

individual's premium and right to enroll in a general enrollment period if that is advantageous to the individual.

**§ 407.15 General enrollment period.**

(a) Except as specified in paragraph (b) of this section, the general enrollment period is January through March of each calendar year.

(b) An unlimited general enrollment period existed between April 1 and September 30, 1981. Any eligible individual whose initial enrollment period had ended, or whose previous period of entitlement had terminated, could have enrolled or reenrolled during any month of that 6-month period.

**§ 407.17 Automatic enrollment.**

(a) *Who is automatically enrolled.* An individual is automatically enrolled for SMI if he or she:

(1) Resides in the United States, except in Puerto Rico;

(2) Becomes entitled to hospital insurance under any of the provisions set forth in §§ 406.10 through 406.15 of this chapter; and

(3) Does not decline SMI enrollment.

(b) *Opportunity to decline automatic enrollment.* (1) SSA will notify an individual that he or she is automatically enrolled under paragraph (a) of this section and grant the individual a specified period (at least 2 months after the month the notice is mailed) to decline enrollment.

(2) The individual may decline enrollment by submitting to SSA or CMS a signed statement that he or she does not wish SMI.

(3) The statement must be submitted before entitlement begins, or if later, within the time limits set in the notice of enrollment.

**§ 407.18 Determining month of automatic enrollment.**

(a) An individual who is automatically enrolled in SMI under § 407.17 will have the month of enrollment determined in accordance with paragraphs (b) through (f) of this section. The month of enrollment determines the month of entitlement.

(b) An individual is automatically enrolled in the third month of the initial enrollment period if he or she—

(1) Is entitled to social security benefits under section 202 of the Act on the first day of the initial enrollment period;

(2) Is entitled to hospital insurance based on end-stage renal disease; on entitlement to disability benefits as a social security or railroad retirement beneficiary; or on deemed entitlement to disability benefits on the basis of Medicare-qualified government employment; or

(3) Establishes entitlement to hospital insurance by filing an application and meeting all other requirements (as set forth in subpart B of part 406 of this chapter) during the first 3 months of the initial enrollment period.

(c) If an individual establishes entitlement to hospital insurance on the basis of an application filed in the last 4 months of the SMI initial enrollment period, he or she is automatically enrolled for SMI in the month in which the application is filed.

(d) If an individual establishes entitlement to hospital insurance on the basis of an application filed after the SMI initial enrollment period but not during a general enrollment period in effect before April 1, 1981, or after September 30, 1981, he or she is automatically enrolled for SMI on the first day of the next general enrollment period.

(e) If the individual establishes entitlement to hospital insurance on the basis of an application filed during a SMI general enrollment period in effect before April 1, 1981 or after September 30, 1981, he or she is automatically enrolled on the first day of that period.

(f) If an individual established entitlement to hospital insurance on the basis of an application filed during the general enrollment period of April 1, 1981, through September 30, 1981, he or she was automatically enrolled for SMI on the first day of the month in which the application was filed.

**§ 407.20 Special enrollment period related to coverage under group health plans.**

(a) *Terminology*—(1) *Group health plan (GHP) and large group health plan (LGHP).* These terms have the meanings given them in § 411.101 of this chapter except that the “former employee” language of those definitions

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does not apply with respect to SEPs for the reasons specified in § 406.24(a)(3) of this chapter.

(2) *Special enrollment period (SEP).* This term has the meaning set forth in § 406.24(a)(4) of this chapter. In order to use a SEP, an individual must meet the conditions of paragraph (b) and of paragraph (c) or (d) of this section, as appropriate.

(b) *General rule.* All individuals must meet the following conditions:

(1) They are eligible to enroll for SMI on the basis of age or disability, but not on the basis of end-stage renal disease.

(2) When first eligible for SMI coverage (4th month of their initial enrollment period), they were covered under a GHP or LGHP on the basis of current employment status or, if not so covered, they enrolled in SMI during their initial enrollment period; and

(3) For all months thereafter, they maintained coverage under either SMI or a GHP or LGHP. (Generally, if an individual fails to enroll in SMI during any available SEP, he or she is not entitled to any additional SEPs. However, if an individual fails to enroll during a SEP because coverage under the same or a different GHP or LGHP was restored before the end of that particular SEP, that failure to enroll does not preclude additional SEPs.)

(c) *Special rule: Individual age 65 or over.* For an individual who is or was covered under a GHP, coverage must be by reason of the current employment status of the individual or the individual's spouse.

(d) *Special rules: Disabled individual.*<sup>4</sup> Individuals entitled on the basis of disability (but not on the basis of end-stage renal disease) must meet conditions that vary depending on whether they were covered under a GHP or an LGHP.

(1) For a disabled individual who is or was covered under a GHP, coverage must be on the basis of the current employment status of the individual or the individual's spouse.

<sup>4</sup>Under the current statute, the SEP provision applicable to disabled individuals covered under an LGHP expires on September 1998. Unless Congress changes that date, the last SEP available under those provisions will begin with June 1998.

(2) For a disabled individual who is or was covered under an LGHP, coverage must be as follows:

(i) Before August 10, 1993, as an “active individual”, that is, as an employee, employer, self-employed individual (such as the employer), individual associated with the employer in a business relationship, or as a member of the family of any of those persons.

(ii) On or after August 10, 1993, by reason of current employment status of the individual or a member of the individual's family.

(e) *Effective date of coverage.* The rule set forth in § 406.24(d) for Medicare Part A applies equally to Medicare Part B.

[61 FR 40346, Aug. 2, 1996]

### § 407.21 Special enrollment period for volunteers outside the United States.

(a) *General rule.* A SEP, as defined in § 406.24(a)(4) of this subchapter, is provided for an individual who does not elect to enroll or to be deemed enrolled in SMI when first eligible, or who terminates SMI enrollment, if the individual meets the following requirements:

(1) The individual is serving as a volunteer outside of the United States in a program that covers at least a 12-month period.

(2) The individual is in a program that is sponsored by an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(3) The individual demonstrates that he or she has health insurance that covers medical services that the individual receives outside of the United States while serving in the program.

(b) *Duration of SEP.* The SEP is the 6-month period beginning on the first day of the month that includes the date that the individual no longer satisfies the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) *Effective date of coverage.* Coverage under a SEP authorized by this section, begins on the first day of the month following the month in which the individual enrolls.

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