



October 15, 2018

**Subject: Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefits ~ Creditable Coverage Notice**

Dear ACERA Health Plan Participant:

The Medicare Modernization Act (MMA) requires entities to annually notify Medicare eligible policyholders whether their prescription drug coverage is “creditable coverage”, which means the coverage is expected to pay on average as much as the standard Medicare prescription drug coverage. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires all plan sponsors, such as ACERA, of health plans that provide prescription drug benefits to provide a Certificate of Creditable Coverage to all plan participants prior to the Part D enrollment period. Due to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), the open enrollment period for Medicare Part D is now from October 15 through December 7 in 2018.

Enclosed is your Medicare Part D Creditable Coverage Notice (Notice) in the CMS Model Notice format, which was last updated on April 1, 2011. Please read it carefully and keep it in a safe place. If you happen to need another copy of this Notice in the future, you can contact ACERA for one.

ACERA has coordinated Medicare Part D coverage with the Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage Plan and Medicare Part D Plans (Plans) through Via Benefits. If you are enrolled in one of these Plans, you do not need to do anything regarding Medicare Part D. The prescription drug coverage for these Plans are equal to or richer than the benefits provided by Medicare drug plans.

If you are NOT eligible to enroll in Medicare Part D now, you may disregard this Notice. However, there may be a time in the future (approaching Medicare eligibility) when you or your dependents may need to take action. Should this occur, it will be important for you to have the enclosed Notice so you do not incur a penalty. **A lifetime penalty charge may go up by at least 1% of the Medicare base beneficiary premium per month for each month that you or your dependents fail to enroll within 63 continuous days of first becoming eligible for Medicare Part D or if there is a lapse in coverage. In addition, you may have to wait until the following October to join.** *Note: Late Enrollment Penalty (LEP) is the late charge assessed by Medicare to ACERA Medicare contracts. These charges will be assessed to you. However, by having this Notice to provide at enrollment, you will not be charged a penalty if you enroll timely and have no lapse in coverage.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathy Foster".

Kathy Foster  
Assistant Chief Executive Officer

Enclosure

# CREDITABLE COVERAGE NOTICE

## Important Notice from Alameda County Employees' Retirement Association (ACERA) About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with ACERA and about your options under Medicare's prescription drug coverage. This information can help you decide whether or not you want to join a Medicare drug plan. If you are considering joining, you should compare your current coverage, including which drugs are covered at what cost, with the coverage and costs of the plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area. Information about where you can get help to make decisions about your prescription drug coverage is at the end of this notice.

There are two important things you need to know about your current coverage and Medicare's prescription drug coverage:

1. Medicare prescription drug coverage became available in 2006 to everyone with Medicare. You can get this coverage if you join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or join a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO) that offers prescription drug coverage. All Medicare drug plans provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans may also offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.
2. ACERA has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by Kaiser Permanente is, on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out as much as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage pays and is therefore considered Creditable Coverage. Because your existing coverage is Creditable Coverage, you can keep this coverage and not pay a higher premium (a penalty) if you later decide to join a Medicare drug plan.

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### When Can You Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

You can join a Medicare drug plan when you first become eligible for Medicare and each year from October 15th through December 7th.

However, if you lose your current creditable prescription drug coverage, through no fault of your own, you will also be eligible for a two (2) month Special Enrollment Period (SEP) to join a Medicare drug plan.

### What Happens To Your Current Coverage If You Decide to Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

If you decide to join a Medicare drug plan, your current ACERA coverage will terminate.

If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your current ACERA coverage, be aware that you and your dependents will be able to get this coverage back.

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CMS Form 10182-CC

Updated April 1, 2011

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0938-0990. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 8 hours per response initially, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to CMS, 7500 Security Boulevard, Attn: PRA Reports Clearance Officer, Mail Stop C4-26-05, Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850.

### **When Will You Pay A Higher Premium (Penalty) To Join A Medicare Drug Plan?**

You should also know that if you drop or lose your current coverage with ACERA and don't join a Medicare drug plan within 63 continuous days after your current coverage ends, you may pay a higher premium (a penalty) to join a Medicare drug plan later.

If you go 63 continuous days or longer without creditable prescription drug coverage, your monthly premium may go up by at least 1% of the Medicare base beneficiary premium per month for every month that you did not have that coverage. For example, if you go nineteen months without creditable coverage, your premium may consistently be at least 19% higher than the Medicare base beneficiary premium. You may have to pay this higher premium (a penalty) as long as you have Medicare prescription drug coverage. In addition, you may have to wait until the following October to join.

### **For More Information About This Notice Or Your Current Prescription Drug Coverage...**

Contact the person listed below for further information or call ACERA at (510) 628-3000, Press 1 or 1-800-838-1932, Press 1. **NOTE:** You'll get this notice each year. You will also get it before the next period you can join a Medicare drug plan, and if this coverage through ACERA changes. You also may request a copy of this notice at any time.

### **For More Information About Your Options Under Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage...**

More detailed information about Medicare plans that offer prescription drug coverage is in the "Medicare & You" handbook. You'll get a copy of the handbook in the mail every year from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare drug plans.

For more information about Medicare prescription drug coverage:

- Visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see the inside back cover of your copy of the "Medicare & You" handbook for their telephone number) for personalized help
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

If you have limited income and resources, extra help paying for Medicare prescription drug coverage is available. For information about this extra help, visit Social Security on the web at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), or call them at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

**Remember: Keep this Creditable Coverage notice. If you decide to join one of the Medicare drug plans, you may be required to provide a copy of this notice when you join to show whether or not you have maintained creditable coverage and, therefore, whether or not you are required to pay a higher premium (a penalty).**

Date: 09/30/2018  
Name of Entity/Sender: Alameda County Employees' Retirement Association  
Contact - - Position/Office: Kathy Foster, Assistant Chief Executive Officer  
Address: 475 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1000, Oakland, CA 94612-1900  
Phone Number: (510) 628-3000, Press 1 or 1-800-838-1900, Press 1

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