

Sliding Fee Program

Program description and frequently asked questions

The Sliding Fee Program allows us to reduce or “slide” the fees for the care you or your family receive at any of the Cherry Health locations. You can apply for the program if you do not have insurance or assistance to help pay for your care.

If you decide to apply, your eligibility is based on two things:

1. How much income you or your family makes
2. How many people are in your household.

If you qualify for the Program, the amount you owe for your visit will be reduced according to the discount schedule.

How to Apply

It is best to apply for the Sliding Fee Program at the time of your first visit to the health center. The front desk can give you the form to fill out.

You will need to provide “proof” of your income. If you or your spouse works, then bring in a recent paycheck stub. You will need to bring in your “proof of income” at least once a year to renew your application for the Sliding Fee Program.

Other things you can bring in are:

- Current 1040 Tax return
- Unemployment check stub
- Worker’s comp check stub
- Other documentation of income

continued

If you apply at your first visit to the health center, you can fill out the form and if you qualify, receive a discount without bringing in proof of income. However, in order to continue to pay the reduced fees, you must bring in your proof as soon as possible.

How Much Do You Owe

The amount of discount depends on your family size and income. Your bill could be as low as \$15. You need to pay the \$15 on the date of your visit and any amounts that are unpaid on your account. If you owe more than the minimum of \$15, you should pay that also at the time of service. A sample of the sliding scale is below:

Family of 4, monthly income less than:

\$1,963 = amount of \$15 due at each visit

\$2,453 = 75% discount

\$2,944 = 50% discount

\$3,925 = 25% discount

How To Find Out More

If you have any questions, please ask any of our patient registration staff, the site manager or call our Billing Department at 616.965.8282 and speak to a Billing Coordinator.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is Cherry Health a “free clinic”?

No. Even uninsured patients are responsible for a portion of the cost of their care. Payment is expected at the time of service.

Who pays for the services that are discounted?

The Sliding Fee Program is made possible by federal grants through the Bureau of Primary Health Care.

Do I have to be a citizen to apply for the Sliding Fee Program?

No, you do not.

What if I get a statement in the mail?

All patients who do not pay their share of the bill will receive a statement. We do accept payment plans. Amounts outstanding on your account may be referred to a collections agency for further action so it is important to keep your account up to date. Also, carrying a \$0 balance allows you and your family access to all services within the agency. If you have not applied for the sliding fee, you should call the Billing Department at 616.965.8282 and they will help you.

I have to pay a lot of money before my insurance pays for my health care; can I apply for the Sliding Fee Program?

The Sliding Fee Program can be used to help you meet your annual insurance deductibles (but not copays that your insurance requires) as long as Cherry Health participates with your health insurance plan. Call 616.965.8282 to discuss your situation with a billing coordinator.

Are all services at the health center discounted?

Some special services offered throughout the agency such as dentures or eye glasses have set fees that are less for uninsured patients who qualify for this program. Be sure to discuss the fees for those services before your appointment. Call the Billing Department for details.

What if I have no income at all?

The patient registration staff is trained to help you figure out your sources of income. They may ask you questions like “Where do you live?” and “How do you pay for food?”

Is my income information confidential?

Yes, all information that we collect about you is confidential.

What if I have a Medicaid spend down to meet?

You can qualify for a discount to pay for your services before your spend down is met. However, only your discounted fees will go toward meeting your spend down.

Check our website for locations:
www.cherryhealth.org



Billing Department
100 Cherry Street SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616.965.8282
Fax: 616.940.5370
cherryhealth.org