

BOARD OF SELECTMEN POLICY

Emergency Medical Services Collection

Date Approved by BOS:

Signature of Chair:

July 29, 2013

Deborah N. Manger

I. Purpose

It is the policy of the Town of Lexington to bill all patients for services provided for emergency medical treatment and transportation to a medical facility, and to pursue reasonable measures to collect billed amounts except where waiver of the fee is warranted due to financial hardship. The Town of Lexington Emergency Medical Services Collection Policy applies to all transported users or responsible parties, charged at a consistent rate as approved by the Board of Selectmen. The following policy is established to provide uniform collection and/or abatement of payments due the Town of Lexington and the Lexington Fire Department, for ambulance services.

II. Policy for Collecting, Writing-Off, Abating, of Liening of Unpaid Ambulance Fees

- A. The Town's ambulance billing provider shall endeavor to collect on any amounts due, by issuing written statements and past due notices to delinquent parties. The requirements found in this policy shall be included as part of the ambulance billing notices.
- B. 14% simple interest per annum shall be applied to all unpaid bills after thirty (30) days past due. Such interest shall be reflected in the bills issued by the Town's ambulance billing provider.
- C. Upon exhaustion of reasonable efforts by the ambulance billing provider to collect delinquent accounts, it shall, on a monthly basis, submit to the Town those accounts that it deems are uncollectible and therefore are candidates for removal from the Town's books (writing-off) or further collection efforts by a licensed collection agent.
- D. The Town Manager, upon recommendation of the Fire Chief and Treasurer/Collector, shall declare an account/accounts uncollectible, authorize the ambulance billing provider to write the account(s) off its books, and shall concurrently notify the Town Accountant of such authorization, who, in turn, will write them off the Town's books.
- E. Upon declaration of an account as uncollectible, the ambulance billing provider shall be authorized to refer the account/accounts to a licensed collection agent. (Only accounts exceeding \$200 dollars shall be sent to a collection agent, unless a different amount is approved by the Town Manager at the recommendation of the Assistant Town Manager for Finance.)
- F. The Town of Lexington shall authorize the collection agent, after reasonable efforts, as defined and agreed upon between the Town and ambulance billing provider, to

- G. report unpaid accounts to a Credit Bureau. The ambulance billing provider shall notify the Fire Chief, Treasurer/Collector and Town Accountant of those accounts concurrent with their being reported to a Credit Bureau.
- H. Upon notification from the collection agent that the account has been reported to a Credit Bureau, the Town shall make a determination as to whether or not that account shall be liened by the Treasurer/Collector. All costs of recording, as determined by the Treasurer/Collector, shall be borne by the property owner. Prior to liening, the Treasurer/Collection shall issue a final delinquent letter notifying the property owner of the impending lien.

III. Policy for Waiver of Payment Due to a Financial Hardship

- A. The Town of Lexington may establish that a financial hardship exists, justifying a waiver of the amount due. The following process and guidelines will be used to determine if a financial hardship exist:
 - 1. All communications with accounts, whether verbally or in writing, shall include a notification that amounts owed may be waived upon demonstration of financial hardship.
 - 2. The Town of Lexington's ambulance billing provider shall make the Request for Waiver of Payment Due to Financial Hardship Form available to patients at their request.
 - 3. The Fire Chief, in consultation with the Human Services Department, will consider a financial hardship waiver if the patient meets the criteria of the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) or the other standards identified in the Form.
 - 4. The Town Manager, upon recommendation of the Fire Chief, shall declare a financial hardship and will authorize the ambulance billing provider to abate the account(s).
 - 5. The Fire Chief shall mail a letter notifying the applicant of the disposition of their request, as well as the ambulance billing provider and the Town Accountant.

IV. References

Chapter 107 – 4 of the Code of the Town of Lexington
M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 58
Article 4 of the March 28, 1988 Annual Town Meeting
Policy approved by the Board of Selectmen on July 29, 2013

V. Effective Date

This policy shall apply to those accounts that were billed on or after January 1, 2012.