INTEL EMPLOYEE PLANNING SERIES

The Intel Retiree Medical Decision

Coordinating IRMP, SERMA, COBRA, Medicare, HSA, and the household retirement budget

Retiring from Intel creates a healthcare transition, not a single enrollment choice. An employee may need to coordinate the end of active coverage, Intel Retiree Medical Plan eligibility, COBRA, a spouse's plan, Medicare, and a finite SERMA balance - sometimes on different dates for different family members. The most expensive mistake is often not choosing the wrong premium. It is missing an eligibility rule, enrollment window, tax interaction, or coverage handoff.

VERIFY BOTH ELIGIBILITY TESTS IRMP eligibility and SERMA eligibility are related but not identical. Confirm retirement status, completed age and service, hire or rehire date, US payroll status, participating-company status, eligible dependents, and the benefit records Intel will use.

BUILD THE COVERAGE CALENDAR Map the exact end of active coverage, each available bridge option, enrollment deadlines, each family member's Medicare date, and the date any HSA contributions must stop. A calendar exposes gaps that a premium comparison can miss.

MODEL THE SERMA RUNWAY SERMA is a finite premium-reimbursement resource, not cash and not comprehensive medical coverage. Compare the balance with eligible premiums, anticipated rate increases, spouse timing, survivor needs, and the household's other healthcare assets before choosing how quickly to use it.

Begin With Two Separate Eligibility Tests

The first planning step is to obtain Intel's current retirement package and verify the underlying data. IRMP determines access to Intel retiree medical and vision options. SERMA is a separate Health Reimbursement Arrangement that may help pay eligible insurance premiums. An employee can qualify for IRMP without qualifying for SERMA.

IRMP - ACCESS TO RETIREE COVERAGE

RETIREMENT ELIGIBILITY Under Intel's 2026 SPD, a US employee may qualify by being at least age 55 with at least 15 years of eligible service, being at least age 65 with no minimum service requirement, or satisfying the Rule of 75 using completed whole years of age and service. Current plan terms and Intel's records control.

COVERAGE PATHS Eligible non-Medicare retirees and dependents may consider the IRMP Anthem HDHP. Medicare-eligible retirees and dependents may consider the IRMP Anthem Medicare Preferred PPO options, which require Medicare Parts A and B. IRMP also offers vision coverage, and split-family enrollment can accommodate different Medicare dates.

DEPENDENTS AND SURVIVORS Eligible dependents can have separate coverage decisions, and surviving eligible dependents may have continuing rights. Confirm each person in Intel's records, disability documentation where applicable, and the consequences of remarriage or a new domestic partnership under current plan rules.

SERMA - A FINITE PREMIUM-REIMBURSEMENT ACCOUNT

SERMA generally requires retirement from a participating Intel US company, satisfaction of the retirement-eligibility rules, and a hire or rehire date before January 1, 2014. The 2026 SPD states a credit of $1,500 for each year of Eligible Service, subject to plan definitions and a cap based on service through the 2020 anniversary of the employee's hire date. The one-time account has no cash value and may receive annual interest under the plan. Transfers, acquisitions, breaks in service, and non-participating-company service can change the result.

SERMA USE RULES

ELIGIBLE PREMIUMS SERMA may pay all or part of IRMP medical or vision premiums and may reimburse eligible non-Intel premiums, including individual health, dental, and vision coverage; other employer retiree group coverage; COBRA; Medicare; Medigap; TRICARE; and qualifying long-term care insurance premiums.

WHAT SERMA GENERALLY DOES NOT PAY SERMA is generally for eligible insurance premiums, not deductibles, copayments, prescriptions, medical services, health-club dues, active-employee group premiums, or long-term care facility fees. The household still needs an HSA or other liquid reserve for out-of-pocket costs.

> **Planning principle:** Treat IRMP as a coverage option and SERMA as a finite funding source. Evaluate them separately first, then coordinate them with Medicare, tax planning, and the household's lifetime healthcare budget.

Build the Retirement Healthcare Calendar

Healthcare planning is date-sensitive. The household should build one timeline for the employee and a separate timeline for the spouse or dependents, then identify where the dates intersect. The goal is continuous coverage without sacrificing an enrollment right, HSA contribution, or premium-tax-credit opportunity.

BEFORE THE LAST DAY AT INTEL

CONFIRM THE EXACT COVERAGE END DATE Use the retirement package and Intel Health Benefits Center records to confirm when active medical, dental, vision, HSA, and flexible-spending-account participation ends. Do not assume every benefit ends on the same date. Calendar the current IRMP, COBRA, and special-enrollment deadlines before leaving.

COMPARE EVERY AVAILABLE BRIDGE For each person under age 65, compare the IRMP HDHP, COBRA, a spouse's employer plan, and individual or Marketplace coverage. Availability is only the first screen; provider access, prescriptions, deductibles, maximum out-of-pocket exposure, HSA eligibility, and administrative complexity can materially change the result.

COMPARE TOTAL HOUSEHOLD COST Model premiums plus expected and adverse-case out-of-pocket costs. Then show the result before and after SERMA reimbursement, possible Marketplace premium tax credits, HSA funding, and the tax cost of withdrawals used to pay premiums. The lowest premium is not always the lowest total cost.

