

**Buncombe County
Department of Health**

**BILLING GUIDE
for FY 2014**

Effective April 1, 2014

**Billing and Collection Policies
Program Information
Sliding Fee Scales
Service Fee Schedule**

**Approved by Buncombe County Health and Human Services Board
February 28, 2014**

**Approved by Board of County Commissioners
March**



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Introduction

North Carolina law¹ allows a local health department to charge fees for services as long as:

1. Service fees are based on a plan recommended by the Health Director. This plan is approved by the Board of Health and the County Commissioners.
2. The health department does not provide the service as an agent of the State.
3. And the fees are not against the law in any way.

The State requires health departments to provide certain services, and no one may be denied these services. It is in the best interest of our community for the Department of Health to:

1. First assure that all residents can get all legally required public health services.
2. Then provide as many other recommended and needed health services as possible, within the resources we still have available to use.

The purpose of charging fees is to increase resources and use them to meet residents' needs in a fair and balanced way. Fees are necessary to help cover the full cost of providing recommended and needed health services. As much as possible, we set fee amounts based on the real cost of providing that service (calculated as direct costs plus indirect costs).

The information in the document below is the fee plan for FY14, effective on July 1, 2013. This Billing Guide for FY14 replaces all earlier plans. Fees may change during the year. You may request a list of current fees at any time.

Fees

General Information

The Department of Health charges and collects fees for most of its services.

- All fees are the responsibility of the client or responsible party.
- We accept cash and major credit or debit cards for payment of all fees. Most fees – but not all – can also be paid by check.
- Full payment is expected at the time of service.
- Clients will be informed of their account status at each visit.
- An itemized receipt will be provided to clients at time of payment.
- Under some conditions of client need, we can arrange a payment plan.

The Department of Health provides some services at no cost to the client. (There may be eligibility requirements.) Some examples are:

- WIC nutritional support services
- certain immunizations for children
- health education services
- tuberculosis (TB) screening and treatment support
- sexually transmitted disease (STD) testing and treatment
- contagious disease investigations

We may bill Medicaid, Medicare or insurance for these services. There may be separate fees – for the client or a third-party payer – for medications, supplies, lab services, X-rays and/or other medically related services.

¹ North Carolina General Statute 130A-39(g)

Payment by a “Third Party” – Medicaid, Medicare and Insurance

- State rules require the Department of Health to bill participating third party payers for services we provide. Current participating providers are:
 - Medicaid
 - Medicare
 - NC Health Choice
 - Blue Cross Blue Shield (except Blue Care)
 - Cigna
 - UnitedHealthcare (except Managed Care Plans)
- As a courtesy to clients, we may bill non-participating third party payers for medical services provided. The client is ultimately responsible for any uncovered charges (i.e., out-of-network and deductibles).
- Clients who have health insurance must show a valid insurance card when they come for their medical appointment.
- Whenever possible, we will determine if a client is eligible for Medicaid.
 - Clients must present all social security numbers and names they have used for employment purposes.
 - Social security number and name will be used *by authorized staff only* for online income verifications.

Payment by Client

- The client is responsible for paying charges that are not covered by third-party payers (insurance plans, including Medicaid and Medicare).
- The client pays any insurance co-pay amounts at the time of services.
- The Department of Health mails a bill each month to clients with any unpaid balance.
- A payment plan can be arranged, when a client shows good cause for needing one.
- Clients with low income may qualify for a reduced fee, based on a **sliding fee scale** for certain services (detail in Appendix 1, below).

Family Planning Billing Policy for Self Pay and Third Parties

- Self-Pay clients will be given a bill that shows total charges, as well as any allowable discounts.
 - Where a third party is responsible, bills are submitted to that party.
 - Third parties authorized or legally responsible to pay for clients at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level are properly billed.
 - Third party bills show total charges without any discounts.
 - Bills to third parties show total charges without discounts unless there is a contracted reimbursement rate that must be billed per the third party agreement.
-

Account Collections and Delinquent Accounts

Payment for Services

Clients are expected to make payment at the time they receive services, and/or to provide up-to-date information about their 3rd party insurance, Medicare or Medicaid coverage.

