



The Village Family Service Center Financial Assistance Program

PURPOSE:

In some locations, The Village Family Service Center will offer financial assistance to individuals who are unable to pay for services. The Village Family Service Center will base program eligibility on a person's ability to pay and will not discriminate based on age, gender, race, creed, disability, or national origin. The Federal Poverty Guidelines, <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty>, are used in creating and annually updating the Financial Assistance Fee Schedule to determine eligibility.

For any Village locations not considered National Health Service Centers (NHSC) or Village locations that do not receive supplemental/underwriting funding, will not be obligated to provide financial assistance.

PROCEDURES:

- 1. Notification:** The Village Family Service Center will notify clients of the Financial Assistance Program by:
 - Payment information will be available to clients at the time of service.
 - The Financial Assistance Program and Application are available on The Village Family Service Center website.
 - The Village posts notification within offices where financial assistance is available (NHSC, United Way, Interns, etc....).
- 2. Services:** Clients seeking services at The Village Family Service Center may be eligible to receive services regardless of ability to pay in locations which The Village is identified as a NHSC location or there is additional funding to assist clients. **In those NHSC locations, no one is refused service because of lack of financial means to pay.**
- 3. Request for discount:** Requests for financial assistance may be made by clients, family members, social services staff, or others who are aware of existing financial hardship. Information and forms can be obtained from the office where services are provided.
- 4. Administration:** Information about the Financial Assistance Program will be provided, and assistance offered for completion of the application. Dignity and confidentiality will be respected for all who seek and/or are provided charitable services.

5. **Completion of Application:** The client/responsible party must complete the Financial Assistance Program application in its entirety. By signing the Financial Assistance Program application, person authorize The Village Family Service Center access in confirming income as disclosed on the application form. Providing false information on a Financial Assistance Program Application will result in all financial assistance being revoked and the full balance of the account(s) restored and payable immediately.

If an application is unable to be processed due to the need for additional information, the effective date of any financial assistance will be updated to the date in which the client provides the additional information.

The Financial Assistance Program application must be completed every 12 months or if there has been a significant change in financial income.

6. **Eligibility:** Financial Assistance will be based on income and family size. The Village Family Service Center uses the Census Bureau definitions of each:

- a. **Family** is defined as: a group of two people or more related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together; all such people (including related subfamily members) are considered as members of one family.
- b. **Income** includes earnings, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, public assistance, veterans' payments, survivor benefits, pension or retirement income, interest, dividends, rents, royalties, income from estates, trusts, educational assistance, alimony, child support, assistance from outside the household, and other miscellaneous sources. *Noncash benefits (such as food stamps and housing subsidies) do not count.*

7. **Income Verification:** Applicants must provide one of the following: prior year W-2, three most recent pay stubs, most recent tax return, letter from employer, or Form 4506-T (if W-2 not filed). Self-employed individuals will be required to submit detail of most recent three months of income and expenses for the business. Adequate information must be made available to determine eligibility for the program. **Self-declaration of Income** may only be used in special circumstances. Specific examples include participants who are homeless. Clients who are able to provide written verification must provide a signed statement of income, and why she/he is unable to provide independent verification. This statement will be presented to The Village Family Service Center for review and final determination as to the financial assistance. Self-declared clients will be responsible for 100% of their charges until The Village Family Service Center is able to determine the appropriate financial assistance category.
8. **Financial Assistance:** Following the Financial Assistance Program guidelines, those with incomes at or below 100% of poverty will receive a full 100% financial assistance. Those with incomes above 100% of poverty, but at or below 200% of poverty, will be charged

accordingly. The Financial Assistance Fee Schedule will be updated during the first quarter of every calendar year with the latest federal poverty guidelines, <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty>.

- 9. Waiving or Further Reduction of Charges:** Waiving or further reduction of charges may be used in special circumstances and must be approved by The Village Family Service Center's Regional Supervisor or their designee. Any waiving or further reduction of charges should be documented on the Financial Assistance Program form along with an explanation (e.g., ability to pay, good will, health promotion event).
- 10. Applicant Notification:** The Financial Assistance Program determination will be provided to the applicant(s) in writing, and will include the amount of financial assistance, or, if applicable, the reason for denial. If the application is approved for less than a 100% financial assistance or denied, the client and/or responsible party must immediately establish payment arrangements with The Village Family Service Center.
- 11. Refusal to Pay:** In non-NHSC locations, if a client verbally expresses an unwillingness to pay or vacates the premises without paying for services, the client will be contacted regarding their payment obligations. If the client does not make an effort to pay or fails to respond within 60 days, this constitutes refusal to pay. The Village Family Service Center can explore other options not limited to, but including offering the client a payment plan, waiving of charges, referring of the client, and/or sending the client to collections.
- 12. Record Keeping:** Information related to the Financial Assistance Program decisions will be maintained and preserved in a password protected, confidential client file located on The Village Family Service Center's electronic billing software system to preserve the dignity of those receiving financially assisted care.
- 13. Policy and Procedure Review:** Annually, the amount of Financial Assistance Program dollars provided will be reviewed. The Financial Assistance Program Fee Schedule will be updated based on the current Federal Poverty Guidelines. Pertinent information comparing amount budgeted and actual community care provide shall serve as a guideline for future planning. This will also serve as a discussion base for reviewing possible changes in our policy and procedures and for examining institutional practices which may serve as barriers preventing eligible clients from having access to our community care provisions.