



## AGENCY POLICY

<b>IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: BR.005</b>	<b>DATE APPROVED:</b>
<b>POLICY NAME: Sliding Scale and Discount Program Policy</b>	<b>REVIEWED: 12/2023</b>
<b>OWNER'S DEPARTMENT: Revenue Strategy</b>	<b>NEXT REVIEW DATE: As needed, or within 12 months</b>
<b>APPLICABILITY: Program- Behavioral Health Revenue Strategy</b>	<b>REFERENCES:</b>

### Purpose

To assure access to quality behavioral health care services for all individuals and families at a discount based on a client's ability to pay.

### Policy:

All clients seeking behavioral health outpatient services at CITIZEN ADVOCATES are assured that they will be served regardless of ability to pay. No one is refused service because of lack of financial means to pay. This program is designed to provide free or discounted care to those who have no means, or limited means, to pay for their behavioral health care (uninsured or underinsured). CITIZEN ADVOCATES will offer a **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** to all who are unable to pay for their services. CITIZEN ADVOCATES will base **Sliding Scale and Discount program** eligibility on a person's ability to pay and will not discriminate on the basis of an individual's race, color, sex, national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Federal Poverty Guidelines are used in creating and annually updating the sliding fee schedule to determine eligibility.

### Procedures:

1. Notification of CITIZEN ADVOCATES **Sliding Scale and Discount Program**:
  - a. "CA Fee, Payment and Attendance Policy" will be given to each client at time of first appointment, which will outline the process on how to request Citizen Advocates **Sliding Scale and Discount Program**.
  - b. **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** information will be posted in each of the waiting rooms at CITIZEN ADVOCATES Behavioral Health locations.
  - c. Customer Support and Clinical Care Teams will also be aware and knowledgeable of CITIZEN's **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** and will automatically refer clients who present with a hardship.
2. Requests for discounted services may be made by patients, family members, care team, social services staff or others who are aware of existing financial hardship. The **Sliding Scale and**



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**Discount Program** will only be made available for clinic visits. Information and forms can be obtained from the Front Desk of each location and on our website.

3. The client/responsible party must complete the **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** application in its entirety. Staff will be available, as needed, to assist patient/responsible party with applications. By signing the **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** application, persons are confirming their income to CITIZEN ADVOCATES as disclosed on the application form.
4. Eligibility- Discounts will be based on income and family size.
  - a. Family is defined as: a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together; all such people (including related subfamily members) are considered as members of one family. CITIZEN ADVOCATES will also accept non-related household members when calculating family size.
  - b. Income includes; gross wages; salaries; tips; income from business and self-employment; unemployment compensation; workers' compensation; Social Security; Supplemental Security Income; veterans' payments; survivor benefits; pension or retirement income; interest; dividends; royalties; income from rental properties, estates, and trusts; alimony; child support; assistance from outside the household; and other miscellaneous sources
5. Clients may provide one of the following: prior year W-2, two most recent pay stubs, letter from employer verifying income, or Form 4506-T (if W-2 not filed). Self-employed individuals will be required to submit detail of the most recent three months of income and expenses for the business. Adequate information must be made available to determine eligibility for the program.
6. Those with incomes at or below 100% of poverty will receive a full 100% discount for health care services. Those with incomes above 100% of poverty, but at or below 200% of poverty, will be charged a nominal fee according to the attached sliding fee schedule. The sliding fee schedule will be updated during the first quarter of every calendar year with the latest Federal Poverty Line Guidelines.
7. The **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** determination will be provided to the client in writing and will include the percentage of **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** write off, or, if applicable, the reason for denial. If the application is approved for less than a 100% discount or denied, CITIZEN ADVOCATES will work with the client and/or responsible party to establish payment arrangements. **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** applications cover outstanding patient balances for six months prior to application date and any balances incurred within 12 months after the approved date, unless their financial situation changes significantly. The client has the option to reapply after the 12 months have expired or anytime there has been a significant change in family income. When the client reapplies, the look back period will be the lesser of six months or the expiration of their last Sliding Scale and Discount Program application.
8. If a client verbally expresses an unwillingness to pay for services that were rendered, the client will be contacted in writing regarding their payment obligations. If the client is not on the sliding fee schedule, a copy of the sliding scale and discount program application will be sent with the notice.



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9. Information related to **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** decisions will be maintained and preserved in a centralized, confidential folder, within Outlook Teams, in an effort to preserve the dignity of those receiving free or discounted care.
  - a. Applicants that have been approved for the **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** will be flagged in CITIZEN ADVOCATES Electronic Health Record, noting dates of coverage and percentage of coverage.
  - b. The Revenue Cycle Department will maintain an additional monthly log identifying **Sliding Scale and Discount Program** recipients and dollar amounts. Denials and applications not returned will also be logged.
10. The Sliding Fee Schedule will be updated based on the current Federal Poverty Guidelines. CITIZEN ADVOCATES will also review possible changes to this policy and procedures and examine practices which may serve as barriers preventing eligible clients from having access to our behavioral health care.

### ATTACHEMENTS:

- A. 2023 Sliding Fee Schedule
- B. Sliding Scale and Discount Program Application