Payments Accepted

- Cash
- Credit Cards (MasterCard, Visa, American Express, and Discover)
- Debit Cards
- Personal Checks
- Business Checks for business transactions
- Money Orders
- Cashier Checks
- Monetary donations shall be accepted and considered payment on an account balance.

Collection of Monies Owed

If payment for service is not made in full on the date of service, the Department of Health may use the following methods to pursue collection of client accounts:

- billing statements
- past due notices
- collection agencies or credit bureaus
- NC Local Government Debt Setoff Clearinghouse² (deduction from a client's tax refund of money client owes Dept. of Health), administered by the NC Department of Revenue

Delinquent Accounts

- We consider an account delinquent if a payment balance is still due 120 days after the charge activity or after the most recent payment made (whichever is later).
- Delinquent accounts are subject to collection through North Carolina's Debt Setoff program for local governments². We follow all State laws and guidelines concerning this program.
- Family Planning patients are not required to meet with the Health Director in attempt to collect a delinquent account.

Service Consequences for Client of Delinquent Account

Unless state and federal program rules prohibit restricting or denying services, persons who have a delinquent account may be:

- required to pay fees before they can get more services
- denied services unless they make a good faith effort to make payment within 90 days

Exception: Any client who has Medicaid coverage will not be denied services because of an unpaid account balance. No Family Planning or STD client will be denied services because of the inability to pay for **services received** or for an unpaid account balance.

² Ref: NCGS 105A-1 et seq.

Failed Collections

The Department of Health reviews accounts each year for bad debt status. If no further collection is anticipated, the Business Officer will decide if there are amounts to be written off as bad debt for accounting purposes only.

- Debts written off are still subject to collection.
- At no time will a client be notified that the account has been written off as a bad debt.
- If a debt is written off for accounting purposes and later a payment is received, this payment is accepted and properly credited to the client's account.

Donations

Voluntary donations are accepted from clients for family planning services. Clients will NOT be pressured to make donations, and donations are not a prerequisite for the provision of services or supplies. Donations from clients do not waive the billing/charging requirements set out above.

Returned Check Policy

If a client's check is returned:

1. We will notify the client.
 - We notify the client by telephone, if possible.
 - If a telephone number is not available, we mail a notice.
 - We will inform and give the client a copy of Buncombe County's Returned Check Policy.
2. The client must replace all returned checks with cash, money order, and/or certified check. **We charge an additional \$25.00 fee per returned check.**
3. If a client has two returned checks within a one-year period:
 - He/she will have to pay for services using cash, money order, and/or certified check for the period of one year.
 - After the one-year period expires, if another returned check occurs, the client must pay all future bills with cash, money order, and/or certified check.

Refunds

If a client or other third-party payer has overpaid their charges, the credit balance is either:

- applied to future charges, or
- refunded to the payer within thirty (30) days of discovery or request.

For the Environmental Health refund policy, see the program-specific information, below

(page15.)

Residency Requirements for Services

Most health services at the Buncombe County Department of Health are available only to persons who are residents of Buncombe County. The State requires that we provide some services regardless of a client's county of residence:

MUST be Buncombe County Resident

- **Breast & Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) and WISEWOMAN program**
- **Health Promotion**
- **Immunizations** ** most adult vaccines (see note at right**)
- **Nurse Family Partnership**
- **WIC / Nutrition**

County Residency NOT Required

- **Communicable Disease Services** (such as STDs, TB)
- **Environmental Health**
Client does not have to be county resident, but services are provided only within Buncombe County.
- **Family Planning**
- **** Immunizations** child vaccines required for school attendance, certain adult vaccines (according to state guidelines)
- **Refugee Health Screening and Immunizations**

Proof of Residency:

- Proof of Buncombe County residency is required for all new clients and at the yearly income assessment review.
- Clients are required to report any change of address.
- Documentation of residency may include:
 - government-issued ID (such as a driver's license)
 - utility receipt
 - rent or mortgage statement
 - Collateral Statement completed by a non-relative
- We may make exceptions about documentation for homeless individuals who reside in Buncombe County.
- Clients who move out of Buncombe County have 30 days to obtain another provider. During these 30 days, they may continue to receive services at the Department of Health.

