



WHICHARD

psychological services PLLC

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INFORMED CONSENT FOR IN-PERSON TESTING SERVICES DURING COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

This document contains important information about our decision (yours and mine) to schedule in-person services (i.e., testing) in light of the public health crisis. Keep in mind that all parent/self meetings prior to/after any testing (i.e., intakes, feedback session) are currently being conducted via telehealth until further notice. Please read this carefully and let me know if you have any questions. When you sign this document, it will be an agreement between us.

Decision to Meet Face to Face

We've agreed to conduct in-person testing for some (or all) future sessions. If there is a resurgence of the pandemic or if other health concerns arise, however, I may require that we postpone testing. You understand that, if I believe it is necessary, I may determine that we postpone in-person testing for everyone's well-being. At the current time, I am not scheduling telehealth virtual-remote testing; nonetheless, if this changes in the near future, I will let you know (reimbursement for telehealth virtual-remote testing, however, is determined by the insurance companies and applicable law, so that is an issue we may also need to discuss).

Risks of Opting for In-Person Services

I remain committed to following state and federal guidelines and to adhering to prevailing professional healthcare standards to limit the transmission of COVID-19 in my office. Despite the careful attention to sanitization, social distancing, and other protocols, there is still a chance that you will be exposed to COVID-19 in our office. If, at any point, you prefer to stop in-person services, please let me know.

You understand that by coming to the office, you are assuming the risk of exposure to the coronavirus (or other public health risk). This risk may increase if you travel by public transportation, cab, or ridesharing service.

My Commitment to Minimize Exposure

My practice has taken steps to reduce the risk of spreading the virus within the office, and I have posted my efforts on my website. They are as follows:

- Office seating in the waiting room and in the testing room has been arranged for appropriate physical distancing (social distancing requirements must be met, meaning that you must maintain a six-foot distance from others). I ask all clients to wait in their cars or outside until no earlier than 5 minutes before their appointment times. I also ask parents to wait outside of the office area during their child's testing appointment (in an adjacent courtyard or in their cars).

- I wear a mask and maintain safe distancing.
- Restroom soap dispensers are maintained and everyone is encouraged to wash their hands.
- Hand sanitizers that contain at least 60-70% alcohol are available in the office/testing room and waiting room.
- I schedule only one in-person testing appointment a day to minimize the number of people in the office.
- Physical contact is not permitted.
- 6-feet distancing between the examiner and client will be maintained during testing; however, a sneeze-guard/plexiglass shield will be used on the testing table for when 6-feet distance is briefly not possible (i.e., for passing of test materials).
- Tissues and trash bins are easily accessed. Trash is disposed of on a frequent basis.
- Common areas are thoroughly disinfected at the end of each day.

Your Responsibility to Minimize Your Exposure

To obtain services in person, you agree to take certain precautions which will help keep everyone (you, me, and our families, and other patients) safer from exposure, sickness and possible death. Your failure or refusal to adhere to these safeguards may result in our postponing in-person testing.

- You will only keep your in-person appointment if you/your child/others in close contact are symptom free. You will be asked to complete an online rating within 24-hours of appointments. _____
- You will take your/your child's temperature before coming to each appointment. If it is elevated (100 Fahrenheit or more), or if you have other symptoms of the coronavirus, you agree to cancel the appointment. If you wish to cancel for this reason, I won't charge you our normal cancellation fee. ____
- You will wait in your car or outside [or in a designated safer waiting area] and text me upon your arrival before entering office. _____
- You and your child will be provided with a mask (or you can bring your own) upon arriving at the office. _____
- You will allow for me to take your/your child's temperature (via a no-contact thermometer) before entering the office. _____
- You will immediately wash your hands with soap/water when you enter the building. ____
- You will adhere to the safe distancing precautions I have set up in the waiting room and testing room. For example, you won't move chairs or sit where I have signs asking you not to sit. _____
- You will wear a mask in all areas of the office (I will too). ____
- You will keep a distance of 6 feet and there will be no physical contact (e.g. no shaking hands) with me. ____
- You will try not to touch your face or eyes with your hands. If you do, you will immediately wash or sanitize your hands. ____
- You will make sure that your child follows all of these sanitation and distancing protocols. ____
- You will be asked not to wait in the waiting room during your child's testing (unless other arrangements have been made); rather, seating is provided in an outside courtyard (if not raining) or you are encouraged to wait in your car. _____
- You will take steps between appointments to minimize your exposure. ____
- If you have a job that exposes you to those who are infected, you will let me know. We will handle these on a case-by-case basis. ____
- If your commute or other responsibilities or activities put you in close contact with others (beyond your family), you will let me know. ____

- If a resident of your home tests positive for the infection, you will immediately let me know and we will discuss rescheduling procedures. _____

I may change the above precautions if additional local, state or federal orders or guidelines are published. If that happens, we will talk about any necessary changes.

