

*State of Idaho*  
**DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE**

C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER  
Governor

700 West State Street, 3rd Floor  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, Idaho 83720-0043  
Phone (208)334-4250  
FAX # (208)334-4398

WILLIAM W. DEAL  
Director

**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Tricia Carney

208-334-4312

[tricia.carney@doi.idaho.gov](mailto:tricia.carney@doi.idaho.gov)

Cell 208-850-2342

**MEDICARE'S 2013 OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD BEGINS OCTOBER 15**

*Beneficiaries encouraged to review plans now*

BOISE ID (October 11, 2012) – The Senior Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) office of the Idaho Department of Insurance reminds consumers that Medicare open enrollment begins October 15 and runs through December 7.

“Some consumers have received letters from their plan carriers about Medicare coverage changes,” says Department Director Bill Deal. “If you have an agent, please contact that individual with your questions about these changes. Otherwise, contact a SHIBA counselor for assistance.”

Consumers who have received termination letters have up to two months beyond the end of the plan to enroll in a new plan. However, if a choice is not made by December 31, the beneficiary's coverage reverts to Original Medicare without a drug coverage plan.

SHIBA offers free, unbiased counseling to Medicare beneficiaries and urges consumers to seek counseling early so they have plenty of time to make an informed decision and to ensure no breaks in drug coverage. SHIBA provides counseling to Medicare beneficiaries who are disabled and under age 65 as well as to senior citizens.

Contact SHIBA by calling toll free 800-247-4422. SHIBA offices are located in Boise, Coeur d'Alene, Twin Falls and Pocatello.

**About the Department of Insurance**

The Idaho Department of Insurance has been regulating the business of insurance in Idaho since 1901. The mission of the Department is to equitably, effectively and efficiently administer the Idaho Insurance Code and the International Fire Code. For more information, visit [www.doi.idaho.gov](http://www.doi.idaho.gov).

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