

Public Information Template and Style Guide

**For Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors
(SHIBA) sponsors and partners**

Table of contents

Introduction	1
Style issues and rules	1
Contact information	2
Translations	2
Opinion-Editorial stories	2
Advertising	2
Approved language	2
Using SHIBA features and benefits	4
Templates	
News releases	6
Volunteer recruitment news release template	7
Medicare Part D news release template	8
Public service announcements	9
Newsletter articles	10
Web-related information	
Web link guidelines	13

Introduction

The purpose of this template and style guide is to provide you with the tools you need to produce public information materials that represent and market SHIBA services, while following SHIBA policies and guidelines.

Style issues and rules

Use of program name

- First time it appears: Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA)
- After the first time, refer to it as: SHIBA

Use of agency name

- Use proper name: Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner
- May use: “a free, unbiased service of the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner”
- May also use: “This free, unbiased, and confidential service is sponsored by the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner.”

Use of mission statement

When you use the SHIBA mission statement, you must use it in its entirety:

SHIBA provides free, unbiased information about health care coverage and access to help improve the lives of all Washington state residents. We cultivate community commitment through partnership, service and volunteering.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

- If you use the materials from the pages in this *Public Information Template and Style Guide* in complete form, you do **not** need to get approval from the SHIBA communications coordinator.
- If you want to make changes or additions, or you only want to use partial information from these pages to develop your own promotional materials, you must get approval from the SHIBA communications coordinator.*
- If you want to create your own content for promotional materials and use the name of SHIBA or the Office of Insurance Commissioner, you must also get approval from the SHIBA communications coordinator.*

**Please allow 10 business days for review and approval by the SHIBA communications coordinator. To contact the communications coordinator, call 360-725-7238 or send an email to donnaw@oic.wa.gov.*

Contact information

- The toll-free Insurance Consumer Hotline is: **1-800-562-6900**
 - The Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) home page is: www.insurance.wa.gov (you can reach the SHIBA Web pages from here)
 - The direct link to the SHIBA Web page is: <http://www.insurance.wa.gov/shiba>
-

Translations

Policy

- An official state translation vendor must translate all SHIBA publications or outreach materials.
 - If SHIBA determines a document should be translated into languages other than English and resources are available, SHIBA staff will arrange document translations (after we approve the English version).
 - We may request a sponsor or partner to review the translated document before we release it to the public.
-

Opinion-editorial stories

While representing SHIBA or the Office of the Insurance Commissioner, **sponsors and volunteers should not participate in opinion-editorial stories.** SHIBA representatives (sponsors, volunteers, and SHIBA staff) need to remain impartial and unbiased to prevent implied or unintentional endorsement of an issue or entity.

Advertising

If you plan to place an ad in the newspaper or on the radio, you must first get approval for the ad content by the SHIBA communications coordinator at the Office of the Insurance Commissioner. Please allow at least 10 business days advanced notice. The communications coordinator is also available to help create an ad, but you must give at least 10 business days advanced notice.

If you're requesting funding to place the ad(s), you must first fill out and submit the online advertising request form, which resides on the MY SHIBA website at:
<http://www.insurance.wa.gov/volunteers-only/index.html>.

Approved language

Taglines

Following are some samples of "tag lines." Choose one that most appropriately fits your needs.

- The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) can help you understand your health care rights and options. Call to get FREE, UNBIASED help and learn more at 1-800-562-6900 (or use local sponsor phone number).

- The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) offers free, unbiased health insurance education and assistance through the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner. Call 1-800-562-6900 for a local referral, or go to www.insurance.wa.gov/shiba. [or use the local SHIBA sponsor number]

Other information (as appropriate)

- Our trained, volunteer Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) counsel people of all ages about their choices and options with private health insurance, affordable prescription drugs, and many government programs. The government programs include: Medicare, Medicaid, and the Washington State Health Insurance Pool (WSHIP). Our volunteers also counsel people about Medigap (Medicare Supplement) and Medicare Advantage plans, employment-related health benefits, managed-care plans, long-term care insurance, fraud and abuse, and much more.
- Our volunteers are impartial and do not affiliate with any insurance company or product. They assist people by phone, in person, and through public group presentations. We mentor and train our volunteers.

