

This appendix is supplemental to a Commonwealth Fund report, Maanasa Kona and Vrudhi Raimugia, *State Protections Against Medical Debt: A Look at Policies Across the U.S.* (Commonwealth Fund, Sept. 2023), <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/fund-reports/2023/sep/state-protections-medical-debt-policies-across-us>. For more detail on the data presented here, see the *State Protections Against Medical Debt* interactive maps, <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/maps-and-interactives/2023/sep/state-protections-against-medical-debt>.

APPENDIX

State Medical Debt Protections Overview

State	Regulation of billing and collections practices							Protections related to medical debt lawsuits		
	Financial assistance requirement	Community benefit requirement	Payment plan requirement	Limits on interest	Preconditions before sending a bill to collections	Limits on credit reporting	Limits on selling debt	Limits on liens and foreclosures	Limits on wage garnishment	Reporting requirements
Alabama										
Alaska									*	
Arizona				√					*	
Arkansas										
California	√	√	√		√	√	*	√	√	
Colorado	√	√	√	√	√	√	*		*	√+
Connecticut	√	√		√	√	√		√	√	√
Delaware	√								*	*
District of Columbia	√	√+						UH	*	*
Florida	√	√						UH	√	*
Georgia	√	√								√
Hawaii									*	
Idaho		√				√	*			*
Illinois	√	√+	√	√	√			√	√	√+
Indiana		√							*	√+
Iowa								UH	*	
Kansas								UH	√	
Kentucky										
Louisiana										
Maine	√					√			*	√
Maryland	√	√	√			√	√	√	√	√+
Massachusetts		√			√				*	
Michigan										
Minnesota		√	√		√	√			√	√
Mississippi										
Missouri									*	*
Montana										*
Nebraska									*	
Nevada	√	√+			√	√		√	*	√
New Hampshire		√							*	*
New Jersey	√	√+			√				*	√+
New Mexico					√		√	√	√	*
New York	√	√	√		√			√	√+	√
North Carolina		√			√			√	√+	*
North Dakota				√					*	
Ohio	√							√		√
Oklahoma	√							UH		
Oregon	√	√+		√	√				*	√

State Medical Debt Protections Overview (continued)

State	Regulation of billing and collections practices						Protections related to medical debt lawsuits			
	Financial assistance requirement	Community benefit requirement	Payment plan requirement	Limits on interest	Preconditions before sending a bill to collections	Limits on credit reporting	Limits on selling debt	Limits on liens and foreclosures	Limits on wage garnishment	Reporting requirements
Pennsylvania		√+							√+	*
Rhode Island	√	√						√	√	*
South Carolina	√	√								
South Dakota								UH	*	
Tennessee										*
Texas		√						UH	√+	√
Utah		√+			√	√				*
Vermont	√	√	√	√			√		√	*
Virginia		√	√						*	√
Washington	√	√		√	√	√	*		*	√
West Virginia		√							*	√
Wisconsin									√	*
Wyoming										

DESCRIPTION OF CRITERIA

Financial assistance requirement

Identifies states that require hospitals to maintain a financial assistance policy and set certain minimum standards for these policies. The state can require hospitals to have these policies in place as a condition of licensure, as a legal mandate subject to penalties, or as a condition of receiving state funding. States that have less prescriptive requirements for their hospitals (like states that put the onus of providing financial assistance on individual counties, or states that generally require provision of financial assistance without setting minimum standards) have been excluded.

Community benefit requirement

√ Identifies states that require nonprofit hospitals to meet community benefit standards in exchange for an exemption from state taxes.

√+ Identifies states that additionally set certain minimum quantitative standards for how hospitals can fulfill their community benefit obligations.

Regulation of billing and collections practices

Payment plan requirement

Identifies states that require hospitals to offer payment plans and states that also set limits on monthly payment amounts and interest that can be charged on these payment plans.

Limits on interest

Identifies states that generally cap interest on medical debt, and those that also prohibit medical debt for certain low-income populations. All states have general usury laws that limit the amount of interest than can be charged on any oral or written agreement.

Preconditions before sending a bill to collections

Identifies states that require hospitals to meet certain conditions before they can send a bill to collections. Conditions might include waiting periods, prior patient notification, offer of a reasonable payment plan, screening for financial assistance, or a prohibition on sending bills of certain low-income patients to collections.

Limits on credit reporting

Identifies states that limit reporting of medical debt to credit reporting agencies. Limitations might include waiting periods, or a prohibition of credit reporting for some or all patients.

Limits on selling debt

* Identifies states that limit sale of medical debt. Limitations might include waiting periods or setting standards for debt buyers.

√ Identifies states that prohibit the sale of medical debt for some or all patients.

Protections related to medical debt lawsuits

Limits on liens and foreclosures

Identifies states that exceed federal protections against placing liens or foreclosing on homes to collect on medical debt.

UH Identifies states with an unlimited homestead exemption.

√ Identifies states that prohibit or limit the ability to place a lien or foreclose on a home.

Limits on wage garnishment

Identifies states that exceed federal protections against wage garnishment to collect on medical debt.

* Identifies states that protect a larger proportion of wages than federal law does.

√ Identifies states that prohibit wage garnishment for certain populations or during certain times of demonstrated financial need.

√+ Identifies states that fully prohibit wage garnishment for all patients.

Reporting requirements

Identifies states that require hospitals to report certain data relevant to medical debt protections.

Financial data: total dollar amounts spent on financial assistance and/or bad debt

FAP data: numbers of financial assistance applications received, numbers approved and denied, numbers appealed, etc.

Demographic data: reporting of the above data by race, ethnicity, gender, preferred or primary language, etc.

* Identifies states that require hospitals to report financial data only.

√ Identifies states that require hospitals to report financial data and FAP data.

√+ Identifies states that require hospitals to report financial, FAP, and demographic data.