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## **American consumers saving millions on medicine costs thanks to counties**

*NACo program helps consumers save \$205 million on prescription purchases*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Americans struggling to cope in an economy in recession are receiving some real financial relief on their prescription drug purchases thanks to their county government.

By participating in the National Association of Counties (NACo) Prescription Discount Card Program, counties have helped American consumers save more than \$205 million on more than 16.6 million prescription medicine purchases at their local pharmacy since the program began five years ago.

The free discount cards are available to every family residing in a participating NACo-member county with no age, income or health restrictions. All commonly prescribed prescription medications, including pet medications, are eligible for a discount. The discounts are available to consumers who do not have prescription drug insurance or the particular drug they need is not covered by their insurance. The average savings is 23.9 percent off the regular retail price the consumer would otherwise pay at the pharmacy.

More than 1,250 of the nation's 3,068 counties are participating in the program and more are joining the program every month. More than 59,000 retail pharmacies, including the major pharmacy chains such as CVS/pharmacy, Rite Aid, Walgreens and Wal-Mart, accept the NACo discount card along with many independently owned and operated pharmacies.

“These are truly valuable cards counties are making available to American families at no cost to taxpayers,” said NACo President Valerie Brown, supervisor, Sonoma County, Calif. “Many families are struggling to make ends meet. By taking advantage of the savings available with the NACo card, families are able to use those extra dollars on other necessities.”

The program has been a big hit with county officials and consumers.

NACo Membership Committee Chairman Tim Loewenstein, commissioner from Buffalo County, Neb., has the program in his county and encourages other county officials about the tremendous benefits of the discount card program.

“Usually in government we ask for taxpayer money and provide a service in return,” Loewenstein said. “But with this program, counties are providing a valuable service directly to families at no cost to them.”

Here are the key factors that make the NACo discount card program unique and effective:

- **It’s easy** – There are no enrollment fees, no forms to fill out, no age or income requirements, and no medical condition restrictions. The entire family is covered with just one card and all commonly prescribed medicine is covered (including pet medication);
- **It’s free** – The discount cards are provided free to residents living in participating NACo-member counties across the country. A national network of more than 59,000 retail pharmacies honor the card;
- **It’s for everyone** – There is no cost to the county, county taxpayers, or consumers to participate.
- **Consumers always receive the lowest price** – On occasion, pharmacies will price a particular medication lower than the discount rate available with the NACo card. If that occurs, consumers will receive the best price available from that pharmacy.

The NACo Prescription Drug Discount Card Program was created in late 2004 as a 17-county pilot program in partnership with CVS Caremark to provide a valuable membership benefit to counties. The NACo Board of Directors made the program available to members nationwide in May 2005.

Brown emphasized that there is no cost to the county, county taxpayers, or consumers to participate in the program. CVS Caremark, the largest provider of prescriptions and related health care services in the nation, negotiates the discounts directly with the pharmacies and drug manufactures. Neither NACo nor the participating counties receive any revenue from the program.

“This is strictly a membership benefit to counties,” Brown said.

“NACo has been a dedicated partner with CVS Caremark to make the free NACo Prescription Discount Card program available to counties and their residents,” said Kirby Bessant, vice president, consumer programs, CVS Caremark. “Since the inception in 2004, it has enabled county governments to help their residents save millions in prescription drug costs.”

For more information about the program and a list of participating counties and pharmacies, visit [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).

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*The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo provides essential services to the nation’s 3,068 counties. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public’s understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. For more information about NACo, visit [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)*



## NACo Prescription Discount Card Program

### **What is the NACo Prescription Discount Card Program?**

NACo, in partnership with CVS Caremark have created the NACo Prescription Discount Card Program to help consumers residing in NACo member counties save money on their prescription drug purchases at participating pharmacies. Specifically, the free cards provide at-the-register savings for consumers who have no prescription drug insurance or need certain medications that are not covered by their insurance. NACo provides the cards as a benefit to its member counties.

### **How much will consumers save?**

The average savings is about 24 percent. Savings may range from 15 to 30 percent depending on the medication. Consumers may save up to 50 percent on mail order purchases.

### **What are the costs associated with the program?**

There is no cost to the county, county taxpayers, or consumers to participate. Caremark negotiates the discounts directly with participating pharmacies. Neither NACo nor the participating counties receive any revenue from the program.

### **How easy is it to participate?**

There are no enrollment fees, no forms to fill out, no age or income requirements, and no medical condition restrictions for consumers to use the NACo card. In addition, the entire family is covered with just one card and virtually all commonly prescribed medicine is covered.

### **Who is eligible to obtain and use the card?**

The NACo prescription discount cards are provided free to residents living in participating NACo member counties across the country. A national network of more than 59,000 retail pharmacies honors the card.

### **Can consumers use their card in conjunction with their insurance to get a bigger discount?**

No. The NACo card cannot be used in conjunction with other prescription drug insurance on any one purchase. However, consumers with insurance are allowed to use the card to purchase prescriptions that are not covered by their insurance.

### **Will consumers always receive the lowest retail price?**

Yes. On occasion, pharmacies will price a particular medication lower than the discount rate available with the NACo card. If that occurs, consumers will receive the lower price. Either way, consumers will always receive the best price available.

### **Does the county have to track who has the cards or monitor card use?**

No. Counties need only to make the cards available to residents.

For more information about NACo and the program, visit:

[www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)

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