Program description – background

Be sure to replace the yellow highlighted text with appropriate localized information and remove the yellow highlighting.

- The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) is a free, unbiased and confidential counseling service sponsored by the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner. Our trained volunteers help consumers of all ages understand their health care rights and options. We offer current information on private health insurance, public health care programs, prescription drugs programs, and other topics. We answer questions, make referrals, help evaluate and compare health insurance policies, make public presentations, and more. Call us at 1-800-562-6900, or call us locally at [Sponsor phone number].

Using SHIBA features and benefits

Following are the features and benefits of the SHIBA. You may choose the features you need to list. However, if you want to change any of this language, you must first get it approved by the SHIBA communications coordinator.

The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) is:

- Completely FREE
- Confidential—we keep your personal information safe and private
- Accessible—some of our volunteers and hotline operators speak English and another language
- Impartial, objective, and unbiased—we do not sell or endorse anything

The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) can help you:

- Find health care coverage options for you and your family
- Learn about your health care coverage rights and options
- Compare health insurance plans and prices
- Understand government health programs
- Report health care fraud and abuse

The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) can provide information on:

- Medicare
- Prescription drug programs
- Medicaid programs
- Apple Health for Kids
- Private insurance
- Washington State Health Insurance Pool (WSHIP)
- Community health clinics
- Long-term care options

Templates

IMPORTANT NOTE:

- If you use the materials from the pages in this *Public Information Template and Style Guide* in complete form, **you do not need to get approval** from the SHIBA communications coordinator.
- If you want to make changes or additions, or you only want to use partial information from these pages to develop your own promotional materials, **you must get approval** from the SHIBA communications coordinator.*
- If you want to create your own content for promotional materials and use the name of SHIBA or the Office of Insurance Commissioner, **you must also get approval** from the SHIBA communications coordinator.*

**Please allow 10 business days for review and approval by the SHIBA communications coordinator. To contact the communications coordinator, call 360-725-7238 or send an email to donnaw@oic.wa.gov.*

News releases

How to use news release templates

- The red-lettered label at the top of each news release identifies the type of release. You need to remove this label before you send out the release.
- Replace the yellow highlighted text with appropriated localized text. Be sure to remove the yellow highlighting.
- You may change other existing language if necessary to customize the release. But, you must send **ANY new language to the SHIBA communications coordinator for approval.**
- You must use sponsor/partner official letterhead for local news releases. You may **not** use SHIBA or Office of the Insurance Commissioner letterhead.
- When you distribute a news release, using an approved template, please e-mail a copy of the news release as a courtesy to the SHIBA communications coordinator at donnaw@oic.wa.gov.

From time to time, the Office of the Insurance Commissioner Public Affairs Department will issue a news release that mentions the SHIBA. When this occurs, we will provide sponsors with a web link to the news release.

Volunteer Recruitment News Release Template

NEWS RELEASE

Month, date, year

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information:

Name, Title

Organization Name

Phone Number

E-mail

Looking for a rewarding way to volunteer in **name of town or county**? Join the Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA)

CITY/TOWN, Wash. – Do you speak English and another language, have computer skills, and are you committed to helping others find access to health care? Make a difference today by becoming a Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) volunteer.

The SHIBA sponsor in **name of town or county** is looking for volunteers to help with **name of initiative**. **Describe how initiative will help others**. If you want to help, consider becoming a SHIBA volunteer. Call the **sponsor name** today at **sponsor phone number**.

A free public service, offered by the Office of Insurance Commissioner, SHIBA volunteers serve people of all ages. Over 300 trained volunteers statewide provide free, informed, and impartial health insurance counseling and education to people in their local communities.

SHIBA staff train and mentor volunteers to educate others about their health care coverage options so they can make informed decisions. Volunteers answer questions, make referrals, help evaluate and compare options, facilitate meetings, provide office support, give presentations, provide translation assistance, perform research, and much more.

