



**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY/PROCEDURE**

SUBJECT TELEPHONE CONTACT OF DELINQUENT FEE ACCOUNTS	POLICY NO. 805.02	EFFECTIVE DATE 10/01/1989	PAGE 1 of 2
APPROVED BY: Original signed by: ROBERTO QUIROZ Director	SUPERSEDES 405.2 10/01/1989	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE 07/01/1988	DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) 1

PURPOSE

- 1.1 To ensure mandatory participation and uniform methodology in the collection of delinquent accounts via telephone. This update redefines a delinquent account from an account which is 60 days past due to an account which is 30 days past due.

POLICY

- 2.1 Client contact via the telephone is encouraged on delinquent accounts with balances over \$25. However, for cost effectiveness, it is not recommended that more than two calls be invested in accounts with balances below \$92. Additionally, client confidentiality must be protected. If the clinic staff reaches someone other than the client or a responsible relative (spouse, parent of a minor, guardian or conservator), a return telephone number may not be provided nor may the purpose of the call be divulged.

BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The objective of telephone contact is to establish mutually satisfactory payment arrangements on delinquent accounts. A delinquent account is defined as any account where a payment has not been received in 30 days.

PROCEDURE

- 4.1 The clinic staff initiating telephone contact should be familiar with the details of the account. Once contact is established with a client or a responsible relative, determination should be made as to why the account became delinquent. If circumstances have changed, perhaps a re-determination is in order. If so, an appointment should be made to meet with the client or a responsible relative to update the UMDAP information. If not, and after re-verifying that no third party payers exist, arrangements must be negotiated for full payment of the account, in the shortest possible time.



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SUBJECT	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE
TELEPHONE CONTACT OF DELINQUENT FEE ACCOUNTS	805.02	10/01/1989	2 of 2

- 4.2 Clinic staff must be sensitive to the nature of the clients with whom they are dealing. If, during the course of a conversation, a client becomes agitated, the conversation should be terminated immediately and, where appropriate, a therapist notified so that the therapist may follow up with the client. The incident should be documented by the financial worker.
- 4.3 If the client is uncooperative, or mutually satisfactory arrangements cannot be reached, the account should be referred to the Treasurer-Tax Collector for follow-up, as outlined in DMH Policy #805.01, "Transferring Delinquent Accounts to the Treasurer-Tax Collector."

AUTHORITY

State Department of Mental Health Revenue Manual for Community Mental Health Services Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 5718, and other applicable Sections