

**158.03 OFFICERS TO REPORT CASES NEEDING HOSPITAL CARE.**

When the existence of a case described in section 158.02 shall come to the notice of the sheriff, town clerk, agent of a board of health as authorized under section 145A.04, public health nurse as defined in section 145A.02, subdivision 18, police officer, or any other public official, or any physician or surgeon, it shall be the official's duty to, and any other person may, file with the board of county commissioners of the county of the residence of such person an application for the treatment of such person at the University of Minnesota Hospitals.

Such application shall be made in duplicate on blanks to be furnished by the University of Minnesota Hospitals and contain a full statement of the financial situation of the person sought to be treated and a general statement of the person's physical condition and shall be verified. Upon the filing of such application, the board of county commissioners shall make investigation in such manner as it shall deem advisable, and it shall be the duty of any public official of any county, city, town, or ward of the residence of the person sought to be treated to supply to the county board, on request thereof, all information within the supplier's knowledge relative to the financial situation of the person sought to be treated. If, after such investigation, the county board shall be satisfied that the person on whose behalf the application is made is not financially able to pay for such treatment; or, in case of a minor, that a parent, guardian, or trustee, in representative capacity, or the person having legal custody over the minor or legally responsible for the minor's support or maintenance, is not financially able to provide such treatment, then the county board shall appoint a physician of the county whose duty shall be personally to make an examination of the person on whose behalf the application for treatment has been filed. The physician shall thereupon make and file with the county board a verified report in writing setting forth the nature and history of the case and such other information as will be likely to aid in the medical or surgical treatment of the disease, malady, deformity, or ailment affecting the person and state in the report whether or not in the physician's opinion the condition of such person can probably be remedied at a hospital. The report of the physician shall be made in duplicate within such time as the county board may direct upon blanks to be furnished by the University of Minnesota Hospitals for that purpose. The report shall include any information within the knowledge of the physician relative to the financial situation of the person proposed to be treated. The physician appointed to make the examination, unless already a salaried officer of the state or some division thereof, shall receive \$5 for making the examination and, in any case, the physician's actual and necessary expenses; which fee and expenses shall be paid by the county of residence of the patient; and it shall be the duty of the board of county commissioners to provide for such payment.

If, upon filing of the report, the county board shall be satisfied that the case is one which should be treated at the University of Minnesota Hospitals and that the person to be treated, or a parent, guardian, trustee, or other person having legal custody of the person, in case of a minor, is not financially able to provide such person with proper treatment, the county board shall enter an order finding such facts. In case the county board is not so satisfied, it may take additional testimony or make such further investigation as to it shall seem proper. The county board may reject any application which is found to be without sufficient merit. Upon the entry of the order of the county board approving the application, it shall communicate with the superintendent of the University of Minnesota Hospitals and ascertain whether or not the applicant can be received as a patient. If the University of Minnesota Hospitals can receive such applicant, the county board shall thereupon certify its approval of the application to the hospitals. One copy of the application and the physician's report shall be sent to the superintendent of the hospitals.

If the county board should find that an applicant or the person legally responsible for the applicant is able to pay, in part but not in full, for care at the University of Minnesota Hospitals at the rate to be charged as determined in section 158.05, the county board may approve the application of the patient on such terms of division of hospital charges as it may deem equitable and just.

**History:** (4579) 1921 c 411 s 3; 1943 c 31 s 1; 1945 c 553; 1973 c 123 art 5 s 7; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 309 s 24