Program-Specific Information: Personal Health Services

Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) and WISEWOMAN Program

Is there a fee? No.

Is there a residency requirement?

Yes. Clients must be residents of Buncombe County.

Program policies to note? (detailed below)

- BCCCP/Wise-Woman Program Eligibility Requirements

BCCCP / Wise Woman Program Eligibility Requirements

- A woman must be uninsured or under-insured to be eligible for the BCCCP and WISEWOMAN programs.
- Also, her family unit must have annual gross income at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Income Level.

Family-Size (# Persons)	250% FPL Income
1	\$ 28,725
2	\$ 38,775
3	\$ 48,825
4	\$ 58,875
For each extra person	Add \$ 10,050

The following persons are counted as part of the family unit, when determining income-based eligibility:

- client
- spouse of client
- all children under 18 years of age, including step-children who live in the home
(see Appendix 1, below, for further detail)

Family Planning

Is there a fee?

Yes, based on the service requested and client's income (see "Confidential Services" note, below, about individual income and sliding fee scale)

How is the fee paid?

- Full payment, co-pay or sliding scale percentage is due at time of service.
- BCDH currently participates with Medicaid, Medicare, Blue Cross Blue Shield (except Blue Care), Cigna, UnitedHealthcare (except Managed Care Plans), and NC Health Choice.
- BCDH will bill other third party payers, only as a courtesy. The client is ultimately responsible for any uncovered charges.

Is there a sliding fee scale?

- Yes. There is a different sliding fee scale for Family Planning. (See Appendix 1, page 16, top table.) Also, see policy below on Confidential Services.

Program policies to note? (detailed below)

- Confidential Services

Is there a residency requirement?

No. Services and sliding fee scale are available regardless of county of residence.

Confidential Services

All Department of Health services are confidential. Teens and other family planning clients may have added privacy by requesting that no mailings are sent to their residence, no appointment reminders are left on voicemail, etc. For sliding fee scale eligibility (Appendix 1 below), clients requesting these additional privacy measures are considered to be a separate family unit. We only look at their own income, and the "economic unit" size is one person on the income table.

Health Promotion

Is there a fee?

We may charge fees for health education and promotion services we provide to individuals or groups. Details and policies are specific to the program offered.

Is there a residency requirement?

Yes. Clients must be residents of Buncombe County

Program policies to note? None

Immunizations

Is there a fee?

- There **are** fees for almost all **adult and child** immunizations.
- State Supplied Vaccine is available to those who qualify.
- Contact our Immunizations clinic for further information.

How is the fee paid?

- For child immunizations only, we bill **all** insurance plans directly. After we receive the insurance payment, we send the client a bill if there is any unpaid balance (i.e., non-covered, out-of-network, or unmet deductible). If you are not able to pay in full at that time, you can contact our Accounting Office to make a payment plan.
- BCDH currently participates with these insurance programs: Medicaid, Medicare, Blue Cross Blue Shield (except Blue Care), Cigna, UnitedHealthcare (except Managed Care Plans), and NC Health Choice. If you are under one of these plans, we bill them directly for both adult and child immunizations.
- For adults who use some other insurance company or have no insurance at all, the client must pay in full at the time of service.

Is there a sliding fee scale?

- No, except for post-exposure rabies treatment provided here at Buncombe County Dept of Health (see note below).

Is there a residency requirement?

No, not for those **childhood** immunizations that are required for school attendance.

Yes, for **most adult** immunizations the client must be a resident of Buncombe County. In accordance with state guidelines, some adult vaccines are provided regardless of county residence. (Contact Immunization Services for further information.)

Program policies to note? (detailed below)

- Post-Exposure Treatment for Rabies

Post-Exposure Treatment for Rabies

Rabies infection is fatal unless the person begins treatment right away. The Department of Health works with Mission Hospitals to make sure any county resident who is exposed to rabies can receive the needed vaccine. After the initial exam and treatment at Mission, we can give any follow-up shots that are due Monday-Friday.

