

# Public Benefits *That Can Help:* Alaska

**T**he AARP Foundation wants you to have the information you need to apply for low- and no-cost programs, including public benefits that can help older Americans:

- save money on prescription drugs.
- pay doctors' bills.
- reduce property taxes, and
- cover other basic living costs.

This fact sheet describes the programs in your state, helps you decide which are right for you, and tells you how to sign up. Income guidelines, eligibility requirements, and telephone numbers are subject to change.

## Paying for Health Care and Prescription Drugs

### Medicare

**Benefit:** Health insurance that helps pay for preventive care, doctors visits, hospital stays and prescription drugs.

**Who can apply:** People who are 65 and older, and younger people with disabilities or kidney failure.

**How to apply:** Call the Social Security Administration toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** and tell the operator where you live. You can also log on to [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) and type in your zip code.

For information about the Medicare prescription drug coverage, call **1-800-Medicare** ([www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)) or the SeniorCare Senior Information Hotline toll-free at **1-800-478-6065** (statewide) or **907-269-3690** (in Anchorage).

For enrollment assistance, you can also call Alaska's SeniorCare Program toll-free at **1-888-352-4150** (statewide).

### Medicare Savings Programs

**Benefit:** Pays for some of the costs of Medicare, including the Part B premium, deductibles, and copays. How much you get depends on your income and assets.

**Who can apply:** People who get Medicare and earn less than \$1,379/month for one person or \$1,857/month for two people.

**How to apply:** Call the Alaska Division of Public Assistance at **1-888-804-6330** or **907-269-5777** (in Anchorage). You can also log on to <http://health.hss.state.ak.us/dhcs/Medicaid>.



## Medicare Rx Extra Help

**Benefit:** Pays for the monthly fee and deductible for Medicare prescription drug coverage, and lowers prescription drug co-payments.

**Who can apply:** People who get Medicare and have combined savings, investments, and real estate (other than your home) that are not worth more than \$11,500 if you are single, or \$23,000 if you are married and living with your spouse.

**How to apply:** Call the Social Security Administration toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** and ask for the Medicare Rx Extra Help application. You can also log on to [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) and click on the Medicare section.

For application assistance, call the Alaska State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) at **1-800-478-6065** or log on to <http://hss.state.ak.us/dsds/medicare.htm>.

## Alaska SeniorCare Rx Program

**Benefit:** Pays for some or all prescription drug costs, and may cover costs of the Medicare prescription drug coverage. There are two benefits: cash assistance of \$120 a month and the prescription drug benefit that pays for the costs of the Medicare prescription drug program.

**Who can apply:** Alaska residents who are 65 or older with gross annual income at or below \$16,133 for individuals or \$21,641 for couples and with assets of \$6,000 for one person and \$9,000 for a married couple are eligible for the cash benefit. Older adults who are not eligible for the cash benefit and have annual incomes at

or below \$20,913 for one person or \$28,053 for two people and with assets below \$50,000 for one person and below \$100,000 for a married couple, may receive assistance paying for the costs of Medicare prescription drug coverage.

**How to apply:** Call the Alaska SeniorCare Program office toll-free at **1-800-478-6065**. You can also log on to <http://hss.state.ak.us/dsds/seniorcaresio.htm>.

## Medicaid

**Benefit:** Provides medical coverage for hospital care, health center and clinical services, doctor care, nurse care, lab and x-ray services and nursing homes.

**Who can apply:** People who are 65 or older, blind or disabled with few resources, and incomes lower than \$1,156 per month for one person and \$1,713 per month for a couple.

**How to apply:** Call the Alaska Division of Public Assistance at **1-888-804-6330** or **907-269-5777** (in Anchorage). You can also log on to <http://health.hss.state.ak.us/dhcs/Medicaid>.

## Help with Your Home

### State Property Tax Assistance

**Benefit:** Alaska has two programs that may give you cash assistance to pay taxes, allow you to delay your property tax payment, or forgive some of the property taxes you already owe.

