

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) on the City of Fairmont Street Maintenance and Improvement Fee

The following FAQ's will provide Fairmont State University and Pierpont Community & Technical College employees with more information on the recently enacted City of Fairmont Street Maintenance and Improvement charge/fee. The questions are grouped into general categories for ease in accessing relevant answers to your questions:

General Information/Background

What is the fee?

The fee is a charge that the Fairmont City Council enacted in June 2011 to collect from both residents and non-resident employees in the City of Fairmont, for the purpose of paving city streets. The City Finance Director is authorized by State law to collect this fee.

Where can I find more information on the fee and the ordinance?

On the City of Fairmont website at

http://www.fairmontwv.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=49&Itemid=5. Scroll down under "Forms" to the items that are titled "Non-Resident Employee Street Maintenance and Improvement Charge Administrative Regulations" and "Street Maintenance Charge Ordinance."

How much is the fee?

\$2.00 per week, \$4.33 semi-monthly or \$8.67 per month.

How do I pay the fee?

Residents of the City of Fairmont (or those who pay the City service fees for such things as water and sewage services, garbage pickup, fire fee, etc.) will pay this fee via their City service bills.

What if I'm not a resident of the City? Do I still have to pay the fee?

Yes, even if you reside elsewhere and only work in Fairmont. Non-residents who work for Fairmont State University or Pierpont Community & Technical College at a work location within the City limits will pay a non-resident fee.

But if I don't live in Fairmont, why do I have to pay this fee?

This is a user fee, which municipalities are authorized to assess for those individuals who travel on City roads/streets.

When did the fee start?

August 1, 2011, for days worked starting on August 1, 2011.

How can I find out if the fee is currently being deducted from my pay?

You can go to the State Auditor's website at <http://www.wvsao.gov/>, to "myApps," and set up an account so that you will have your pay stubs electronically delivered to you. (Follow the instructions on the website.) Once you have access to your electronic pay stub ("e-NOD"), you will see the deduction taken or not. It is titled "City of Fairmont User Fee."

How much of this money do Fairmont State and Pierpont receive?

None of it. We are just the pass-through, responsible for collecting the fee and forwarding the full amounts collected on to the City of Fairmont.

What if I simply prefer to pay the full fee for the coming year now, and not have it deducted from my pay each payday? Is this permitted or available as an option?

No, the City of Fairmont's reporting system is not set up to take one-time or lump sum payments; nor is our FSU/Pierpont system able to take deductions in this manner, or to hold funds in escrow for later payment.

May I deduct the service fees I pay through withholding from my income taxes next year?

Employees should contact their own tax advisors about this.

Who is to Pay/When

If I'm not a resident of Fairmont, how will I pay the fee?

Through payroll deduction. Employees who are current-paid saw the first deduction made in their pay on August 16, 2011; arrears-paid employees saw their first deduction on August 31, 2011.

How often do I have to pay the fee?

Every paycheck, unless and until the fee is discontinued by the City.

The fee is \$2.00 per week, but we get paid twice per month. How will that work?

Employees will see approximately \$4.33 deducted from each pay, or \$8.67 per month. The total owed to the City by each resident and non-resident employee is \$104 per year.

I'm a student employee, and I work only part-time. Do I have to pay the fee?

Yes. If you receive a paycheck, you are assessed the full fee each pay.

I'm a part-time employee. Do I have to pay the fee?

Yes. If you receive a paycheck, you are assessed the full fee each pay.

I'm adjunct faculty and teach only one class per week on the campus. Do I have to pay the fee?

Yes. If you receive a paycheck, you are assessed the full fee each pay.

If I'm a student worker, part-time employee or adjunct faculty, will the fee be pro-rated based on the number of hours I work?

No, the City has no provisions for pro-ration for adjunct, part-time or student employment. Anyone who receives a paycheck in a given pay period pays the full fee amount.

I don't work in the summer. If I'm not receiving a paycheck, do I still have to pay the fee?

No, the fee is assessed ONLY when you receive a paycheck.

I'm a 9-month employee, but I spread my pay out to receive it over 12 months. Will the deduction stop during the time I'm not working?

No, if you're still receiving a check, the fee will be withheld.

If I'm on annual leave for two weeks, will the deduction stop then?

No, not if you're still getting a paycheck. The fee is assessed from each pay you receive. If you receive pay, the fee will be withheld.

I am off work on an extended medical leave, for which I am using sick leave/catastrophic leave. Will I have to pay the fee while I'm off work?

Yes. If you are receiving a paycheck, the fee will be withheld.

At the beginning of the academic year, I don't start back to work until August 15. Will I be responsible to pay the fee for the whole month of August?

