

WRIGHT COUNTY FEE POLICY
Mediation Services
Effective 01/01/02 (Rev. 10/06/08)

Pursuant to MN Statute 393.12, a social services agency may charge fees for social services furnished to a family or individual, not on public assistance, according to an established fee schedule based on the client's ability to pay.

Determination of Income and Assets:

Definition: Federal Poverty Level: The annual income level based upon household size and adjusted gross household income as defined in the poverty guidelines updated annually in the Federal Register by DHS under authority of section 673 (2) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981.

Definition: Adjusted Gross Household Income: Total annualized cash receipts before taxes from all sources for all members of the household.

Definition: Household: All persons who occupy a housing unit, whether they are related to each other or not.

Definition: Income and Assets: Income and assets include, but are not limited to, earned income (wages), unearned income such as Social Security benefits (SSI, RSDI, survivors), veterans benefits, railroad retirement benefits, pension payments, and child support received and/or paid. Assets include, but are not limited to, cash or savings on hand, checking and savings accounts, stocks, bonds, certificate of deposits, mutual funds, and retirement plans if client is over age 59½.

Fee Determination:

A \$250 mediation fee will be charged to each adult party involved in the service based on their ability to pay. Wright County uses a sliding fee schedule, which takes into account income, assets, child support received and/or paid, and household size to *determine ability to pay*.

The client(s) *will be required to* cooperate fully with the Collections Officer to determine their fee, based on a signed court order. Failure to cooperate, may result in the client being assessed the entire cost of the service provided.

If the client refuses to provide sufficient information to determine household size and adjusted gross household income, it will be presumed that the adjusted gross household income is above the Federal poverty guideline. No fee will be charged to a client whose adjusted gross income is below the Federal poverty guideline.

The total fee assessed cannot exceed the cost of service.

Payment Options:

Payment is due at the time of the fee determination. If payment of the entire fee amount would cause a financial hardship on the household unit, the client has the option of monthly payments of no less than 10% of the beginning balance. Wright County may require the client to sign a stipulation agreement. Any deviation from this must be approved by the Fiscal Manager.

Wright County may use Revenue Recapture to collect any balance owing from MN State refunds.

Wright County may add an \$85 collection charge to any balance owing that is greater than ninety (90) days overdue.

Appeal Procedure:

The client must appeal in writing to the Collections Offer stating the reasons a waiver or variance should be granted and the desire for a review hearing.

Appeals must be filed within thirty (30) days of the first billing for the fee.

The Collections Officer will notify the client with the date and time of the review hearing. A panel of three (3) Wright County Human Services supervisors will review the request.