



General Assembly

February Session, 2026

**Raised Bill No. 496**

LCO No. 3074



Referred to Committee on HUMAN SERVICES

Introduced by:  
(HS)

**AN ACT CONCERNING HOSPITAL UNCOMPENSATED CARE.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) (a) As used in this section,  
2 (1) "hospital" has the same meaning as provided in section 19a-490 of  
3 the general statutes, (2) "hospital financial assistance" means any  
4 program administered by a hospital or health system, including a bed  
5 fund, as defined in section 19a-509b of the general statutes, that reduces,  
6 in whole or in part, a patient's liability for the cost of inpatient or  
7 outpatient care, and (3) "hospital financial assistance program" means a  
8 program in which a participating hospital provides inpatient and  
9 outpatient care:

10 (A) At no cost to an uninsured patient with income not exceeding two  
11 hundred per cent of the federal poverty level;

12 (B) Subsidized by hospital financial assistance for an uninsured  
13 patient with income exceeding two hundred per cent of the federal  
14 poverty level but not exceeding three hundred per cent of the federal  
15 poverty level;

16 (C) Subsidized with hospital financial assistance for any patient with  
17 income not exceeding four hundred per cent of the federal poverty level  
18 who is enrolled in (i) the federal supplemental nutrition assistance  
19 program, or (ii) the federal Special Supplemental Food Program for  
20 Women, Infants and Children; and

21 (D) For patients with household income under two hundred per cent  
22 of the federal poverty level who are deemed ineligible for hospital  
23 financial assistance, billed in accordance with a payment schedule  
24 amounting to not more than two per cent of such patient's annual  
25 household income per year. After a cumulative thirty-six months of  
26 payments by such patient, each participating hospital shall consider the  
27 patient's hospital bill paid in full and permanently cease any and all  
28 collection activities on any balance that remains unpaid.

29 (b) A hospital may opt in to the hospital financial assistance program  
30 and be reimbursed pursuant to section 2 of this act. A participating  
31 hospital shall not (1) count a patient's assets when determining  
32 eligibility for hospital financial assistance, or (2) require the patient to  
33 provide proof of a denial letter from the state medical assistance  
34 program, Medicare, Emergency Medicaid, other government-funded  
35 coverage or insurance through the Connecticut Health Insurance  
36 Exchange. A hospital shall use software that conforms to industry  
37 standards concerning electronic income verification and may accept one  
38 of the following documents to verify income:

39 (A) A copy of the patient's most recent tax return;

40 (B) A copy of the patient's most recent W-2 form and 1099 forms;

41 (C) Copies of the patient's two most recent pay stubs; or

42 (D) Written income verification from an employer if the patient is  
43 paid in cash.

44 (c) A participating hospital shall exempt patients who are

45 experiencing homelessness or are at imminent risk of homelessness  
46 from the documentation requirements but may require self-attested  
47 information for both a hospital financial assistance screening and a  
48 hospital financial assistance application.

49 (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 19a-509b of the general  
50 statutes, a participating hospital shall make information available on the  
51 hospital financial assistance program in each of the top non-English  
52 languages spoken by five or more per cent of the population that reside  
53 in the geographic area served by the hospital. Such information shall (1)  
54 be included in all discharge paperwork and on the hospital's Internet  
55 web site, (2) contain contact information for the Office of the Health Care  
56 Advocate, and (3) comply with requirements concerning effective  
57 communications under the Americans with Disabilities Act, including,  
58 but not limited to, communications delivered through relay services,  
59 interpretation, large print and braille.

60 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) (a) As used in this section,  
61 "disproportionate share hospital payment" means a Medicaid payment  
62 to a hospital that serves a disproportionately large number of Medicaid  
63 beneficiaries and uninsured individuals. The Commissioner of Social  
64 Services shall amend the Medicaid state plan to use disproportionate  
65 share hospital payments to compensate hospitals that participate in the  
66 hospital financial assistance program established pursuant to section 1  
67 of this act.

68 (b) The Commissioner of Social Services shall establish criteria for a  
69 participating hospital to document hospital financial assistance and  
70 receive timely payment for such assistance.

71 (c) A hospital aggrieved by a final decision by the commissioner on  
72 the validity of such hospital's bills for hospital financial assistance may  
73 file an appeal in accordance with the provisions of section 17b-60 of the  
74 general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	New section

***Statement of Purpose:***

To expand hospital financial assistance to patients and reimburse such assistance in a voluntary assistance program.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*