The client is responsible for the cost of treatment at BCDH and at Mission Hospitals. At BCDH, we do not require payment in advance for rabies treatment. **No Buncombe County resident is turned away from getting follow-up rabies shots at BCDH.** We will bill any insurance plan. If a client gets a bill from BCDH and can't pay at that time, he/she can ask for a payment plan. **To apply for the Sliding Fee Scale**, the client must also apply for any Rabies Vaccine Assistance Program for

which he/she may be eligible. Proof of income is required. If a client is approved for the sliding fee scale, we apply this to any unpaid balance.

Nurse Family Partnership

Is there a fee?

- There are no client fees for Nurse Family Partnership services.
- We bill Medicaid, where appropriate.

Is there a residency requirement?

Yes. Clients must be residents of Buncombe County.

Program policies to note? None

Refugee Health (Limited Services)

Is there a fee?

- No. Immunizations plus TB and lead screening are provided at no charge to clients who qualify for Refugee Health services.
- Clients must go elsewhere for their Refugee Health Physical Assessment Exam and for any medical treatment that may be needed. Any fee for follow-up care is a matter between the client and whichever medical office provides the service.

Is there a sliding fee scale? No

Is there a residency requirement? No

Program policies to note? (detailed below)

NC Division of Public Health Policy

NC Division of Public Health Policy

The state's policy on "Refugee Health Assessments Provided in Health Departments" can be found at:

<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dma/mp/1d1.pdf>

Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) and HIV Control

Is there a fee?

- There are no client fees for routine STD screenings.
- Client fees may be associated with non-routine STD screenings.
- We may bill Medicaid, where appropriate.

Is there a residency requirement? No

Program policies to note? None

Tuberculosis (TB)

Is there a fee?

- **There are client fees** for routine TB skin tests (or test waivers) **for reasons such as employment or school admission.**
- **There are no client fees** for routine TB-control services.
- Client fees may be associated with non-routine TB testing (i.e., T-SPOT that is only available to certain clients).

How is the fee paid?

- Full payment or co-pay is the responsibility of the client or client guardian.
- BCDH currently participates with Medicaid, Medicare, Blue Cross Blue Shield (except Blue Care), Cigna, UnitedHealthcare (except Managed Care Plans), and NC Health Choice.
- We may bill Medicaid, as appropriate, for TB-control services.

Is there a sliding fee scale? No

Is there a residency requirement? No*.

*All local health departments in North Carolina coordinate TB prevention and control efforts in their county. To better ensure continuity of care, out-of-county residents are strongly encouraged to work with their local county health department. We are happy to help clients contact their health department to arrange for needed services.

Program policies to note? None

WIC / Nutrition

Is there a fee?

- There are no client fees for WIC services.
- There are fees for clinic-based Medical Nutrition Therapy services.

How is the fee paid? (Medical Nutrition Therapy)

- Full payment, co-pay or sliding scale percentage is the responsibility of the client or client guardian.
- BCDH currently participates with Medicaid, Medicare, Blue Cross Blue Shield (except Blue Care), Cigna, UnitedHealthcare (except Managed Care Plans), and NC Health Choice.
- BCDH will bill other third party payers, only as a courtesy.
The client is ultimately responsible for any uncovered charges (i.e., out-of-network or out of network charges).

Is there a residency requirement?

Yes. This service is only available to Buncombe County residents.

Program policies to note? None

Program-Specific Information: Property Owners & Businesses

Environmental Health

Is there a fee? Yes

How is the fee paid? Fees are collected before services are rendered.

Is there a sliding fee scale? No

Is there a residency requirement? No

Program policies to note? (detailed below)

- Refund Policy
- Rate Adjustment Policy

Refund Policy

Fee payments are generally non-refundable once a service has been rendered by the agency. Service is considered rendered when an Environmental Health Specialist has substantially delivered the requested service.

Fees cannot be refunded because the applicant no longer wishes to pursue the original project, except under the conditions described below.

General Refund Procedure:

- Program supervisor makes a recommendation to issue a refund.
- Director of Environmental Health must sign and approve all such refunds.
- Director of Environmental Health may approve exceptions to the policies below, when there are unusual or extenuating circumstances.
- Applications not acted upon within 60 days will be considered inactive, until the Department is notified by the applicant. Inactive applications may be refunded upon request, within one year of the application date.
- If the original service has not been rendered, client may request that fee payments be transferred to other services. The transfer must be accomplished upon cancellation of the original service.

