

Help From Maine's Federally Qualified Health Centers

What is a sliding fee discount program?

Every FQHC must have a sliding fee discount program, in accordance with federal requirements. It is a program that offers different levels of discount for services, based on income and family size. Health centers generally have between 3-5 levels of discount for services.

Some health centers have different names for this program, including 'affordable care program', 'fee discount program', 'sliding fee program', 'ACCESS program' among others.

Who is eligible?

Any patient whose income is up to 200% FPL is eligible to apply for the sliding fee discount, regardless of insurance status. Income eligibility is based on income level and family size. The discount must be applied equally to all eligible patients.

In terms of process, there is an application that a patient will need to fill out to apply for this program; and FQHC staff can help people navigate that process if needed. Generally, patients are asked to renew their application on an annual basis if they continue utilizing the sliding fee discount program.

It is important to note that it is permissible to have two separate sliding fee schedules: one for medical and one for dental services.

How much will patients be expected to pay?

Each FQHC has a standard fee discount schedule that applies equally to all patients. Each FQHC is allowed the flexibility to set their sliding fee discount, which is supposed to be, "consistent with locally prevailing rates or charges for the service."

See examples below.

What happens if someone has zero income or otherwise cannot pay?

For those under 100% FPL, they must be offered the 'full discount' on the schedule, "Full discount for individuals and families with annual incomes at or below 100 percent of the FPG, or allowance for a nominal charge only." Commonly, a nominal charge is \$10 – but as with the discount schedule itself – is defined by each FQHC individually.

A Few Examples of Sliding Fee Scales:

Sacopee Valley Health Center: <http://www.svhc.org/index.php/sliding-fee>

Penobscot Community Health Care:

https://pchc.com/download/patient_resources/affordable_care_program/ACP%20Application%202015.pdf

DFD Russell Medical Centers: <http://dfdrussell.org/for-our-patients/sliding-fee-discount/>

Katahdin Valley Health Center: <http://www.kvhc.org/wpSite/patient-information/patient-assistance/sliding-fee-scale/>

Pines Health Services: <http://www.pineshealth.org/patient-care/assistance/>

HealthReach CHC: <http://www.healthreachchc.org/files/HealthReachAffordableCareBrochureUse.pdf>



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Some Covered FQHC Services:

Primary medical care (primary, preventive, pediatrics, women's health, etc.)

Behavioral health

Dental/oral health

Chronic disease management

Podiatry

Prescription assistance

Pharmacy (some)

Lab (some)

Referrals to specialists, community-based services, and other non-medical assistance programs



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