I. **POLICY:**

Mid Coast Hospital of Brunswick, Maine, a non-profit, acute facility, is dedicated to providing the highest quality, state of the art, medical care to all of its patients regardless of race, color, creed or ability to pay.

Patients, on occasion, are not financially able to pay for all or part of the hospital care they receive. These patients may qualify for financial assistance under Mid Coast Hospital's charity care program.

**Summary:**

This rule establishes guidelines for the charity care policies of Mid Coast Hospital, including minimum income guidelines to be used in determining whether individuals are unable to pay for hospital services. This policy sets forth procedures for notifying patients of the availability of charity care, determining who is qualified for such care and annually reporting the quantity of charity care provided.

II. **PURPOSE:**

In accordance with Chapter 150, Hospital Finance Rules, Section 1, Hospital Free Care Guideline, Mid Coast Hospital will not deny services to any Maine resident solely because of the inability of the individual to pay for those services.

The determination of income eligibility will be based on twelve months actual or three months actual (multiplied by four) data.

Mid Coast Hospital and Mid Coast Medical Group Offices will post notices of the availability of charity care in locations within the hospital at which members of the public generally transact business with the hospital and offices.

Individual notices will be provided to each patient upon admission or in case of emergency upon discharge, or outpatient services at time of service.

Mid Coast Hospital shall provide an opportunity for each person seeking charity care to make application on forms provided by the hospital.
Mid Coast Hospital may require the applicant to furnish any information that is reasonably necessary to substantiate the applicant's income or the fact that the individual is not covered by insurance or eligible for coverage by state or federal programs of medical assistance.

Mid Coast Hospital Charity Care Policy follows the requirements established by The Department of Human Services, Bureau of Medical Services.

III. OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE SERVICE AND ADOPT POLICY
A. Mid Coast Hospital shall not deny services to any Maine resident solely because of the inability of the individual to pay for those services. Mid Coast Hospital shall adopt and adhere to a charity care policy that provides for a determination of inability to pay, defines the services to be provided as charity care and takes into account other sources of payment for care, consistent with the standards established in this policy.
B. Nothing in this policy shall preclude Mid Coast Hospital from adopting a policy for the provision of charity care to individuals not qualifying for charity care under this policy for services not covered under this rule.
C. For purposes of this policy, "charity care" means service provided without expectation of payment from or on behalf of the individual receiving the hospital service.

IV. INCOME GUIDELINES:
A. Definitions:
   For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:
   1. Family:
      A family is a group of two or more persons related by birth, marriage or adoption who reside together; all such related persons are considered as members of one family.
   2. Family Unit of Size One:
      In conjunction with the income guidelines, a family unit of size one is an unrelated individual (a person 15 years old or older) who is not living with any relatives.
   3. Income:
      Income means total annual cash receipts before taxes from all sources except as provided below.
      a) Income includes:
         1. Money, wages and salaries before any deductions, exclusive of food or rent received in lieu of wages;
         2. Net receipts from non-farm or farm self-employment;
         3. Regular payments from social security, railroad retirement, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, strike benefits from union funds, veteran's benefits;
         4. Public assistance including aid to families with dependent children, supplemental security income and general assistance money payments;
         5. Training stipends;
6. Alimony, child support and military family allotments or other regular support form an absent family member or someone not living in the household;

7. Private pensions, government employee pensions and regular insurance or annuity payments; and

8. Income from dividends, interest, rents, royalties or periodic receipts from estates or trusts.

b) Income does not include the following:
1. Capital gains;
2. Any liquid assets, including withdrawals from a bank or proceeds from the sale of property;
3. Tax refunds;
4. Gifts and lump sum inheritances;
5. One time insurance payment or other one time compensation for injury;
6. Non-cash benefits such as the employer paid or union paid portion of health insurance or other employee fringe benefits
7. The value of food and fuel produced and consumed on farms and the inputted value of rent from owner occupied non-farm or farm housing; and
8. Federal non cash benefit programs including Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamps, school lunches and housing assistance.

c) Inability to Pay:
A person is unable to pay for hospital services when the family income of that person, as calculated by either of the following methods, is not more than the applicable income guidelines set forth below:
1. Multiplying by 4 the person's family income for the three months preceding the month in which the service is provided.
2. Using the person's actual family income for the 12 months preceding the month in which the service is provided.

d) Income Guideline:
Mid coast Hospital must provide Free Care to Maine People with income at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines listed below as per Maine's Final Rule #150.

