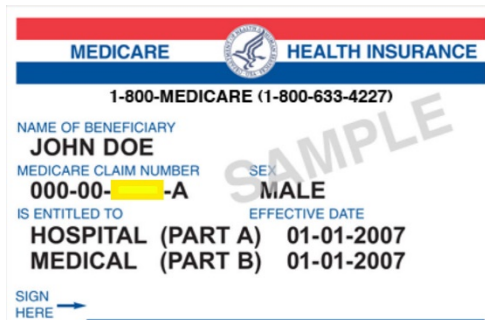


Social Security Numbers will no longer be your Medicare ID!

Everyone is told to always have their Medicare card on them and to never have their Social Security card on them...but they're the same number! If your wallet or purse is stolen; thieves now have access to your Medicare ID, which for most people is the same number as their Social Security Number. With a stolen Social Security Number identity thieves can commit several financial crimes including accessing your Social Security benefits.

To protect Medicare beneficiaries from identity theft former President Obama signed a bill in 2015 to remove Social Security numbers from Medicare cards and issue a new Medicare ID. This bill will begin mailing new Medicare cards in April of 2018 and all beneficiaries will have a new card by December 31st 2019.

One way to protect yourself before you are issued a new card is to make a copy of your current Medicare card and black out the last four digits of your Social Security Number on the card. Keep this card in your wallet instead of your Original Medicare card. Most people can remember the last four digits and this will protect you in case your card gets lost or stolen. Below is an example of a Medicare card with the last for numbers blacked out.



Other ways to protect yourself include only giving personal information such as your Medicare card or Social Security Number to doctors, other health care professionals, and approved Medicare health insurance plans. Never give your personal information to someone calling you over the phone. If you

suspect identity theft, or feel like you gave your personal information to someone you shouldn't have, call your local police department and the Federal Trade Commission's ID Theft Hotline at 877-438-4338. (CMS, 2015, p. 136)



Andrew Vasta
973) 580-4339
www.njmedicarebrokers.com