Specific Refund Procedures:

Improvement Permits

- May be refunded if the service has not been rendered.
- Refunds for this service are to be the full amount of the original fee.
- Refunds are not to be issued where the Environmental Health Specialist determines that the property cannot be used for the intended project. In this case, services are considered rendered regardless of the outcome or the amount of time spent making the determination.

Authorization to Construct

- Fees are collected for two separate services:
 - *Construction Authorization* for the purpose of obtaining a building permit, and
 - *Operations Permit* for the purpose of obtaining final approval.
- Because these are two separate services, applicants may be entitled to a refund for one or both services.
- If no service has been rendered the applicant may request a full refund or transfer of the fee to another service.
- If the applicant has received a service related to the Construction Authorization, but does not wish to pursue installing the approved septic system, he/she is entitled to a refund equal to half the original fee.
- Property that is denied a Construction Authorization will receive a refund equal to half of the original fee.

Authorization to Construct/Existing System Revision

- If no service has been rendered the applicant may request a full refund or transfer of the fee to another service.
- No refund will be made when service is rendered and authorization is denied.

Existing System Inspection

- If no service has been rendered the applicant may request a full refund or transfer of the fee to another service.

Well Permit / Inspection

- If no service has been rendered the applicant may request a full refund or transfer of the fee to another service.
- If an applicant has received a service related to well construction, but does not wish to pursue drilling the approved well, he/she is entitled to a refund equal to half the original fee.

Rate Adjustment Policy

Payment for an application is valid for 6 months. If initial action on the application is requested more than 6 months from initial payment of the fee, the applicant will be required to pay the difference (if any) between the original fee and the current fee before action can proceed. In the event of a reduction in fees the applicant will be refunded the difference between the old fee and any reduced fee amount.

Appendix 1: Sliding Fee Scales

Buncombe County Department of Health – Sliding Fee Scales for FY14

For services that are eligible for Sliding Fee Scale payment, the Department of Health uses the current DHHS Federal Poverty Guidelines as published in the *Federal Register*. FY2014 guidelines were published January 24, 2013 (FR Doc No: 2012-1603) and may be subject to change during the fiscal year.

FY 2014 Sliding Fee Scale for Family Planning Services (Up to 250% FPL - Effective 02/1/2014 - 1/31/2015)

# Persons in Econ. Unit	% of Clinic Fee Charged to Client, According to Economic Unit Size & Income					
	0% Pay	20% Pay	40% Pay	60% Pay	80% Pay	100% Pay
1	0 - 11,670	11,671 - 16,046	16,047 - 20,423	20,424 - 24,799	24,800 - 29,174	29,175 - Over
2	0 - 15,730	15,731 - 21,629	21,630 - 27,528	27,529 - 33,426	33,427 - 39,324	39,325 - Over
3	0 - 19,790	19,791 - 27,211	27,212 - 34,633	34,634 - 42,054	42,055 - 49,474	49,475 - Over
4	0 - 23,850	23,851 - 32,794	32,795 - 41,738	41,739 - 50,681	50,682 - 59,624	59,625 - Over
5	0 - 27,910	27,911 - 38,376	38,377 - 48,843	48,844 - 59,309	59,310 - 69,774	69,775 - Over
6	0 - 31,970	31,971 - 43,959	43,960 - 55,948	55,949 - 67,936	67,937 - 79,924	79,925 - Over
7	0 - 36,030	36,031 - 49,541	49,542 - 63,053	63,054 - 76,564	76,565 - 90,074	90,075 - Over
8	0 - 40,090	40,091 - 55,124	55,125 - 70,158	70,159 - 85,191	85,192 - 100,224	100,225 - Over
9	0 - 44,150	44,151 - 60,706	60,707 - 77,263	77,264 - 93,819	93,820 - 110,374	110,375 - Over
10	0 - 48,210	48,211 - 66,289	66,290 - 84,368	84,369 - 102,446	102,447 - 120,524	120,525 - Over
11	0 - 52,270	52,271 - 71,871	71,872 - 91,473	91,474 - 111,074	111,075 - 130,674	130,675 - Over
12	0 - 56,330	56,331 - 77,454	77,455 - 98,578	98,579 - 119,701	119,702 - 140,824	140,825 - Over
13	0 - 60,390	60,391 - 83,036	83,037 - 105,683	105,684 - 128,329	128,330 - 150,974	150,975 - Over
14	0 - 64,450	64,451 - 88,619	88,620 - 112,788	112,789 - 136,956	136,957 - 161,124	161,125 - Over
15	0 - 68,510	68,511 - 94,201	94,202 - 119,893	119,894 - 145,584	145,585 - 171,274	171,275 - Over
	≤100% FPL	>100% & ≤137.5% FPL	>137.5% & ≤175% FPL	>175% & ≤212.5% FPL	>212.5% & <250% FPL	≥250% FPL
FY 2014 - Client's Economic Unit Income as % of Federal Poverty Level						

