

Northwest Relationships Sliding Fee Discount Program Policy

Our practice is committed to providing high-quality therapy services to all clients, regardless of their financial situation. We understand the importance of mental health support and aim to ensure that our services are affordable and accessible for everyone. To this end, we offer a sliding fee scale based on the client's financial ability and a limited number of pro bono slots.

POLICY: To make available free or discounted services to those in need.

PURPOSE: All patients seeking health care services at Northwest Relationships 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 medical services (uninsured or underinsured).

Northwest Relationships will offer a Sliding Fee Discount Program to all who are unable to pay for their services. Northwest Relationships will base 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.

PROCEDURE:

The following guidelines are to be followed in providing the Sliding Fee Discount Program.

1. Notification: Northwest Relationships will notify patients of the Sliding Fee Discount Program by:
 - Payment Policy Brochure will be available to all patients at the time of service.
 - Notification of the Sliding Fee Discount Program will be offered to each patient upon admission.
 - Sliding Fee Discount Program application will be included with collection notices sent out by Northwest Relationships.
 - An explanation of our Sliding Fee Discount Program and our application form are available on Northwest Relationships's website.
 - Northwest Relationships places notification of Sliding Fee Discount Program in the clinic waiting area.
2. Request for discount: Requests for discounted services may be made by patients, family members, social services staff or others who are aware of existing financial hardship. The Sliding Fee Discount Program will only be made available for clinic visits. Information and forms can be obtained from the Office Manager.

3. Administration: The Sliding Fee Discount Program procedure will be administered through the Business Office Manager or their designee. Information about the Sliding Fee Discount Program policy and procedure will be provided to patients. Staff are to offer assistance for completion of the application. Dignity and confidentiality will be respected for all who seek and/or are provided health care services.
4. Completion of Application: The patient/responsible party must complete the Sliding Fee Discount Program application in its entirety. Staff will be available, as needed, to assist patient/responsible party with applications. By signing the Sliding Fee Discount Program application, persons are confirming their income to Northwest Relationships as disclosed on the application form.
5. Eligibility: Discounts will be based on income and family size only.
 - 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. Northwest Relationships 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.
6. Income verification: Applicants may provide one of the following: prior year W-2, two most recent pay stubs, letter from employer, 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. Self-declaration of Income may be used. Patients who are unable to provide written verification may provide a signed statement of income.
7. Discounts: 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](#).
8. Nominal Fee: Patients with incomes above 100% of poverty, but at or below 200% poverty will be charged a nominal fee according to the attached 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.

9. **Waiving of Charges:** In certain situations, patients may not be able to pay the nominal or discount fee. Waiving of charges must be approved by Northwest Relationships's designated official. Any waiving of charges should be documented in the patient's file along with an explanation.
10. **Applicant notification:** The Sliding Fee Discount Program determination will be provided to the applicant(s) in writing, and will include the percentage of Sliding Fee Discount Program write off, or, if applicable, the reason for denial. If the application is approved for less than a 100% discount or denied, Northwest Relationships will work with the patient and/or responsible party to establish payment arrangements. Sliding Fee 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 applicant has the option to reapply after the 12 months have expired or anytime there has been a significant change in family income. When the applicant reapplies, the look back period will be the lesser of six months or the expiration of their last Sliding Fee Discount Program application.
11. **Refusal to Pay:** If a patient verbally expresses an unwillingness to pay or vacates the premises without paying for services, the patient will be contacted in writing regarding their payment obligations. If the patient is not on the sliding fee schedule, a copy of the sliding fee discount program application will be sent with the notice. If the patient does not make effort to pay or fails to respond within 60 days, this constitutes refusal to pay. At this point in time, Northwest Relationships can explore options not limited to, but including offering the patient a payment plan, waiving of charges, or referring the patient to collections.
12. **Record keeping:** Information related to Sliding Fee Discount Program decisions will be maintained and preserved in a centralized confidential file located in the Business Office Manager's Office, in an effort to preserve the dignity of those receiving free or discounted care.
 - a. Applicants that have been approved for the Sliding Fee Discount Program will be logged in Northwest Relationships's practice management system, noting names of applicants, dates of coverage and percentage of coverage.
 - b. The Business Office Manager will maintain an additional monthly log identifying Sliding Fee Discount Program recipients and dollar amounts. Denials and applications not returned will also be logged.
13. **Policy and procedure review:** The Sliding Fee Schedule will be updated based on the current Federal Poverty Guidelines. Northwest Relationships will also review possible changes in our policy and procedures and for examining institutional practices which may serve as barriers preventing eligible patients from having access to our community care provisions.
14. **Budget:** During the annual budget process, an estimated amount of Sliding Fee Discount Program service will be placed into the budget as a deduction from revenue.



