

## **APPENDIX O PATIENT POLICIES**

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The following are sample patient policy statements that can be modified to meet your practice's needs. You may not want to use some of them, and you may have others that are important to your practice. We recommend compiling all policies into one handout to be given to the patient at his or her first visit.

### **Payment Policies:**

- Payment for services, including insurance copayments, is due at the time of service.
- If a check is returned due to insufficient funds, you will be charged an additional fee of \$20.
- Unless arrangements are made for a payment plan, all accounts that are outstanding for more than 90 days will be sent to our collections agency.

### **Appointment Cancellations:**

- If an appointment is canceled with at least 48 hours notice, the patient will not be penalized.
- A first-time cancellation within 48 hours of the scheduled appointment will not be penalized.
- A second cancellation within 48 hours of the scheduled appointment will result in a fee equivalent to half the amount of the normal visit rate.
- A third cancellation within 48 hours of the scheduled appointment will result in a fee of the full normal visit rate.
- Neither Medicare nor commercial insurers will reimburse for missed appointments, so the patient is personally responsible for any fees levied because of a missed appointment.
- Exceptions will be dealt with on a case by case basis and are at the discretion of the doctor.

### **Emergencies/After Hours:**

- Emergency psychiatric care is available 24 hours a day, but a patient in a situation requiring immediate care should call 911.
- In the event of an emergency, call the office's main number (999-999-9999). During normal business hours, the receptionist will set up an

emergency appointment. If it is before or after normal business hours, a recording [or answering service] will provide instructions for reaching a psychiatrist [either by giving the number for an emergency room or pager].

- Provisions will be made for all emergency appointments to be conducted within 4 hours of the phone call.