

Form Privacy of Information Policies

This form describes the confidentiality of your medical records, how the information is used, your rights, and how you may obtain this information.

Our Legal Duties

State and Federal laws require that we keep your medical records private. Such laws require that we provide you with this notice informing you of our privacy of information policies, your rights, and our duties. We are required to abide by these policies until replaced or revised. We have the right to revise our privacy policies for all medical records, including records kept before policy changes were made. Any changes in this notice will be made available upon request before changes take place.

The contents of material disclosed to us in an evaluation, intake, or counseling session are covered by the law as private information. We respect the privacy of the information you provide us and we abide by ethical and legal requirements of confidentiality and privacy of records.

Use of Information

Information about you may be used by the personnel associated with this clinic for diagnosis, treatment planning, treatment, and continuity of care. We may disclose it to health care providers who provide you with treatment, such as doctors, nurses, mental health professionals, and mental health professionals, or business associates affiliated with this clinic such as billing, quality enhancement, training, audits, and accreditation.

Both verbal information and written records about a client cannot be shared with another party without the written consent of the client or the client's legal guardian or personal representative. It is the policy of this clinic not to release any information about a client without a signed release of information except in certain emergencies or exceptions in which client information can be disclosed to others without written consent. Some of these situations are noted below, and there may be other provisions provided by legal requirements.

Duty to Warn and Protect

When a client discloses intentions or a plan to harm another person or persons, the health care professional is required to warn the intended victim and report this information to legal authorities. In cases in which the client discloses or implies a suicide plan, the health care professional is required to notify legal authorities and make reasonable attempts to notify the family of the client.

Public Safety

Health records may be released for the public interest and safety of public health activities, judicial and

administrative proceedings, law enforcement purposes, serious threats to public safety, essential government functions, military, and when complying with worker's compensation laws.

Abuse

If a client states or suggests that he or she is abusing a child or vulnerable adult or has recently abused a child or vulnerable adult, or a child (or vulnerable adult) is in danger of abuse, the health care professional is required to report this information to the appropriate social service and/or legal authorities. If a client is the victim of abuse, neglect, violence, or a crime victim, and their safety appears to be at risk, we may share this information with law enforcement officials to help prevent future occurrences and capture the perpetrator.

Prenatal Exposure to Controlled Substances

Health care professionals are required to report admitted prenatal exposure to controlled substances that are potentially harmful.

In the event of a Client's Death

In the event of a client's death, the parents of a deceased client have a right to access their child's record or the spouse's record if the spouse is the medical representative of the deceased client.

Professional Misconduct

Professional misconduct by a healthcare professional must be reported by other healthcare professionals. In cases in which a professional or legal disciplinary meeting is being held regarding the health care professional's actions, related records may be released to substantiate disciplinary concerns.

Judicial or Administrative Proceedings

Health care professionals are required to release records of clients when a court order has been placed.

Minors/Guardianship

Parents or legal guardians of non-emancipated minor clients have the right to access the client's records.

I do reserve the right to keep conversations with minors confidential. This will allow the minors to discuss the problems without fear of being retaliated against. Please initial upon agreement. [redacted] initial.

Couples Counseling

At times it is required to separate couples and conduct individual treatment. Any matters discussed in the individual session are confidential and will not be discussed with the other person unless the therapist feels to get the result it is necessary to discuss parts or all of the matters in the couple's session. Verbal permission is obtained and enough in these cases. [redacted] initial.

Other Provisions

When payment for services is the responsibility of the client or a person who has agreed to provide payment, and payment has not been made in a timely manner,

collection agencies may be utilized in collecting unpaid debts. The specific content of the services (e.g., diagnosis, treatment plan, progress notes, testing) is not disclosed. If a debt remains unpaid it may be reported to credit agencies, and the client's credit report may state the amount owed, the time frame, and the name of the clinic or collection source.

Insurance companies managed care, and other third-party payers are given information that they request regarding services to the client. The information which may be requested includes the type of services, dates/times of services, diagnosis, treatment plan, description of impairment, the progress of therapy, and summaries.

Information about clients may be disclosed in consultations with other professionals to provide the best possible treatment. In such cases, the name of the client, or any identifying information, is not disclosed. Clinical information about the client is discussed. Some progress notes and reports are dictated/typed within the clinic or by outside sources specializing in (and held accountable for) such procedures.

In the event in which the clinic or mental health professional must telephone the client for purposes such as appointment cancellations or reminders, or to give/receive other information, efforts are made to preserve confidentiality. Please notify us in writing where we may reach you by phone and how you would like us to identify ourselves. For example, you might request that when we phone you at home or work, we do not say the name of the clinic or the nature of the call, but rather the mental health professional's first name only. If this information is not provided to us (below), we will adhere to the following procedure when making phone calls: First we will ask to speak to the client (or guardian) without identifying the name of the clinic. If the person answering the phone asks for more identifying information we will say that it is a personal call. We will not identify the clinic (to protect confidentiality). If we reach an answering machine or voice mail we will follow the same guidelines.

Your Rights

You have the right to request to review or receive your medical files. The procedures for obtaining a copy of your medical information are as follows. You may request a copy of your records in writing with an original (not photocopied) signature. If your request is denied, you will receive a written explanation of the denial. Records for non-emancipated minors must be requested by their custodial parents or legal guardians. The charge for this service is \$1:00 per page, plus postage.

You have the right to cancel a release of information by providing us with a written notice. If you desire to have your information sent to a location different than our address on file, you must provide this information in writing.

You have the right to restrict which information might be disclosed to others. However, if we do not agree with these restrictions, we are not bound to abide by them.

You have the right to request that information about you be communicated by other means or to another location. This request must be made to us in writing.

You have the right to disagree with the medical records in our files. You may request that this information be changed. Although we might deny changing the record, you have the right to make a statement of disagreement, which will be placed in your file.

You have the right to know what information in your record has been provided to whom. Request this in writing.

If you desire a written copy of this notice you may obtain it by requesting it from the Clinic Director at this location.

I understand the limits of confidentiality, privacy policies, my rights, and their meanings and ramifications.

Client's name (please print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Signed by: __client __guardian __personal __representative