FY 2014 Sliding Fee Scale for Any Other Eligible Service (Up to 200% FPL - Effective 2/1/2014 - 1/31/2015)

# Persons in Econ. Unit	% of Clinic Fee Charged to Patient, According to Economic Unit Size & Income					
	0% Pay	20% Pay	40% Pay	60% Pay	80% Pay	100% Pay
1	0 - 11,670	11,671 - 14,588	14,589 - 17,505	17,506 - 20,423	20,424 - 23,339	23,340 - Over
2	0 - 15,730	15,731 - 19,663	19,664 - 23,595	23,596 - 27,528	27,529 - 31,459	31,460 - Over
3	0 - 19,790	19,791 - 24,738	24,739 - 29,685	29,686 - 34,633	34,634 - 39,579	39,580 - Over
4	0 - 23,850	23,851 - 29,813	29,814 - 35,775	35,776 - 41,738	41,739 - 47,699	47,700 - Over
5	0 - 27,910	27,911 - 34,888	34,889 - 41,865	41,866 - 48,843	48,844 - 55,819	55,820 - Over
6	0 - 31,970	31,971 - 39,963	39,964 - 47,955	47,956 - 55,948	55,949 - 63,939	63,940 - Over
7	0 - 36,030	36,031 - 45,038	45,039 - 54,045	54,046 - 63,053	63,054 - 72,059	72,060 - Over
8	0 - 40,090	40,091 - 50,113	50,114 - 60,135	60,136 - 70,158	70,159 - 80,179	80,180 - Over
9	0 - 44,150	44,151 - 55,188	55,189 - 66,225	66,226 - 77,263	77,264 - 88,299	88,300 - Over
10	0 - 48,210	48,211 - 60,263	60,264 - 72,315	72,316 - 84,368	84,369 - 96,419	96,420 - Over
11	0 - 52,270	52,271 - 65,338	65,339 - 78,405	78,406 - 91,473	91,474 - 104,539	104,540 - Over
12	0 - 56,330	56,331 - 70,413	70,414 - 84,495	84,496 - 98,578	98,579 - 112,659	112,660 - Over
13	0 - 60,390	60,391 - 75,488	75,489 - 90,585	90,586 - 105,683	105,684 - 120,779	120,780 - Over
14	0 - 64,450	64,451 - 80,563	80,564 - 96,675	96,676 - 112,788	112,789 - 128,899	128,900 - Over
15	0 - 68,510	68,511 - 85,638	85,639 - 102,765	102,766 - 119,893	119,894 - 137,019	137,020 - Over
	≤100% FPL	>100% & ≤125% FPL	>125% & ≤150% FPL	>150% & ≤175% FPL	>175% & <200% FPL	≥200% FPL
FY 2014 - Client's Economic Unit Income as % of Federal Poverty Level						

Guidelines for Determining Eligibility for Sliding Fee Scale

How does the Sliding Fee Scale work?

- Clients must show proof of income and family size.
- Staff will use this information to determine what percent of fees a client must pay.
See Appendix 1: Sliding Fee Scale (page16)
- If income cannot be confirmed at the time of screening, or if a client declines to provide information to verify employment, the charge for services will be at 100% pay.
 - If proof of income is received at a later date, retroactive adjustments are limited to charges within the past 30 days.
- If clients report false information, they will no longer be allowed to use the sliding scale, except for Family Planning service fees.
- Eligibility for reduced fees will be re-checked:
 - anytime the client's income and household size changes; and/or
 - once every 12 months.
- The Clinical Services Supervisor may make exceptions to the fee policies for those who are unable, for good cause, to pay for family planning services.
- Income reported for Family Planning financial eligibility screening can be used through other programs offered in the agency.

