



## SLIDING FEE / PAYMENT POLICY

It is the policy of A.W.A.R.E., Inc. to provide essential services regardless of the patient's ability to pay. This policy is applicable to the uninsured and underinsured. Discounts are offered solely upon family income and size. Definitions of family and income are defined as:

- a. Family size is defined in terms of the number of individuals currently living in the household.
- 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.

A Sliding Fee Schedule is used to calculate the basic services discount and is updated each year using the federal poverty guidelines. Sliding Fees for Room and Board charges are set for certain facilities, using a bracketed scale. Patients with incomes above 100% of poverty, but at or below 200% poverty will be charged a nominal fee according to the sliding fee schedule and based on their family size and income. However, patients will not be denied services due to an inability to pay. The nominal fee is not a threshold for receiving care and thus, is not a minimum fee or co-payment.

In certain situations, patients may not be able to pay the nominal or discount fee. Waiving of charges must be approved by AWARE's designated official. Any waiving of charges should be documented in the patient's file along with an explanation.

Sites will post a notice in a clearly visible location, such as a front office or waiting room along with the information being displayed on the AWARE website. The notice explicitly states that no one will be denied access to services due to inability to pay; and there is a discounted/sliding fee schedule available. Sites do not have to post the details of the policy or the actual fee schedule; these can be supplied to applicants upon inquiry.

We will not discriminate against any person receiving health services because of their inability to pay for services, or because payment for the health services will be made under part A or B of title XVIII ("Medicare") or title XIX ("Medicaid") of the Social Security Act. We will accept assignment under the Social Security Act for all services for which payment may be made under Part B of title XVIII ("Medicare") of the Act. We have an agreement with the State agency which administers the State plan for medical assistance under title XIX ("Medicaid") of the Social Security Act to provide services to medical assistance under the plan.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

A completed Fee Waiver application must be on file and approved by the business office before a services discount will be granted. Individuals will be provided an application upon request by the AWARE representative enrolling the individual in services. Support to complete the application will be offered. Once approved, the discount will be honored for one year, after which the patient must reapply.

Room and Board Sliding Fees will be calculated at the time of Admission to an AWARE facility. Income will be re-evaluated at the beginning of each fiscal year (July 1), with any changes made effective September 1 of that year.

Once the AWARE representative receives the application, they will review the documentation from the client to calculate their income. The AWAR Representative may also fax the application and supporting documentation to the administrative offices at the Shared Resource Center (406-563-5956) to have someone calculate the sliding fee percentage for you. AWARE administration may ask for Proof of Income: Pay stubs, unemployment checks, bank statements, award letters, Income Tax statements, etc.

### ANNUAL GROSS INCOME CALCULATION:



Annual gross income is the estimated yearly amount the family will receive based on current income that can be reasonably expected to continue. Gross income is income before any taxes or deductions are withheld. Income from more than one source or more than one family member should be added together to calculate total income.

There are several ways to calculate Annual Gross Income:

Hourly wage x average hours worked per week x 52 weeks

Monthly income x 12

Bi-weekly (every 2 weeks) income x 26

Semi-monthly (twice per month) income x 24

You must include income from the following categories:

Wages, Salaries, Tips

Supplemental Security Income

Social Security Disability Insurance

Retirement or Pension Income

Unemployment Insurance

Regular income from investments

Rental and/or self-employment income

Income may be verified by providing copies of the following types of documents:

Pay Stubs or other earnings statement

W2 Forms and/or 1099s

Tax Returns

Award Letters

Investment performance statements

Bank Statements showing direct deposits

Once annual gross income is calculated, the current year Sliding Fee Scale is used to find the appropriate Discount Percentage for the family size. Enter the Percentage on the Fee Waiver application, obtain the Service Director's signature, and submit to the Administration office (fax 406-563-5956). The Administration office will review the application and approve or follow up with the treatment location. Discounts will be applied at the billing office to self-pay amounts. Billing for services must be recorded and set to Accounts Receivable even if the person served is on a 0% sliding fee. AWARE may turn accounts over to a collection agency when no agreed upon payments are received and family does not respond to attempts to contact. AWARE does accept partial payments on accounts.