

Adult Outpatient Services Contract

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AVAILABILITY: I am often not immediately available by telephone. I will make every effort to return your call within 24-48 hours except on weekends. Please note that I cannot guarantee that cell phone or e-mail communications are confidential. Use of e-mail should be limited to appointment scheduling, should not include any sensitive personal information, and may be answered at my discretion. I will not e-mail you unless you e-mail me first, or indicate on the Client Information Questionnaire if you are willing to be contacted by e-mail.

PROFESSIONAL RECORDS: The laws and standards of my profession require that I keep treatment records. You are entitled to receive a copy of the records. If I believe that seeing them would interfere with your treatment, I will be happy to send them to a mental health professional of your choice or your attorney (with your permission). Patients will be charged an appropriate fee for any time spent in preparing information requests and for preparation and mailing of records.

CONFIDENTIALITY: In general, the privacy of all communications between a patient and a psychologist is protected, and I can only release information about our work to others with your written permission. But there are a few exceptions.

In most legal proceedings, you have the right to prevent me from providing any information about your treatment. In some proceedings involving child custody and those in which your emotional condition is an important issue, a judge may order my testimony if he/she determines that the issues demand it. In addition, if you legally claim an emotional or mental disorder as part of your defense, confidentiality of records will not be maintained. If you decide to take legal action against myself, I will not be under any obligation to protect your confidentiality. If a government agency is requesting the information for oversight activities, I may be required to provide it.

There are some situations in which I am legally obligated to take action to protect others from harm, even if I have to reveal some information about a patient's treatment. For example, if I believe that a child, elderly person, or a disabled person is being abused or neglected, I must file a report with the appropriate state agency/ agencies.

If I have reasonable cause to believe that there is clear and present danger of serious bodily injury, I will disclose necessary information to protect the safety and rights of those at risk. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, seeking hospitalization for the patient, or alerting potential family members or personal contacts to help provide protection. If such a similar situation occurs, I will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action.

I may occasionally find it helpful to consult other professionals about a case. During a consultation, I make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of my patient. The consultant is also legally bound to keep the information confidential. If you don't object, I will not tell you about these consultations unless I feel that it is important to our work together.

FEES and PAYMENT: Payment is due at the time of service for individual psychotherapy and group pre-screening sessions. If you are joining a group, payment for the group is due monthly and in advance. Because I do not bill insurance companies directly, some of my clients have chosen to submit a bill of services to their insurance companies to collect reimbursement. Whether or not you are able to do this depends on your insurance plan, and is between you and your insurance. If you choose to do this please be aware that I must provide you a diagnosis code. The cost of services may periodically increase due to the rising costs of maintaining a practice, and I will provide you at least two months notice if this is the case.

If it occurs that for any reason your account has not been paid for more than 30 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, I have the option of using legal means to secure the payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court. If such legal action is necessary, all costs including attorney's fees will be included in the claim. In most collection situations, the only information I release regarding a patient's treatment is his/her name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due.

If you become involved in legal proceedings that require my participation, you will be expected to pay for my professional time even if I am called to testify by another party. Because of the difficulty of legal involvement, I will charge \$350 per hour for preparation and attendance at any legal proceeding. Payments for the estimated time required in legal matters are required in advance of my reserving time, preparing and attending those activities.

CANCELLATION: Once an *individual* appointment is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide 24 hours advance notice of cancellation. If, for any reason, you are unable to give me 24 hours notice, **you will be charged for the session.**

SOCIAL MEDIA: Social media is very new in this field and there are concerns about confidentiality. I sometimes use social media to announce new things in my practice and keep clients informed of helpful video clips or shared blog posts. As a professional, I do not "friend" people on my business Facebook page and use my LinkedIn account to interact only with other professionals in the field. Please note that if you interact with me online, which includes e-mail, I cannot guarantee your confidentiality. I have limited knowledge of how to protect your privacy online, but I will not willingly or knowingly release any of your personal information.

Please do not sign this form, but fill out the *Adult Client Questionnaire* posted on the *Forms* Section of the website and initial and sign where prompted at the bottom of the page. Your signature there will confirm that you have read and understood the terms of this document and have had the opportunity to ask questions about it. Please bring any questions regarding this consent to the intake session.

This consent was updated on February 15, 2016.