative support skills are highly recommended, but not required.

## COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS SUPPORT

Preparing and presenting seminars about the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), and its services on Medicare topics to small and large groups, with the opportunity for interaction with the audience during time set aside for Q&A and discussion. The purpose is to empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers with information that increases their understanding of Medicare and how to prevent, detect and report health care fraud, error, and abuse. (Exhibits, Fairs, Libraries, Community, etc.)

## DATA ENTRY SUPPORT

Involves entering client contact and presentation data, timely and accurately into a national data collecting system on a regular basis. Data entry skills are recommended, however, training will be provided. (This position requires the signing of a confidentiality agreement.)

For additional information on volunteer opportunities, contact:

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