Which BCDH services offer a Sliding Fee Scale*?

- Family Planning and post-exposure rabies treatment.
 - * There may be conditions on when the sliding fee scale applies (see sections above).

When does the Sliding Fee Scale discount NOT apply?

- for insurance co-payments or deductibles
- for certain service charges, including:
 - **Pharmaceutical** charges for **Foreign Travel** medications
 - **Environmental Health** services
 - **Immunization** services that use State-supplied vaccine
 - **Refugee** services
 - **Medical Records** copies
 - certain other "Miscellaneous" services

Guidelines for Sliding Fee Scale Eligibility (*continued*)**How often is a client screened for Sliding Fee Scale eligibility?**

We review financial information on clients to see if they are eligible for reduced fees on the Department of Health's Sliding Fee Scale (tables on page 17). The "Economic Unit is the method of income collection used to determine financial eligibility" for patient fees. We do financial screening:

- on all new clients
- when clients report that family size and/or income has changed
- if it has been **1 year** or more since they were last screened.

Who is considered a member of the "family" for determining eligibility?**Definition of Family Size/Household and Countable Gross Income**

1. **Family:** A family of two or more is defined as a group of persons related by birth, marriage, adoption, or a defined dependent relationship, who live together in a household. Persons are considered members of a "family" when their production of income and consumption of goods are related.

- A client with no income must be considered part of the larger family unit that is providing support to the client.
- Groups of persons living in the same house with other people may be considered a separate family unit. For example, if two sisters and their children live in the same house and both work and support their own children, they would be considered two separate households.

2. **Dependent Status:** Dependent household members are defined as those persons for whom the head of household:

- has a legal responsibility to support, or
- has voluntarily extended support

These relationships are usually defined as legal adoptions and guardianships.

Guardianship status must be supported by court documents defining the guardian relationship /responsibility.

Exceptions:

- A foster child assigned by DSS shall always be considered a family of one.
- **Teens and others requesting confidential Family Planning Services will have their income assessed as a family of one.**

3. **Family/Household Income:** Dollar amounts represent gross monthly income, the total cash receipts before taxes, from all sources. This is the total of all household income from each "counted" family member.

Guidelines for Sliding Fee Scale Eligibility (*continued*)

4. **Income Sources:** All income from full or part time employment, produced by all dependents, must be declared as part of the household income. Income sources include:
- salaries and wages
 - earnings from self-employment (deduct business expenses, except depreciation)
 - interest income
 - all investment and rental income
 - public assistance
 - unemployment benefits
 - worker's compensation
 - alimony and child support
 - military allotments
 - Social Security benefits
 - VA benefits
 - retirement and pension pay
 - insurance or annuity plans
 - gaming proceeds
- and any other income not represented here that contributes to the household consumption of goods. This list is not all-inclusive.
5. **Income Verification:** We require income verification before a client can be eligible for a sliding scale discount. Any **one** of the following is acceptable:
- current pay stubs
 - signed note from employer that shows client's income before taxes are taken out
 - W-2 Forms
 - unemployment letter
 - award letter from Social Security Office, VA or Railroad Retirement Board
 - 1099's received from IRS
 - paper from the IRS that shows client did not file taxes
 - **Self-employed clients** may bring accounting records or income tax return for the most recent calendar year. (Entire tax return must be provided in order to allow deductions for business expenses.)

Appendix 2: Service Fees

Service Fees are subject to change throughout the year. We are happy to speak with you by phone or in person to tell you what a service costs, answer questions about our fees, and provide fee documentation on request. To speak with the Accounting Department, call 828-250-5218.

Medical Records Copy Charges

The Department of Health’s charges for Medical Record and Environmental Health Record copies are within the limits set by North Carolina state law (GS §90-411).

