

Southern California Hospitals Campuses: ☒ Culver City ☒ Hollywood ☒ Van Nuys		BAD DEBT POLICY	
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Department: Patient Access		COMMITTEE/BOARD	DATE
Section:		Policy and Procedure Committee	
Number: PA.35		Medical Executive Committee	
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Bad Debt Accounts

PURPOSE

To establish procedures for the proper handling of Bad Debt.

POLICY

It is the policy of Southern California Hospitals to ensure compliance with the applicable bad debt requirements.

DEFINITIONS

Bad debts are amounts considered to be uncollectible from accounts receivable which were created or acquired in providing services.

Accounts receivable are designations for claims arising from the rendering of services and are collectible in money in the relatively near future.

Charity care means the providing of care, free of patient responsibility, to those patients who qualify under the Charity Care Criteria established by Southern California Hospitals.

PROCEDURES

1. A statement is sent 5 days with a collection call to the patient/guarantor requesting full payment or payment arrangements if full payment is not possible.

Self-pay accounts are to receive three data mailers within a 180-day span. Phone calls will be attempted by the self-pay collector with documented reasonable collection effort. Accounts unpaid after 180 days will be written off to bad debt and sent to an external collection agency.

Patient accounts may not be sent to a collection agency if the patient is attempting to qualify for charity or is attempting in good faith to settle the account by negotiating a payment plan or is making regular partial payments. The accounts may be assigned to a collection agency so long as the agency agrees to comply with this provision by merely managing the payment plan, negotiating the payment arrangement with the patient, or taking no action pending the outcome of the patient's application. Any extended payment plans negotiated with a qualified patient under a discounted fee arrangement must be provided without interest so long as the patient does not default on their payment arrangement.

The external collection agency may not report adverse information to a consumer credit reporting agency or commence civil action against the patient for nonpayment at any time prior to 180 days after initial billing.