To become a SHIBA volunteer, you must be able to ensure client confidentiality, be willing to provide unbiased information, and you cannot affiliate with any insurance company, agency, product, or service. You must also be willing to have fun!

For more information about how you can become a SHIBA volunteer, or to get a volunteer application today, call **sponsor phone number**.

###

Medicare Part D Template

NEWS RELEASE

Month, date, year

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information:

Name, Title

Organization Name

Phone Number

E-mail

Medicare Part D enrollment starts Oct. 15

TOWN/CITY, Wash – Enrollment in Medicare’s prescription drug program (Part D) starts this **day of the week**, Oct. 15 and runs through Dec. 7. If you’re Medicare-eligible and want to enroll in Part D or change your current plan, beat the last minute rush by enrolling early.

The Washington State Office of Insurance Commissioner’s Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) can answer questions about Medicare Part D and provide help on other parts of Medicare as well as other health care topics.

Insert quote here from SHIBA sponsor coordinator about how the sponsor can help people.

To attend a public enrollment event on Part D in **county name** County, call **sponsor phone number**.

For additional ways to get help with Part D:

- Visit Washington State BenefitsCheckUp® at: <http://www.benefitscheckup.org>
- Contact Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (633-4227) or visit <http://www.medicare.gov/>
- For help in other languages, call:
 - Spanish, Medicare: 1-800-633-2273
 - Spanish, National Alliance for Hispanic Health: 1-866-783-2645
 - Korean, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging: 1-800-582-4259
 - Chinese, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging: 1-800-582-4218
 - Vietnamese, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging: 1-800-582-4336
- Ask a trusted friend or relative for help

For more information about Medicare, go to:

<http://www.insurance.wa.gov/your-insurance/health-insurance/medicare/>

###

Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

General PSA

Radio (30 seconds)

Need help finding access to health care coverage? Call SHIBA (SHEE BA)! Our volunteers, located statewide, can help you understand your rights and options, learn about private insurance, government programs, and many other health care topics.

Get the help you need today. Call us at 1-800-562-6900 or visit www.insurance.wa.gov.

SHIBA is a free, unbiased counseling service of the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner.

Volunteer recruitment PSA

Radio (15 seconds)

Do you enjoy helping people of all ages and backgrounds? Become a SHIBA (SHEE BA) volunteer and help others get access to the health care coverage they need.

If you speak English and other languages, or have computer skills, call SHIBA at 1-800-562-6900 or visit www.insurance.wa.gov.

Radio (30 seconds)

Do you enjoy helping others of all ages and backgrounds? Become a SHIBA (SHEE BA) volunteer! Join the hundreds of volunteers across the state who helped over 40,000 people last year get access to the health care coverage they needed and deserved.

Learn current information about health care and insurance options for your community. If you speak English and other languages or have computer skills, call SHIBA at 1-800-562-6900 or visit www.insurance.wa.gov.

Health insurance fraud and abuse PSA

Radio (30 seconds)

Protect yourself from health insurance fraud and abuse. Health insurance fraud and abuse affects all of us. It contributes to the rising costs of health care.

If you're shopping for health insurance, don't become a victim. Take the time to verify you're buying insurance from a licensed Washington state insurer. Call the Insurance Consumer Hotline today at 1-800-562-6900 or go to www.insurance.wa.gov.

Newsletter articles

General article

Let SHIBA assist you with finding health insurance or health care programs that meet your needs

Do you need help finding access to health insurance, health care programs or prescription drugs? Call the Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA)!

SHIBA is a free, unbiased and confidential counseling service of the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). We're a statewide network of trained volunteers who assist and advocate for consumers about Medicare, health care coverage, health insurance, and access to health care and prescription drugs. This impartial counseling resource helps consumers understand their rights and options, learn about private insurance, government programs, and many other health care-related topics.

Our volunteers answer questions, make referrals, help evaluate and compare policies, and more. We offer individual and group help statewide to people of all ages, in a variety of languages.

