

Can't pay? You still have a right to Emergency Room Care



This **Emergency Room card** can help you get care in an emergency or childbirth.

Can't pay? Don't have insurance, or TennCare or Medicare? You still have a legal right to get hospital care for an emergency or childbirth. It's against the law to turn you away because you can't pay.

This does not mean the care is free. You may have to agree to pay later.

What is an emergency?

It's when you will get a lot worse in a very serious way without treatment.

What about childbirth?

Are you in active labor and about to have a baby? Then the hospital must help with the labor and delivery.



Are there medical reasons why the hospital can't deliver your baby? Then they must have you **SAFELY** moved to a hospital that can deliver your baby. But they can't turn you away just because you can't pay.

On the next page is your emergency care card.

Cut it out and carry it with you all the time. You may need to show it to emergency room staff.

It's a good idea to take friends to the emergency room with you. You may be too sick to stand up for your rights. Your friends can do this for you. They can also be your witnesses.

How to use your Emergency Care Wallet Card at the hospital

What if a hospital tries to turn you away in an emergency or in active labor?

- **Show them the back of your card.** This is the side that says "Legal Liability for Refusing Emergency Medical Care."

It tells what the law says hospitals must do. It also tells what can happen to a hospital that turns you away in an emergency or in childbirth.

Showing them the back of the card tells them that you know your rights.

- **Ask to be seen by a doctor.**

They can't turn you away until a doctor has examined you. They must find out if:

- you are in active labor
- OR, you would be seriously hurt if they didn't treat you.

- **If they still try to turn you away, use the front of your card.**

This shows them you are serious because you are taking names and finding witnesses.

Here's how to use the front side of your card:

Does the hospital want to turn you away in active labor or an emergency? Fill out the card.

Is the person who wants to turn you away not a doctor?

Then ask them to sign their name in the 2nd box;

OR if a doctor tries to turn you away, ask them to sign in the next box.

They might decide to treat you. They may not want to write down that they turned you away because of money.

What if the person who wants to turn you away won't sign? Then in the last box:

- Print their name and
- Get witnesses to sign that the hospital staff would not sign this card.

If you still don't get medical care, you may want to see a private lawyer. OR call Legal Aid at **1-800-238-1443**.

If you see a lawyer, show them this emergency care card. It gives them facts about your case.

Legal Aid Society
of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland
1-800-238-1443

OR on the internet at www.las.org

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Fold on solid line →

Front of Emergency Care Card	
Your name: _____	<p>Is the hospital turning you away in active labor or an emergency? Show them this card.</p> <p>Legal Liability for Refusing Emergency Medical Care</p> <p>All Tennessee hospitals (even private, for-profit hospitals) that give general medical and surgical services must furnish emergency services to any person who is injured or who suffers from an acute illness, if that injury or illness is likely to cause severe injury or illness if left untreated. T.C.A. §§68-140 301, 302.</p> <p>It is a crime to deny emergency care. T.C.A. §68-140-303.</p> <p>A hospital with an emergency room may be liable for money damages if it fails to provide an appropriate medical screening to anyone presenting himself for care. 42 U.S.C. § 1395dd(a) and (d)</p> <p>A hospital that fails to provide necessary stabilizing care to a person with an emergency medical condition may be liable for money damages. 42 U.S.C. § 1395dd(b) and (d); Roberts v. Galen of Virginia, 525 U.S. 249 (1999).</p> <p>Transfers of emergency patients (including women in active labor) without adequate provision for their care, subjects a hospital to fines, damages, loss of all Medicare funds, and revocation of its license. T.C.A. §68-11-701, et seq.; 42 U.S.C. 1395dd(c) and (d); and 42 C.F.R. pt. 489.</p> <p>If a hospital has received federal Hill-Burton construction subsidies (many Tennessee hospitals), it cannot deny emergency care because the person is unable to pay. The hospital cannot transfer or discharge the person unless they determine there is not a big risk that it will make the patient's medical condition worse. 42 C.F.R. §124.603(b).</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Get more cards from:</p> <p>Legal Aid Society <i>of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland</i></p> <p>1-800-238-1443</p> <p>On the internet at www.las.org</p> </div>
Hospital name: _____	
Date and time: _____	
<p>If the person turning you away is <u>not a doctor</u>, ask them to sign below.</p> <p>I hereby refuse hospital care to the person named below because they lack cash or insurance to pay the bill.</p> <p>X _____ Hospital Representative's signature</p> <p>Job Title: _____</p> <p>Supervisor: _____</p> <p>Witness's signature X _____</p>	
<p>If a <u>doctor</u> turns you away, ask them to sign below.</p> <p>I have examined the person named below and, in my professional opinion, this person can be denied medical care without worsening his/her illness or injury. I hereby authorize the hospital named below to refuse care to this person because s/he lacks cash or insurance to pay the bill.</p> <p>X _____ Doctor's signature</p> <p>X _____ Witness's signature and phone number</p>	
<p>If the person turning you away won't sign, print their name below. Get a witness to sign that hospital staff would not sign this card.</p> <p>I swear/witness that _____ _____ refused to sign this card.</p> <p>X _____ Witness's signature Phone number</p>	



Cut out on dotted line