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Frequently asked questions about your health savings account (HSA)

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Health savings account (HSA)

Q. What is a health savings account (HSA)?

A. An HSA is a tax-free savings account that's paired with a high-deductible health plan (HDHP). By law, to open or contribute to an HSA, the medical plan must be a qualified HDHP. This means the deductible is higher than most traditional health plans. The required deductible is set by the IRS each year. The limit for 2021 is $3,600 for an individual and $7,200 for a family. You can use the money in your account to pay for qualified medical expenses (QME). For a full list of QMEs, visit **anthem.com/qme**. You can also save money in your HSA for future health care costs. The account grows with interest and you have investment options after your account reaches a minimum balance of $1,000. The HSA belongs to you and the money in the account is yours to keep, even if you leave your employer.

Q. How is my HSA funded?

A. Your HSA is funded by tax-free contributions, up to a certain annual limit. If you choose to contribute money to your HSA after taxes are taken out, you can claim it on your tax return. Others including your employer may contribute to your account as well. You can earn more dollars for your HSA by taking certain steps to improve your health. The total of all contributions cannot be more than the maximums defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). (See the question: *How much can I contribute to my HSA?* for details.)

The IRS has specific rules on who can open an HSA. See those rules in **IRS Publication 969**.[1]

Q. I'm a veteran with a service-connected disability. Can I contribute to an HSA?

A. Yes. A 2016 amendment to the eligibility rules allows veterans with a high-deductible plan, no disqualifying coverage and who have a service-connected disability to make or receive HSA contributions, regardless of when they received benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This amendment also applies to contributions from the veteran's employer. Veterans with a service-connected disability are not blocked from HSA eligibility because they accessed VA benefits in the past three months.

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If a veteran receives VA medical benefits for a non-service-connected disability during the prior three months, they are not eligible to make or receive HSA contributions.

Q. Can I have an HSA if my spouse is on Medicare?

A. Yes, as long as you're not enrolled in Medicare and you meet the IRS eligibility requirements for an HSA. If you contribute to an HSA and cover your spouse on your plan, you can use your HSA funds to pay for qualified medical expenses for you and your spouse on Medicare.

Q. My spouse is enrolled in Medicare. Can he or she also be enrolled as a dependent on my HSA?

A. Yes, but your spouse cannot open an HSA account in their name. You may use your HSA to pay for qualified medical expenses for you and your spouse on Medicare.

Q. Who can use the money in an HSA?

A. The money can be used for qualified medical expenses for you, your spouse or any IRS-qualified dependent who you claimed on your income taxes, even if they're not covered on your health care plan. Talk with a tax advisor to find out if these rules apply to your tax situation. You can also go to **irs.gov** to find out who qualifies as a dependent.

Q. I am enrolled in an HSA. Can I continue to contribute to my spouse's HSA and use his or her bank?

A. You and your spouse can continue to make contributions to their HSA. But you can't contribute more than the IRS family contribution maximum between both HSA accounts. For 2020, the family contribution maximum is $7,100.

Q. My child is under 26, but I no longer claim them on my taxes. Can I still cover them using my HSA?

A. The IRS has specific rules about covering children and children of divorced or separated parents. Please see **IRS Publication 969**[1] and talk with a tax advisor. You can cover dependents under age 26 but you can't use your HSA for their expenses unless they meet the following requirements:

- You can claim the child on your tax return.
- Your child is under age 19 or age 24 if a full-time student, or totally and permanently disabled.

Dependents who don't qualify to receive funds from your HSA may qualify to open their own HSA and could be permitted to contribute up to the family maximum (for 2020, this is $7,100). They can contact a financial institution to discuss how to set up a separate HSA.

Q. What's the difference between an HSA and a health care flexible spending account (HCFSA)?

A. Both HSAs and HCFSAs can be funded with tax-free dollars and be used to pay for qualified medical expenses. However, HSA balances roll over from year to year, while HCFSA money is generally forfeited if it's not spent during a 12-month period. And if you leave your employer, your HSA dollars are yours to keep but HCFSA dollars are forfeited.

Q. Can I have an HSA and a HCFSA?

A. Yes, you can have both an HSA and a compatible HCFSA, if it's defined as:

- **Limited/Special Purpose LPFSA**, which may be limited to dental or vision services.
- **Post-Deductible FSA**, which also allows for dental or vision services, as well as paying for coinsurance under the traditional health component of the plan, after meeting the deductible.
- **Dependent Care FSA**, you can use tax-exempt funds to pay for childcare expenses that incur while at work. Employees can also use FSAs to cover adult daycare expenses for elderly family members who live in the home.
- **Commuter Benefits**, to pay for work transportation and parking. You have until Month DD, YYYY to use the funds in this account or the funds will be forfeited.

Making contributions to your HSA

Q. How much can I contribute to my HSA?

A. The annual contribution maximum in 2020 is $3,500 (2019) $3,550 (2020) for individual coverage and $7,000 (2019) $7,100 (2020) for family coverage. The maximums are set by the IRS. Those maximums may go up every year for inflation. Check **irs.gov** for the most current maximum amounts.

Q. Can I ever contribute more than the annual limit?

A. Yes, people age 55 and older who are not enrolled in Medicare can contribute an extra $1,000 above the regular limits. This is called a "catch-up contribution." These individuals can make catch-up contributions each year until they enroll in Medicare.