**Who can apply:** Low-income homeowners who are older adults, veterans, or who have disabilities.

**How to apply:** Call the Alaska State Assessor's Office at **907-269-4605**. You can also email the state assessor at [Steve\\_VanSant@commerce.state.ak.us](mailto:Steve_VanSant@commerce.state.ak.us).

## Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

**Benefit:** Pays heating and cooling bills, and some energy-related home repairs.

**Who can apply:** Low-income people with incomes less than \$1,531/month for one person or \$2,063/month for two people.

**How to apply:** Call toll-free **1-888-804-6330** (outside Anchorage) or **907-269-5777** (in Anchorage) or log on to [www.hss.state.ak.us/dpa/programs/hap](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dpa/programs/hap).

## Telephone Assistance

**Benefit:** Helps pay for the cost of basic local telephone services.

**Who can apply:** Qualified older adults with low incomes. You are automatically eligible if you are in one of the following programs: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) General Assistance, Federal Public Housing Assistance/Section 8 Programs, Food Stamps, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Programs, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

**How to apply:** Call your local phone company and tell the sales department that you want to apply for Link-Up or Lifeline. For more information, go to [www.lifelinesupport.org/li/low-income/lifelinesupport](http://www.lifelinesupport.org/li/low-income/lifelinesupport).



## Help Buying Nutritious Food

### Food Stamps

**Benefit:** An EBT card (like a debit card) that you can use like cash to pay for food at most grocery stores.

**Who can apply:** Low-income people 60 and over. If you qualify, the amount of money you receive depends on your total income, family size, and where you live.

**How to apply:** Call the Alaska Office of Public Assistance at **907-465-3347** or call the Alaska Senior Information Office toll-free at **1-800-478-6054**. You can also log on to [www.hss.state.ak.us/dpa/programs/fstamps](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dpa/programs/fstamps).

## Cash

### Social Security

**Benefit:** Monthly checks. How much you get depends on how long you have worked, how much money you earned, where you worked, and your age when you began getting benefits.

**Who can apply:** Workers who are 62 or older, people with disabilities, or the spouse and children of a deceased or disabled worker who paid into the Social Security program.

**How to apply:** You can find your local Social Security office by calling **1-800-772-1213** toll-free and telling the operator where you live. Or, you can log on to **www.socialsecurity.gov** and type in your zip code. You must make an appointment at your local Social Security office to apply.

### Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

**Benefit:** Monthly checks.

**Who can apply:** People who are 65 and older, disabled, or blind and have very low income and assets.

**How to apply:** You can find your local Social Security office by calling **1-800-772-1213** toll-free and telling the operator where you live. Or, you can log on to **www.socialsecurity.gov** and type in your zip code. You must make an appointment at your local Social Security office to apply.

## Other Information

### BenefitsCheckUp

There may be additional programs for which you may qualify. To find out if you are eligible, log on to **www.benefitscheckup.org**.

### Eldercare Locator

Connects older Americans and their caregivers with sources of information on senior services. Call **1-800-677-1116** or log on to **www.eldercare.gov**.

### Senior Information Hotline

Your one-stop source for senior resources in Alaska. Call **1-866-465-3165** or log on to **www.hss.state.ak.us/dsds**.

### Legal Help

A toll-free hotline staffed by attorneys who provide legal advice on a variety of issues to qualified older adults. Call **1-800-478-9431** or **907-272-9431** (in Anchorage). You can log on to the website for the Alaska Legal Services Corporation at **www.alsc-law.org**. You can also contact Alaska's ElderLaw Project at **907-272-9431**.

The AARP Foundation is AARP's affiliated charity. Foundation programs provide security, protection and empowerment for older persons in need. Low-income older workers receive the job training and placement they need to re-join the workforce. Free tax preparation is provided for low- and moderate-income individuals, with special attention to those 60 and older. The Foundation's litigation staff protects the legal rights of older Americans in critical health, long-term care, consumer and employment situations. Additional programs provide information, education and services to ensure that people over 50 lead lives of independence, dignity and purpose. Foundation programs are funded by grants, tax-deductible contributions and AARP.



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