Pro Bono Services

We firmly believe in the principle of equal access to therapy services, which is why we offer a limited number of pro bono slots based on availability. These slots are designed for individuals or families who are unable to afford the minimum fee on our sliding scale due to extreme financial hardship. To apply for a pro bono slot, please contact our office directly.

Please note that all regular fees are due at the time of service. If you have any questions or concerns about the sliding fee scale or our pro bono services, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Our commitment is to provide comprehensive, high-quality therapy that is affordable for everyone in our community. We appreciate your understanding and adherence to this sliding fee scale and pro bono policy.



Therapeutic Services Sliding Fee Discount Application

It is the policy of Northwest Relationships to provide essential services regardless of the patient’s ability to pay. NWR offers discounts based on family size and annual income.

Please complete the following information and return to the front desk to determine if you or members of your family are eligible for a discount. The discount will apply to all services received at this clinic. You must complete this form every 12 months or if your financial situation changes.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Please list all household members, including those under age 18.

	Name	Date of Birth
Self		
Other		
Other		
Other		
Other		

Annual Income Reporting

Enter income below and attach documentation to this application.

Source	Self	Other	Total
Gross wages, salaries, tips, etc.			
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			
TOTAL INCOME			

I certify that the family size and income information shown above is correct.

Name (Print) _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

Patient Name: _____

Approved Discount: _____

Approved by: _____

Date Approved: _____

Verification Checklist	Yes	No
Identification/Address: Driver's license, utility bill, employment identification, or other		
Income: Prior year tax return, three most recent pay stubs, or other		



2023 Sliding Fee Scale for Behavioral Health Services						
Total Fees	\$20 Nominal Fee	20% of total charges	40% of total charges,	60% of total charges	80% of total charges	Full Charges
Status	A	B	C	D	E	F
Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	≤ 100%	101-125%	126-150%	151-175%	176-200%	> 200%
Family Size						
1	0-\$14,580	\$14,581-\$18,225	\$18,226-\$21,870	\$21,871-\$25,515	\$25,516-\$29,160	\$29,161+
2	0-\$19,720	\$19,721-\$24,650	\$24,651-\$29,580	\$29,581-\$34,510	\$34,511-\$39,440	\$39,441+
3	0-\$24,860	\$24,861-\$31,075	\$31,076-\$37,290	\$37,291-\$43,505	\$43,506-\$49,720	\$49,721+
4	0-\$30,000	\$30,001-\$37,500	\$37,501-\$45,000	\$45,001-\$52,500	\$52,501-\$60,000	\$60,001+
5	0-\$35,140	\$35,141-\$43,925	\$43,926-\$52,710	\$52,711-\$61,495	\$61,496-\$70,280	\$70,281+
6	0-\$40,280	\$40,281-\$50,350	\$50,351-\$60,420	\$60,421-\$70,490	\$70,491-\$80,560	\$80,561+
7	0-\$45,420	\$45,421-\$56,775	\$56,776-\$68,130	\$68,131-\$79,485	\$79,486-\$90,840	\$90,841+
8	0-\$50,560	\$50,561-\$63,200	\$63,201-\$75,840	\$75,841-\$88,480	\$88,481-\$101,120	\$101,121+
9	0-\$55,700	\$55,701-\$69,625	\$69,626-\$83,550	\$83,551-\$97,475	\$97,476-\$111,400	\$111,401+
10	0-\$60,840	\$60,841-\$76,050	\$76,051-\$91,260	\$91,261-\$106,470	\$106,471-\$121,680	\$121,681+
11	0-\$65,980	\$65,981-\$82,475	\$82,476-\$98,970	\$98,971-\$115,465	\$115,466-\$131,960	\$131,961+
12	0-\$71,120	\$71,121-\$88,900	\$88,901-\$106,680	\$106,681-\$124,460	\$124,461-\$142,240	\$142,241+

*Status A patients receive a 100% discount on total charges and are asked to pay a nominal fee of \$20 for behavioral health services.

**Status B, C, D and E patients are asked to pay a down payment of \$30 at time of visit and will be billed for the remainder of their charges with their eligible discount applied.

**Status F patients are not eligible for discounts. They are asked to pay a down payment at time of service and will be billed for remaining charges.

**Down payments are only collected for office visits. Patients will receive a bill for these services with their eligible discount applied.

This sliding fee scale applies to patients who are uninsured or underinsured. Insured patients are asked to pay their insurance co-pay, and their insurance is billed for services. Insured patients are asked to provide income information for sliding fee scale eligibility. If there are any charges not covered by insurance, their eligible sliding fee scale discount is applied to their balance. Northwest Relationships accepts most insurances including Medicaid.

Northwest Relationships provides all services regardless of a patient's ability to pay. If a patient is not able to pay the nominal fee or down payment at time of visit, they will be asked to pay any amount they can. All patients will be served whether or not they can pay the nominal fee or down payment.