

investigate the financial condition of such person and also the financial condition of any relative or other person who may be legally chargeable with his or her maintenance and support, in order to determine, in each case, the ability of any such person, or of his or her relatives or other persons legally chargeable with his or her maintenance and support, to make payment, in whole or in part, for the maintenance and support of such person while an inmate of such hospital and infirmary. In making such investigation, the County Welfare Board and the Department of Welfare of Baltimore City shall require reports or statements to be made by such person, relatives or other person upon such forms as may be prepared by said County Welfare Board and Department of Welfare of Baltimore City, as the case may be.

(b). If as a result of such investigation, the County Welfare Board or the Department of Welfare of Baltimore City shall determine that such person, his or her relatives or other persons shall be required to pay for his or her maintenance or support or a part thereof, it shall specify the amount of such payments to be made, which shall not exceed the average per diem cost of maintaining a patient in such hospital, and the times when the same are to be made. The County Welfare Board and the Department of Welfare of Baltimore City shall have the power to require the relatives of any such person or others legally chargeable with his or her maintenance and support, to enter into appropriate and binding agreements with respect to the making of such payments, and may from time to time modify or change the terms thereof, as the circumstances may justify.

(c). All payments required to be made under the provisions of this section shall be made to and collected by the County Treasurer or Treasurer of Baltimore City, as the case may be, who shall account for same. Any amounts so collected shall first be applied against the seventy-five cents (\$.75) per day which the County or Baltimore City are required to pay. Any amount collected over and above seventy-five cents (\$.75) per day from or on account of any patient shall be paid by the County or Baltimore City to the State Treasurer.

(d). Upon the death of any person admitted to any chronic hospital and infirmary, the County Commissioners or the Department of Welfare of Baltimore City, as the case may be, shall be entitled to make claim against the estate of any such person for his or her maintenance and support while in such institution, or for the balance due therefor if part has been paid. Such claim shall be a preferred claim against the estate of any such person, and all claims arising here-