No. The fee is assessed only when you are working or receiving pay. Since you are not on payroll as of August 1, you are not responsible for payment as of that date, just from August 15 forward.

I'm a nine-month employee, and I stop work on May 15th. Will I have to pay for the whole month of May?

No, you pay only for the days on which you work or when you receive a paycheck. An arrears employee, however, because s/he is paid a pay cycle behind, will still see the deduction in the May 31st paycheck.

Exemptions

Are there any exemptions from paying the fee through payroll withholding?

Yes. Because City residents or those who receive services (water, sewage, fire protection, etc.) from the City will pay the service fee through the City billing process, any Fairmont State/Pierpont employee who pays for City services will not have the fee withheld. You must, however, submit the appropriate claim Form SMC-05 and documentation to the HR/Payroll office to prevent the deduction. As of August 1, 2011, Fairmont/Pierpont started automatic deductions of the fee from EVERY employee's check (starting on August 16 or August 31) unless an employee submitted the appropriate exemption form and documentation. ***UNLESS an employee qualifies for and submits an exemption form, we will continue to make the deduction.***

Are there any other exemptions available?

Yes, for those employees of Fairmont/Pierpont who do not work in the City, those who already pay another municipality a user fee, and those who pay the fee through another employer in the City of Fairmont.

Where can I find the exemption forms?

Exemption forms and instructions can be found on the City of Fairmont website at

http://www.fairmontwv.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=49&Itemid=5, under "Forms." Scroll down to the "S" section. Review form numbers SMC-04, "Street Maintenance Charge Prior Payment Form"

and SMC-05, “Street Maintenance Charge Exemption Claim Form” to determine which you should use.

I’m a Pierpont employee, but I’m also a resident of the City of Fairmont, and I pay for City services. Since I’ll have to pay this fee on my water bill, will it ALSO be withheld from my paycheck?

No. But you must submit exemption Form SMC-05 with a copy of your bill to HR so that we can make sure you are exempted from the fee in the payroll system.

Both my spouse and I live in Fairmont and pay the City for services. Will only one of us get the exemption?

No, since your household pays the fee on your City services bill, both of you would qualify for the exemption and both of you should complete a separate Form SMC-05 and attach a copy of your service bill.

I am a Fairmont State employee who pays for City services, so I claim the exemption. However, my child is a student at Pierpont, works for Pierpont and still lives at home with me. I’m the one who actually pays the City bill, not my child. Will my child have to pay the fee?

No. Since your child still lives at home, and since your HOUSEHOLD pays a City service bill, your child can also claim exemption from the fee by filling out Form SMC-05, “Exemption Claim Form.”

I am a Fairmont State or Pierpont employee who is not a resident of Fairmont. I work exclusively outside of the City limits, and I rarely if ever come to the main campus in Fairmont. Will I need to pay the fee?

No, you qualify for exemption from payment of the fee if you don’t come to campus and work exclusively outside of the Fairmont city limits. Fill out Form SMC-05, check the 4th box under “2. Exemption Claimed” and note at the top of the form where your work location is. This will be sufficient for us to exempt you from payment of the fee.

I don't reside within the City limits, but I do receive and pay for City services. Can I get the exemption?

Yes. "Resident" in your case refers to a customer who receives services from the City. Submit Form SMC-05, Exemption Claim Form, and check the box by "Resident of City of Fairmont and paid on City service bills." Be sure to include a copy of your City bill.

What services do I have to receive from and pay the City for to be exempt?

The City has indicated that those who pay a garbage pickup fee to the City will be exempt.

I work for Pierpont and also for another employer in the City. Will both of my employers deduct this fee and do I have to pay the fee twice?

No, an employee with more than one Fairmont employer pays only once. It is, however, YOUR responsibility to complete and submit Form SMC-04, "Prior Payment Form" to the employer who you do not want to make the deduction. Please note that you will need to obtain the federal Employer Identification Number (EIN or FEIN) from the employer who will be withholding your fee, and submit this information on Form SMC-04 to the employer who you do not want to withhold.

I have two jobs, one with another Fairmont employer and one with FSU/Pierpont. I want FSU/Pierpont to withhold my fee. What is the EIN (number) to put onto Form SMC-04, the "Prior Payment Form," to give to my other employer?

The Fairmont State/Pierpont EIN is 55-6000778.

I currently live in Morgantown, but I will be closing on a house in the City of Fairmont very soon and will be paying Fairmont for services then. How can I stop my withholding from my paycheck at that time, since I will be paying the fee directly to the City once I move?