Only the account holder can make catch-up contributions. The contribution amounts allowed are subject to proration if you are enrolled in the plan less than 12 months or under other circumstances. Catch-up contributions can be made in the same way your regular contributions are made.

Q. What if my spouse has an HSA, too?

A. The chart below explains different situations:

If your spouse:	And you have:	Then, the IRS:
Has PPO (preferred provider organization) self + children coverage.	HDHP (high-deductible health plan) self-only coverage.	Treats you as having single coverage and only you may set up an HSA. You may contribute up to $3,500 (2019), $3,550 (2020).
Has HDHP self-only coverage with a $1,500 deductible.	HDHP self + child coverage with a $3,000 deductible.	Treats you both as having family coverage, and combined you may contribute up to $7,100 to an HSA.
Has HDHP self + family coverage with a $3,000 deductible.	HDHP self + spouse coverage with a $3,000 deductible.	Treats you both as having family coverage, and combined you may contribute up to $7,100 to an HSA.
Is enrolled in Medicare.	HDHP self + family coverage only.	Will only allow you to set up an HSA. You may contribute up to $7,100 (2020).

Q. Does tax filing status (joint vs. separate with my spouse) affect my HSA contribution?

A. Tax filing status does not affect your contribution. The IRS requirements simply refer to eligible expenses for the "spouse" — they do not include requirements for filing jointly or separately.

Q. Can I use the HSA account for eligible expenses for my spouse even if we file our taxes separately?

A. Yes, the IRS requirements simply refer to eligible expenses for the "spouse" — they do not include requirements for filing jointly or separately.

Q. Can I contribute to an HSA if my spouse has an HCFSA?

A. Usually, a health care FSA covers the expenses of the participant and their spouse and dependents. If your spouse has a health care FSA, most likely your health care costs are covered under it. If so, then you won't be able to make contributions to your HSA.

There are exceptions to this rule. For example, if your spouse's HCFSA is a limited-purpose HCFSA that only covers dental and vision costs. See **IRS Publication 969**.[1]

Q. Can I use my HSA to pay for medical expenses I had before my account was set up?

A. No, you cannot be reimbursed for qualified medical expenses from before the date your HSA account is established.

Q. What happens if I have a medical expense early in the year and there isn't enough money in my HSA to cover my out-of-pocket costs?

A. The HSA works like a bank account. You can only spend what's in the account. However, you can start the reimbursement process for any services incurred after you enrolled in the HSA when you have more funds in your account. You can also set up recurring payments for larger expenses as the HSA is funded.

Q. Are dental and vision care considered qualified medical expenses for purposes of an HSA?

A. Yes, many dental, orthodontia and eye care expenses are considered qualified medical expenses. However, cosmetic procedures, like cosmetic dentistry, would not be considered a qualified medical expense. For a detailed list, please see the QME tool at **anthem.com/qme**.

Q. How can I find out more about HSA regulations?

A. Go to the U.S. Treasury website at **treasury.gov** and type HSA in the search box. You may also read **IRS Publication 969**.[1]

Q. I am enrolled in an HRA. What happens to that money if I choose an HSA for 2020?

A. Any unused funds from your HRA will be transferred to an account. The funds in this account do not count toward the annual contribution maximum for HSAs. The funds in the account will automatically be used to lower your coinsurance for health care costs you have after you meet your annual deductible.

Q. Are any administrative fees charged to my HSA?

A. Yes, See a **list of standard administrative and other related fees** that may be charged to your HSA by your Administrator.

Q. Do I have to use funds from my HSA to pay for health care costs?

A. No, you may pay out of pocket with after-tax dollars and let your HSA balance grow tax-free.

Q. How does the money I contribute to my HSA help me save on taxes?

A. Any money you contribute to your HSA is (federal) tax-free. That means it's not counted as taxable income for the year. So if you put $1,000 into your HSA, your adjusted gross income for the year is lowered by $1,000, which could save what you owe for taxes, depending on your tax status.

Tax benefits

Q. What are the tax benefits of an HSA?

A. There are several benefits:

- Contributions to the account are tax-free.
- Any investment and interest earned in your account are (federal) tax-free.
- Withdrawals from the account for qualified medical expenses are (federal) tax-free.
- Depending on the state where you live, you may save on state taxes as well.

Your privacy

Q. Is your website secure?

A. Yes, our customer-only website is secure and password-protected. Your personal information is kept safe using the highest encryption level available.

Q. What is your privacy policy?

A. You can read the *Privacy Policy* anytime at **anthem.com**.

Questions?

Chat with us online at **anthem.com** or call Member Services at the number at the top of your ID card.

The information included does not constitute legal, tax, or benefit plan design advice. We strongly encourage you to consult with a tax advisor before establishing a health savings account. Any health savings account will be established between the individual account holder and the HSA custodian or trustee. Anthem is responsible for the administration of the health plan, and the custodian is responsible for the administration of the HSA.

1 Internal Revenue Service. *Publication 969, Health Savings Accounts and Other Tax-Favored Health Plans* (March 4, 2019): irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p969.pdf.

2 Internal Revenue Service. *Publication 502, Medical and Dental Expenses (Including the Health Coverage Tax Credit)* (January 9, 2019): irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p502.pdf.