COBRA, MEDICARE, AND THE HSA HANDOFF

COBRA DOES NOT EXTEND ACTIVE-EMPLOYEE MEDICARE STATUS Medicare's Part B special-enrollment period generally begins when employment or active job-based coverage ends, even if COBRA continues. Intel also cautions that COBRA may pay secondary to Medicare. A Medicare-eligible retiree should not use COBRA as a reason to delay reviewing Parts A and B.

IRMP AFTER MEDICARE Intel's Medicare Preferred PPO options require enrollment in Medicare Parts A and B and include Part D prescription coverage. Keep Intel's coverage-history and creditable-coverage notices. Compare the IRMP Medicare Advantage options with non-Intel Medicare alternatives based on providers, prescriptions, travel, premiums, and total out-of-pocket exposure.

HSA CONTRIBUTION CUTOFF HSA contributions must stop when Medicare coverage begins. Premium-free Part A can begin retroactively for as many as six months when someone enrolls after age 65, but not before initial eligibility. Coordinate the application date, final payroll contribution, employer funding, and any excess-contribution correction with a tax professional.

SPLIT-FAMILY TIMING A Medicare-eligible spouse and a non-Medicare spouse may need different coverage. Intel's split-enrollment rules can pair a Medicare PPO option with the IRMP HDHP. A spouse's employer plan or outside policy may also be part of the comparison, so each person's coverage should be modeled separately.

ACA MARKETPLACE AND SERMA A non-Medicare retiree with access to SERMA generally cannot receive federal Marketplace premium tax credits while opted in. Intel permits a temporary SERMA opt-out under current rules; the balance is frozen and cannot reimburse premiums during that period. Coordinate the election with projected household income and a tax advisor before acting.

Turn SERMA Into a Deliberate Funding Strategy

SERMA does not have one universally correct spending rate. Some households may value near-term cash-flow relief; others may want to preserve credits for Medicare, a younger spouse, long-term care premiums, or survivor use. A written policy turns a balance into a healthcare funding plan and reduces the chance that eligible claims or deadlines are missed.

THE SIX-PART SERMA AND MEDICARE POLICY

1. BALANCE AND RUNWAY RULE Confirm Intel's official SERMA balance, eligible-service calculation, and all eligible dependents. Divide the balance by projected annual eligible premiums to estimate a starting runway. For illustration, $45,000 divided by $9,000 of annual premiums is about five years before interest, rate changes, or different claims.

2. USE-PACE RULE Choose whether SERMA will offset current premiums fully, partially, or only in selected years. Test the decision against inflation, longevity, spouse age differences, expected Medicare premiums, long-term care coverage, survivor priorities, and the value of keeping other assets invested.

3. CLAIM AND CASH-FLOW RULE For IRMP, elect the percentage of premiums to be paid from SERMA under current procedures. For eligible outside premiums, document the proof required, reimbursement method, direct-deposit instructions, and whether recurring claims are available. Allow for the administrative period before a new retiree can access the account.

4. DEADLINE RULE Reconcile claims at least quarterly. Under the 2026 SPD, prior-year claims with complete support must generally be submitted by May 31 of the following year. Also avoid 20 consecutive years of non-use, which can forfeit the account under current plan terms.

5. TAX AND IRMAA RULE SERMA reimbursements are generally tax-free, although domestic-partner reimbursements can be taxable unless the partner is a tax dependent. Medicare Part B and Part D IRMAA uses tax-return income from two years earlier. Model RSUs, option exercises, gains, Roth conversions, and SERPLUS distributions; a retirement-related work stoppage and income decline may support an SSA-44 request.

6. SURVIVOR AND REVIEW RULE Keep eligible-dependent records current and document who may use a remaining balance after death. Review the policy during annual enrollment and after a Medicare transition, major premium change, tax-law change, long-term care decision, death, divorce, remarriage, or material change in health.

QUESTIONS TO RESOLVE BEFORE RETIREMENT

WHICH BENEFITS ARE ACTUALLY AVAILABLE? Verify IRMP and SERMA separately using Intel's age, service, hire-date, company, payroll, dependent, and survivor records.

WHERE COULD COVERAGE LAPSE? Put active coverage, IRMP, COBRA, spouse coverage, Marketplace enrollment, Medicare Parts A and B, and HSA dates on one calendar.

HOW LONG SHOULD SERMA LAST? Compare the balance with eligible premiums, anticipated inflation, spouse timing, long-term care coverage, survivor needs, and other healthcare reserves.

WHICH TAX ITEMS CHANGE THE MEDICAL DECISION? Coordinate Marketplace credits, SERMA opt-out status, HSA contributions, IRMAA, SSA-44 eligibility, domestic-partner taxation, and the income created by retirement transactions.

Educational overview. Current Intel plan documents, enrollment notices, retiree records, Medicare rules, and tax law control. Sources: Intel Retiree Medical Plan and SERMA 2026 Plan Document and Summary Plan Description; Intel US Retiree Information; Medicare & You 2026; Medicare.gov, Medicare enrollment and coverage-start guidance; Social Security Form SSA-44 (12-2025); IRS Publication 969 (2025). Plan options, premiums, IRMAA thresholds, eligibility, and deadlines can change. Intel Corporation is not affiliated with Oswego Legacy Partners or Prudential. Reviewed August 2026.

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