



Maryland State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Volunteer Job Descriptions

The Maryland Department of Aging administers the federally funded State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), and Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) through grants to local SHIP offices in every county and Baltimore City. Below please find brief descriptions of potential volunteer opportunities throughout the state. Note the descriptions below may vary by local jurisdiction.

Medicare 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/or telephone assistance on Medicare hospital insurance, medical services, Medicare Advantage, and prescription drug plans. 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. Medicare training is provided and a requirement for counselor certification. This role also requires the signing of a confidentiality agreement.

Medicare Part D Counselor

Seasonal position that supports Medicare Annual Open Enrollment Period activities from October 15th through December 7th 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 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. Training is provided and a requirement for counselor certification. This role also requires the signing of a confidentiality agreement.

Community Presentation Support

Preparing and presenting seminars about the SHIP services and topics related to Medicare for small and large groups. The purpose of this role is to empower Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers with information that increases their understanding of Medicare and may include how to prevent, detect and report health care fraud, error, and abuse. Presentations may involve sharing information at a fairs, tables/exhibits, public libraries, senior centers, etc.

Administrative Support

Performs office support that may include file management, follow-up telephone calls, scheduling appointments, ordering bulk educational materials, and/or providing logistical support for setting up community education seminars. This position does not provide counseling and thus does require Medicare subject matter expertise nor counselor certification. Previous office administrative support skills are highly recommended, but not required.

Data Entry Support

Involves entering client contact and presentation data, timely and accurately into a national data collection system on a regular basis. Data entry skills are recommended, however, not required. Training will be provided, and this position requires the signing of a confidentiality agreement.)

For additional information on volunteer opportunities, please complete the [SHIP Volunteer Interest Form](#) or contact Julia Schreiber at julia.schreiber@maryland.gov or call 410-767-2077.