

<b>West Neighbourhood House</b>	
Policy Title:	<b>Fee for Service</b>
Approved by:	West Neighbourhood House Board of Directors
Approval date:	March 2014
Revision dates:	May 2018 / / / /

**Policy Statement**

For programs that charge a fee West Neighbourhood House will use a sliding scale to determine the fee. Program fees, no matter how small, are important to demonstrate the commitment and investment of program participants in improving their lives. Program fees are also an important income source to further the overall mission of West Neighbourhood House.

**Applicability**

- Program participants, clients, members and their families or caregivers

**Principles and Procedures**

1. All programs will charge fees to participants unless prohibited by regulations, funder conditions, net additional cost (compared to benefits), or other exceptional circumstances as determined by the Executive Director.
2. Fees will be charged on a sliding scale, based on the financial situations of program participants. Determination of sliding scale fees and subsidies, if applicable, will be done in a non-stigmatizing manner and will include consideration of the “stacking effect” and “claw backs” that arise, usually for people on social assistance and/or people receiving other subsidies such as rent-geared-to-income housing or childcare.
3. The fee/subsidy is to be determined by a financial assessment tool administered by the Program Coordinator or delegated staff in consultation with the participant. The financial information of program participants and their fee/subsidy level is considered confidential and not to be shared with any other participants. The details and decision regarding the fee/subsidy will be made known only to relevant program staff, administration and finance staff, auditors, and management on a need to know basis. Please refer to the Confidentiality Policy if necessary.
4. Where programs charge fees and offer subsidies, the practice will be consistently applied to all participants (although the level of fee and subsidy may vary according to participants’ financial situations). Program fees and subsidy levels will be reviewed annually with individual participants.
5. West Neighbourhood House will take into consideration the fee levels and practices for similar services in the community.
6. West Neighbourhood House management will review fees every year to determine rates and/or equity across the organization and make modifications as necessary.

7. Fees and the availability of sliding scale adjustments and subsidies, if available, will be communicated and readily available to all participants in relevant languages and clear language.
8. When fees are increased, participants must be given at least 30 days notice and the rationale for the increase before it takes effect.

### **Providing Subsidies**

1. A standardized financial assessment tool for all participants is used within each program.
2. Participants must provide third party proof of their household income in order to be eligible for a subsidy, barring exceptional circumstances. The proof may be in the form of a cheque stub, a signed letter from the employer, income tax return, etc. Program staff will have the discretion to request verification of other factors that may affect the financial assessment (e.g. proof of rent-geared-to-income housing, childcare subsidies).
3. Participants should be made aware of the standard fee and the subsidy they are receiving.

### **Methods of Payment**

Payment can be made by cheque, credit card, debit or electronic transfer. (Cheques are to be made payable to “West Neighbourhood House”) West Neighbourhood House also accepts cash.

### **Collecting Outstanding Fees**

West Neighbourhood House will make every attempt to collect outstanding fees from participants. If participants are unable to fulfill their payment obligations, Unit Directors and/or delegated staff will work with participants to develop a payment plan that takes into consideration the participant’s situation and circumstances. In unresolved circumstances, the Executive Director will determine how to proceed on a case by case basis.

### **Refunds/Credits**

Fee refunds or charge disputes will be addressed on a case by case basis by the Unit Director.