For assistance, you can call **Your Agency** at **Your Phone Number**, which sponsors SHIBA in **Town/Community**. You can also drop by our office at **Your Address**.

Medicare Prescription Drug Program (Part D)

Medicare Part D annual enrollment period starts Oct. 15

Enrollment in Medicare's prescription drug program (Part D) starts Oct. 15 and runs through Dec. 7. If you're Medicare-eligible and want to enroll in Part D or change your current plan, beat the last minute rush by enrolling early.

The Office of Insurance Commissioner's Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) can assist you with answering questions about Medicare's Part D and provide help on Medicare and other health care-related topics.

To attend a public enrollment event on Part D in **county name** County, call **sponsor name** at **sponsor phone number**.

In addition to SHIBA, here are other ways to get help with Part D:

- Visit Washington State BenefitsCheckUp® at: <http://www.benefitscheckup.org>
- Contact Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (633-4227) or visit <http://www.medicare.gov/>
- For help in other languages, call:
 - Spanish, Medicare: 1-800-633-2273
 - Spanish, National Alliance for Hispanic Health: 1-866-783-2645
 - Korean, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging: 1-800-582-4259
 - Chinese, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging: 1-800-582-4218
 - Vietnamese, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging: 1-800-582-4336
- Ask a trusted friend or relative for help

For more information about Medicare, go to: <http://www.insurance.wa.gov/your-insurance/health-insurance/medicare/>

Newsletter articles (continued)

Volunteer recruitment

Searching for a rewarding volunteer experience in **name of town or county?**

Join the Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors

If you speak English and another language, have computer skills, and are you committed to helping others find access to health care – make a difference today. Become a Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) volunteer.

The SHIBA sponsor in **name of town or county** is looking for volunteers to help with **name of initiative**. **Describe how initiative will help others**. If you want to help, consider becoming a SHIBA volunteer. Call the **sponsor name** today at **sponsor phone number**.

A free public service offered by the Office of Insurance Commissioner, SHIBA volunteers serve people of all ages. Over 300 trained volunteers statewide provide free, informed, and unbiased health insurance counseling and education to people in their local communities.

SHIBA staff train and mentor volunteers to educate others about their health care coverage options so they can make informed decisions. Volunteers answer questions, make referrals, help evaluate and compare options, facilitate meetings, provide office support, give presentations, provide translation assistance, perform research, and much more.

To become a SHIBA volunteer, you must be able to ensure client confidentiality, be willing to provide unbiased information, and you cannot affiliate with any insurance company, agency, product, or service. You must also be willing to have fun!

For more information about how you can become a SHIBA volunteer, or get a volunteer application today, call **sponsor phone number**.

Web-related information

Web link guidelines

You must receive prior approval from the SHIBA communications coordinator to place any external web links on your organization's SHIBA web pages or to link from other websites to your organization's SHIBA web pages.

SHIBA cannot endorse, appear to endorse, or affiliate with any for-profit product, service, or company, or those related to the sale of insurance or other coverage.*

We will only accept websites and public information provided by public agencies or non-profit, non-partisan organizations.

***OTHER examples of external content that does not meet the web link guidelines:**

- Advocacy of or opposition to any political, environmental, or socially controversial subjects, issues, or candidates.
- Disparaging or promoting any person or class of people.
- External content not suitable for readers or viewers of all ages, or links to or other promotion of businesses whose products or services are not suitable for people of all ages.
- Promoting or inciting illegal, violent, or socially undesirable conduct.
- Promotion or availability of alcohol or tobacco products.
- Promotion or availability of illegal drugs.
- Promotion or availability of adult or sexually oriented entertainment or materials.
- Promotion, opposition, or availability of weapons.
- Promotion, opposition, or availability of gambling.
- Claims of efficacy, suitability, desirability, or other non-objective statements about businesses, products, or services.
- Content that infringes on any trademark, copyright, or patent rights of another.
- Claims of representations in violation of advertising or consumer protection laws.
- Content that a reasonable citizen may not consider to maintain the dignity and decorum appropriate for government.