However, Mid Coast Hospital, including the Mid Coast Medical Group Offices, may provide Free Care with incomes at 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines listed below in order to assist more patients in our community that are in need of help. Mid Coast Hospital will offer assistance to those who meet eligibility criteria for 201%-300% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines equal to a discount of 44.5% from charges.

The following income guidelines shall be used in
determining whether a person is unable to pay.

**2020 Federal Guideline on Poverty Income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of family</th>
<th>48 Contiguous States and D.C.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$12,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$17,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$21,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$26,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$30,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$35,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$39,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$44,120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each additional person add: $4,480

V. **SERVICES COVERED:**
Mid Coast Hospital shall provide charity care for medically necessary inpatients and outpatient hospital services, including physician services within Mid Coast Medical Group Offices.

VI. **NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF CHARITY CARE:**
A. **Posted Notice**
   Mid Coast Hospital and Mid Coast Medical Group Offices shall post notices of the availability of charity care in locations within the hospital and Physician Offices within Mid Coast Medical Group’s at which members of the public generally transact business with the hospital or present themselves to receive or request hospital services, including admitting areas, waiting rooms, business offices and outpatient reception areas.

B. **Individual Notice**
   With respect to inpatient services, Mid Coast Hospital will provide individual written notices of the availability for charity care to each patient upon admission or in the case of emergency admission, before discharge. With respect to outpatient services, Mid Coast Hospital shall either accompany the patient’s bill with a copy of an individual notice of the availability of charity care or shall provide a copy of the individual notice at the time service is provided.

C. **Content of Notice.**
The posted and individual written notice must state the following:

**Notice:**
**Medical Care For Those Who Cannot Afford To Pay**

Mid Coast Hospital is required to provide charity care to residents of Maine whose income falls below the guidelines.

You may apply for free care by calling 207-373-6075. An application will be mailed to your home address for completion. Applications can be returned by U.S. mail or in person to Mid Coast Hospital – Attn: Financial Assistance, 121 Medical Center Drive, Suite G300, Brunswick, ME 04011.

Before providing charity care, you will be asked if you first have insurance of any kind to help pay for your care. You may also be asked to show that insurance or a government program will not pay for your care.

**D. Supplementation of Notice.**
If Mid Coast Hospital elects to provide charity care that would not be required under this policy may supplement the notice set forth with information about the availability of additional charity care.

**E. Communication of Contents.**
Mid Coast Hospital shall make reasonable efforts to communicate the contents of the written notice to persons, it has reason to believe, cannot read the notice.

**VII. DETERMINATION OF QUALIFICATION:**

**A. Application**
1. Mid Coast Hospital shall provide an opportunity for each person seeking charity care to make application on forms provided by the hospital.
2. Mid Coast Hospital shall require the applicant to furnish information that is reasonably necessary to substantiate the applicant's income or the fact that the individual is not covered by insurance or eligible for coverage by state or federal programs of medical assistance.

**B. Determination**
1. Upon receipt of an application, Mid Coast Hospital shall determine that an individual seeking charity care qualifies for such care if:
   a) The individual meets the income guidelines
   b) The individual is not covered by any insurance nor eligible for coverage by state or federal programs of medical assistance.
2. If Mid Coast Hospital determines that the individual seeking charity
care meets the income guidelines, but is covered by insurance or by state or federal programs of medical assistance, it shall determine that any amount remaining due after payment by the insurer or medical assistance program will be considered charity care.