When you move and have a bill or other correspondence from the City of Fairmont that confirms your residency, bring or send that documentation

to HR Payroll along with your completed Form SMC-05, and we will stop withholding the fee from your paycheck.

Does HR Payroll need my original Form SMC-05 and receipt, or may I complete the form, scan it and a copy of my receipt and email it to you?

No, we do not need the original of your form, and you may scan and email forms and required documentation to us. Please email to Sherry Baldwin at Sherry.Baldwin@fairmontstate.edu, or to Jean Fulton at Jean.Fulton@fairmontstate.edu. If the PDF or copy we receive is not legible, we will need to contact you for the original or a better copy.

If I have another job in Fairmont and submit the exemption form to Fairmont State/Pierpont, does HR call the other employer to verify that they're taking out my fee?

No. However, the City of Fairmont has announced their intention to audit employers beginning a few months in to the collection process. Fairmont State/Pierpont are to maintain all of the signed exemption forms. If the auditors discover a discrepancy between an employee's request for exemption and eligibility for the exemption, the City will require the **employee** to pay any due fees. In addition, the ordinance speaks to instituting "appropriate legal proceedings against any employer or other person who fails to comply with the provisions" of the law.

I would rather HR/Payroll not see all of the details on my bill when I make you a copy to include with my exemption form. May I black out or cover up the costs and usage details?

Absolutely! So long as we see that your address/location pays for City services, we don't need to have a bill copy with all of your personal information.

Does my bill have to have MY name on it for me to get the exemption?

No—just your address, as it appears in our system. If the bill is in your parent’s/spouse’s/partner’s/roommate’s name but has your address, that will be sufficient.

I don’t keep copies of my bills and don’t have one available to provide.

Would HR accept any other form of proof of residency?

The City will provide you with a recent copy of your paid bill. Please contact them for this information.

I’m a Fairmont State/Pierpont employee, but I have a second job in another municipality that ALREADY withholds a user fee from my pay there. Do I also have to pay the City of Fairmont fee?

No. You are exempt from paying a second fee if another municipality already receives a user fee from your employer there. Fill out Form SMC-05 and check the box beside “Make remittance to another municipality for services” under “2. Exemption Claimed.” You will need to provide documentation, such as an itemized pay stub, that indicates you pay a user fee elsewhere.

I’m a Fairmont State/Pierpont employee but am a resident of another municipality that ALREADY assesses a user fee in my utility bill there. Do I also have to pay the City of Fairmont fee?

No. You are exempt from paying a second fee if another municipality already charges you a user fee on your municipal services bill. Fill out Form SMC-05 and check the box beside “Make remuneration to another municipality for services based on employment” under “2. Exemption Claimed.” You will need to provide documentation in the form of a copy of your services bill that shows that you pay a user fee elsewhere.

I'm a Fairmont State/Pierpont employee who is a resident of Fairmont, but I rent. I don't get a bill for services from the City because my landlord adds utility fees to my rent; but I'm still paying the fee, in a way. Can I get an exemption?

Yes. Just ask your landlord for a copy of a City services bill to submit with your completed Form SMC-05, on which you will check "Resident of City of Fairmont and paid on City service bills." Please make sure that the bill notes the address of the apartment or house you're renting.

I'm a Fairmont State/Pierpont employee who is NOT a resident of Fairmont, but I own a business in the City, for which I pay City service bills. Can I get an exemption?

Yes. Complete Form SMC-05 and check "Business Owner and paid on City services bill." You will need to provide a copy of your business's City services bill.

Where does my exemption form go? Does Fairmont State/Pierpont send it to the City?

No, the City ordinance requires that the EMPLOYER collect and maintain all exemption forms. All exemption forms and requests of Fairmont State/Pierpont employees will be kept in the HR/Payroll office. These will be made available to the City's auditors at such time as they come to campus to review our exemptions against our fee withholdings.

I forgot to send in my exemption Form SMC-05 and documentation in time, and the fee was withheld from my pay. Can I get a refund for what was withheld from my paycheck?

Submit your exemption Form SMC-05 as soon as you can to prevent any future deductions from being made. The State sends your payment directly to the City, so Fairmont/Pierpont's Payroll Office will be unable to issue you a refund; you will need to contact the City. There is a form to request a refund available on the City of Fairmont website at

http://www.fairmontwv.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&

[id=49&Itemid=5](#). Scroll down under forms to find “Street Maintenance Charge Refund Claim Form” and instructions.

Questions or concerns in regard to the Street Maintenance and Improvement Charge in general should be directed to the City of Fairmont at 304.366.6211.

For other questions on payroll withholding and exemptions that are not answered here, please contact the Office of Human Resources in 324 Hardway.