Copying charges are:

- \$.75 per page for up to 25 pages;
- \$.50 per page for pages 26 through 100;
- \$.25 for each page thereafter.

The table at right shows the specific charge from 1 to 150 pages.

For copy requests greater than 150 pages, the charge is \$68.75 plus an additional \$.25 for each page over 150.

#Pgs	Charge	#Pgs	Charge	#Pgs	Charge
1	\$ 0.75	51	\$ 31.75	101	\$ 56.50
2	\$ 1.50	52	\$ 32.25	102	\$ 56.75
3	\$ 2.25	53	\$ 32.75	103	\$ 57.00
4	\$ 3.00	54	\$ 33.25	104	\$ 57.25
5	\$ 3.75	55	\$ 33.75	105	\$ 57.50
6	\$ 4.50	56	\$ 34.25	106	\$ 57.75
7	\$ 5.25	57	\$ 34.75	107	\$ 58.00
8	\$ 6.00	58	\$ 35.25	108	\$ 58.25
9	\$ 6.75	59	\$ 35.75	109	\$ 58.50
10	\$ 7.50	60	\$ 36.25	110	\$ 58.75
11	\$ 8.25	61	\$ 36.75	111	\$ 59.00
12	\$ 9.00	62	\$ 37.25	112	\$ 59.25
13	\$ 9.75	63	\$ 37.75	113	\$ 59.50
14	\$ 10.50	64	\$ 38.25	114	\$ 59.75
15	\$ 11.25	65	\$ 38.75	115	\$ 60.00
16	\$ 12.00	66	\$ 39.25	116	\$ 60.25
17	\$ 12.75	67	\$ 39.75	117	\$ 60.50
18	\$ 13.50	68	\$ 40.25	118	\$ 60.75
19	\$ 14.25	69	\$ 40.75	119	\$ 61.00
20	\$ 15.00	70	\$ 41.25	120	\$ 61.25
21	\$ 15.75	71	\$ 41.75	121	\$ 61.50
22	\$ 16.50	72	\$ 42.25	122	\$ 61.75
23	\$ 17.25	73	\$ 42.75	123	\$ 62.00
24	\$ 18.00	74	\$ 43.25	124	\$ 62.25
25	\$ 18.75	75	\$ 43.75	125	\$ 62.50
26	\$ 19.25	76	\$ 44.25	126	\$ 62.75
27	\$ 19.75	77	\$ 44.75	127	\$ 63.00
28	\$ 20.25	78	\$ 45.25	128	\$ 63.25
29	\$ 20.75	79	\$ 45.75	129	\$ 63.50
30	\$ 21.25	80	\$ 46.25	130	\$ 63.75
31	\$ 21.75	81	\$ 46.75	131	\$ 64.00
32	\$ 22.25	82	\$ 47.25	132	\$ 64.25
33	\$ 22.75	83	\$ 47.75	133	\$ 64.50
34	\$ 23.25	84	\$ 48.25	134	\$ 64.75
35	\$ 23.75	85	\$ 48.75	135	\$ 65.00
36	\$ 24.25	86	\$ 49.25	136	\$ 65.25
37	\$ 24.75	87	\$ 49.75	137	\$ 65.50
38	\$ 25.25	88	\$ 50.25	138	\$ 65.75
39	\$ 25.75	89	\$ 50.75	139	\$ 66.00
40	\$ 26.25	90	\$ 51.25	140	\$ 66.25
41	\$ 26.75	91	\$ 51.75	141	\$ 66.50
42	\$ 27.25	92	\$ 52.25	142	\$ 66.75
43	\$ 27.75	93	\$ 52.75	143	\$ 67.00
44	\$ 28.25	94	\$ 53.25	144	\$ 67.25
45	\$ 28.75	95	\$ 53.75	145	\$ 67.50
46	\$ 29.25	96	\$ 54.25	146	\$ 67.75
47	\$ 29.75	97	\$ 54.75	147	\$ 68.00
48	\$ 30.25	98	\$ 55.25	148	\$ 68.25
49	\$ 30.75	99	\$ 55.75	149	\$ 68.50
50	\$ 31.25	100	\$ 56.25	150	\$ 68.75

Total charge for more than 150 pages = \$68.75 + \$.25 for each additional page