

## Increased co-payment maximums for government-sponsored drug plans

To offset the rising cost of government-sponsored drug coverage, the maximum prescription drug co-payment for Albertans with Coverage for Seniors and Non-Group Coverage will increase from \$25 to \$35. This increase will happen over a 10-month period.

While some beneficiaries utilizing high-cost drugs will see an increase, many prescription co-payments will stay below \$25. The co-payment maximum has not increased since 1994.

The government's cost to provide this coverage has been steadily increasing. The cost of both Coverage for Seniors and Non-Group Coverage increases by nearly 7% annually on average. The Government of Alberta needs to ensure these plans are financially sustainable so they can continue offering this coverage in the years to come.

### How will this work

Beginning July 1, 2025, the maximum co-payment will increase by \$1 each month until it reaches \$35 on April 1, 2026.

### How will this affect you

Alberta Blue Cross® will update its system, ensuring you do not have to take any action. Pharmacies will be able to input information as usual and the new maximum co-payment will be automatically calculated.

Pharmacies may receive questions from beneficiaries after the announcement. The Alberta government has created a fact sheet that pharmacies can download, print and provide to concerned beneficiaries. This document is available on page 2.

### What can Albertans do

All Albertans are encouraged to consult with their pharmacist about ways to reduce their costs, such as obtaining prescription quantities of up to 100 days, when possible.

Eligible low-income seniors can apply for financial assistance with their co-payments through the Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program. In case there are questions about the program, please call the Alberta Supports Contact Centre (1-877-644-9992).

### Questions?

Please contact an Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations contact centre representative at 1-800-361-9632.

### Links

Bulletin: <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=93447913D2B63-9523-604D-A538C1BEE1D6197B>

For assistance with benefit or claim inquiries, please contact an Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations contact centre representative at

780-498-8370 (Edmonton and area)

403-294-4041 (Calgary and area)

1-800-361-9632 (toll free)

FAX 780-498-8406 (Edmonton and area)

FAX 1-877-305-9911 (toll free)

Alberta Blue Cross offers online access to current Pharmacy Benefacts and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct-bill drug claims.

Visit [ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php](https://ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php)



## Maximum co-payment increase Coverage for Seniors and Non-Group Coverage

The Alberta government offers Coverage for Seniors to Albertans 65 years and older, and Non-Group Coverage to Albertans younger than 65 years. This important drug coverage ensures that essential medications remain affordable to Albertans.

Changes to the cost of this coverage will come into effect July 1, 2025.

### Co-payment

A co-payment is the portion of the prescription cost paid by Albertans who have Coverage for Seniors and Non-Group Coverage. The cost is paid to the pharmacy when you have your prescription filled.

The government covers the remaining cost of the prescription.

### Maximum co-payment

The maximum co-payment is the highest amount you are required to pay out-of-pocket for each eligible prescription. Once the maximum co-payment is paid, the government covers the remaining cost of the medication.

### Maximum co-payment increase

The maximum co-payment for a prescription will increase from \$25 to \$35 for Albertans with Coverage for Seniors and Non-Group Coverage, beginning July 1, 2025.

This increase will be implemented gradually. Beginning July 1, 2025, the maximum co-payment will increase by \$1 each month until it reaches \$35 on April 1, 2026. With this change, you will pay 30 per cent of the prescription cost up to a maximum of \$35.

Co-payments have not increased since 1994.

Premiums are not being increased as part of this change.

### Average prescription co-payment

The average prescription co-payment is currently \$11.30 for Albertans with Non-Group Coverage, and \$8.44 for those with Coverage for Seniors.

It is anticipated these average co-payments will increase to \$14.31 and \$9.87, respectively.

### Reasons for the change

Albertans rely on drug coverage to keep their essential medications affordable.

But, the government's cost to provide this coverage is rising significantly. The cost of these plans is increasing by 7 per cent annually on average.

Changes are needed to ensure this drug coverage is financially sustainable and the government can continue to offer drug coverage to Albertans.

### Available support

Low-income seniors can apply for financial assistance with their co-payment costs through the Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program. Please contact the Alberta Supports Contact Centre at 1-877-644-9992.

Albertans with government-sponsored low-income plans do not pay co-payments. They are not affected by this change.

All Albertans are encouraged to consult with their pharmacist about ways in which their costs can be reduced, for example, by obtaining up to 100 days of a prescription when possible

**More information**

Read the [Bulletin](#)

Contact Alberta Blue Cross:

Phone: 1-800-661-6995

Website: <https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/contact-us.php>