

## **What if you retire after age 65, or before age 65 and your earned coverage from active work hours continues to cover you past your 65th birthday?**

If you still have coverage *earned from when you were actively working* you should refuse Medicare enrollment in Part B or Part D. Part A (hospital insurance) will be available automatically at age 65 if you have worked at least 40 quarters under social security, but it's still important to let your medical providers know that Local 4 Health & Welfare is your primary insurance. Part B (medical insurance) and Part D (prescription insurance) requires that you elect these Plans and pay a separate premium for each.

Social Security may advise you to sign up for Medicare when you first turn 65 or else face a 10% per year premium penalty tax. This tax will not apply as long as you have maintained continuous *earned* health coverage and you apply for Medicare coverage three months before your Local 4 Health & Welfare coverage ends. Ask Social Security for the form, "Request for Employment Information" which will be completed by the Fund Office. The Fund Office will document that your Health & Welfare coverage is based on your active work hours, even if you have already retired.

If you experience any problem with Social Security allowing you to enroll after age 65 without charging you a penalty, refer them to HI 00805.266. This section of the Social Security Program Operations Manual addresses the "Special Enrollment" that is available to large group health plans, including union health and welfare plans. This Special Enrollment opportunity means you will not be penalized with an increased monthly premium if you enroll in Medicare Part B or Medicare Part D more than eight months after you first become eligible at age 65. You must, however, have *earned* coverage with Local 4 Health & Welfare or be covered by another medical plan with no breaks in coverage.

If you miss the three month enrollment period, you may sign up for Medicare Part B and D within eight months after your Local 4 Health & Welfare Plan coverage ends. However, your Medicare coverage may not be effective until the first of the month following approval of your application and you may experience a gap without medical coverage.