C. Deferral of Determination
1. Under the conditions specified, a determination of qualification for charity care may be deferred for up to 30 days, for the purpose of requiring the applicant to obtain and present evidence of ineligibility for medical assistance programs or to verify that the services in question are not covered by insurance.
2. If an applicant for charity care, who meets the income guidelines and who is not covered under any state or federal program of medical assistance, meets any of the following criteria, qualification for charity care shall be deferred:
   a) age 65 or over
   b) blind
   c) disabled

D) is a member of a family in which a child is deprived of parental support or care due to one of the following causes and whose income is less than the guideline:
   1) death of a parent
   2) continued absence of the parent
   3) Disability of a parent
   4) Unemployment of a parent who is the principal wage earner
   5) Individual under 21 whose parental income is less than the guidelines
   6) Pregnant woman whose income is less than the guidelines
   7) A child up to the age of one year who is born to a woman who meets any of the above criteria

E. Content of Favorable Determination
A determination that an applicant qualifies for charity care must indicate:
1. That Mid Coast Hospital will provide care at no charge
2. The date on which the services were requested
3. The date on which the determination was made
4. The date on which services were or will be first provided to the applicant

F. Reasons for Denial
Mid Coast Hospital will provide each applicant who requests charity care and is denied it, in whole or in part, a written and dated statement of the reasons for the denial when the denial is made. When the reason for the denial is failure to provide required information during a period of deferral, the applicant shall be informed that she/he may reapply for charity care, if the required information can be furnished.

G. Reasons for Deferral
1. When an application for charity is deferred, the applicant shall be
notified as follows:

A charity care determination has not yet been made because there is reason to believe that you (the applicant) may be eligible for coverage by state or federal medical assistance programs. If you can show that you are not eligible for coverage by these programs within 30 days from the date of this notice by obtaining a letter or other statement from (the name of state or federal agency to which applicant has been referred), then you will be considered qualified for charity care. Even if you are eligible for coverage, charity care will be available for any portions of the bill that the medical assistance program or any other insurance coverage will not pay.

2. When an application is deferred, the applicant shall be notified of the reason for deferral, including the basis for Mid Coast Hospital's belief that coverage or eligibility may exist and the nature of the evidence that should be provided to complete the determination.

VIII. BILLING:
A. If an individual has been determined qualified for charity care; the individual shall not be billed for services provided.
B. If an individual has been determined qualified for charity care; the individual shall not be billed for any amount not paid by an insurer or medical assistance program.
C. If an individual's application for charity care has been deferred, then the individual may be billed for services during the period of deferral.
D. If an individual has been determined qualified for charity care, or if the determination covering charity care has been deferred, then no municipality shall be billed under the general assistance program for hospital care provided to that individual.

IX. NO LESSER COVERAGE ALLOWED:
Mid Coast Hospital will not establish policies that limit the availability of charity care to individuals who are qualified for charity care under the provisions of this rule.

X. REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING:
A. Mid Coast Hospital shall maintain records of the amount of charity care provided in accordance with the minimum guidelines established in this rule and of the number of individuals to whom it was provided. If Mid Coast Hospital provides charity care that is not required by this chapter, the hospital shall maintain separate records of amount of such care provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

B. Mid Coast Hospital shall report to the commissions, as part of its filing of information for purposes of final reconciliation, a) a summary of the amount of charity care that was provided in the applicable payment year in accordance with the requirements of this chapter;
b) the amount of charity care that was not required under this chapter that was provided in that year; and

c) the number of individuals to whom each type of charity care (required and not required) was provided

XI. REFERENCE:
Joint Commission 2020. Hospital Accreditation Standard RI. 02.01.01

APPROVED:

Michael Perry
V.P. Finance Date

APPROVED:

Joe Hall
Interim Director, Revenue Cycle Date