If You or I Are Sick

You understand that I am committed to keeping you, me, and all of our families safe from the spread of this virus. If you show up for an appointment and I believe that you have a fever or other symptoms, or believe you have been exposed, I will have to require you to leave the office immediately. We can follow up with services by telehealth and/or postpone as appropriate.

If I test positive for the coronavirus, I will notify you so that you can take appropriate precautions.

Your Confidentiality in the Case of Infection

If you have tested positive for the coronavirus, I may be required to notify local health authorities that you have been in the office. If I have to report this, I will only provide the minimum information necessary for their data collection and will not go into any details of the reason(s) for our visits. By signing this form, you are agreeing that I may do so without an additional signed release.

Your signature below shows that you agree to these terms and conditions.

Client (Self/Parent) Signature

Date (expires one year from date)

Print Name

Print Name of minor (if applicable)

Date of Birth



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INFORMED CONSENT FOR TELEPSYCHOLOGY

This Informed Consent for Telepsychology contains important information focusing on the provision of psychological services using the phone or the Internet. Please read this carefully, and let me know if you have any questions. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

Benefits and Risks of Telepsychology

Telepsychology refers to providing psychological services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. One of the benefits of telepsychology is that the client and clinician can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be helpful in ensuring continuity of care if the client or clinician moves to a different location, takes an extended vacation, or is otherwise unable to continue to meet in person. It is also more convenient and takes less time. Telepsychology, however, requires technical competence on both our parts to be helpful. Although there are benefits of telepsychology, there are some differences between in-person psychological services and telepsychology, as well as some risks. For example:

- Risks to confidentiality. Because telepsychology sessions take place outside of the therapist's private office, there is potential for other people to overhear sessions if you are not in a private place during the session. On my end I will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. But it is important for you to make sure you find a private place for our session where you will not be interrupted. It is also important for you to protect the privacy of our session on your cell phone or other device. You should participate in services/therapy only while in a room or area where other people are not present and cannot overhear the conversation.
- Issues related to technology. There are many ways that technology issues might impact telepsychology. For example, technology may stop working during a session, other people might be able to get access to our private conversation, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.
- Crisis management and intervention. Usually, I will not engage in telepsychology with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring high levels of support and intervention. Before engaging in telepsychology, we will develop an emergency response

plan to address potential crisis situations that may arise during the course of our telepsychology work.

- Efficacy. Most research shows that telepsychology is about as effective as in-person services/therapy. However, some therapists believe that something is lost by not being in the same room. For example, there is debate about a therapist's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

Electronic Communications

We will decide together which kind of telepsychology service to use. You may have to have certain computer or cell phone systems to use telepsychology services. You are solely responsible for any cost to you to obtain any necessary equipment, accessories, or software to take part in telepsychology.

For communication between sessions, I only use email communication and text messaging with your permission and only for administrative purposes unless we have made another agreement. This means that email exchanges and text messages with my office should be limited to administrative matters. This includes things like setting and changing appointments, billing matters, and other related issues. You should be aware that I cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any information communicated by email or text. Therefore, I will not discuss any clinical information by email or text and prefer that you do not either. Also, I do not regularly check my email or texts, nor do I respond immediately, so these methods **should not** be used if there is an emergency.

Treatment is most effective when clinical discussions occur at your regularly scheduled sessions. But if an urgent issue arises, you should feel free to attempt to reach me by phone. I will try to return your call within 24 hours except on weekends and holidays. If you are unable to reach me and feel that you cannot wait for me to return your call, contact your family physician or the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychologist or psychiatrist on call. If I will be unavailable for an extended time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact in my absence if necessary.

Confidentiality

I have a legal and ethical responsibility to make my best efforts to protect all communications that are a part of our telepsychology. However, the nature of electronic communications technologies is such that I cannot guarantee that our communications will be kept confidential or that other people may not gain access to our communications. I will try to use updated encryption methods, firewalls, and back-up systems to help keep your information private, but there is a risk that our electronic communications may be compromised, unsecured, or accessed by others. You should also take reasonable steps to ensure the security of our communications (for example, only using secure networks for telepsychology sessions and having passwords to protect the device you use for telepsychology).

The extent of confidentiality and the exceptions to confidentiality that I outlined in my Psychologist-Client Agreement and Notice of Privacy Practices (HIPPA) still apply in telepsychology. Please let me know if you have any questions about exceptions to confidentiality.

Appropriateness of Telepsychology

From time to time, we may schedule in-person sessions to “check-in” with one another. I will let you know if I decide that telepsychology is no longer the most appropriate form of treatment for you. We will discuss options of engaging in in-person counseling or referrals to another professional in your location who can provide appropriate services.

Emergencies and Technology

Assessing and evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting telepsychology than in traditional in-person services/therapy. To address some of these difficulties, we will create an emergency plan before engaging in telepsychology services, if applicable. In such cases, I will ask you to identify an emergency contact person who is near your location and who I will contact in the event of a crisis or emergency to assist in addressing the situation. I will ask that you sign a separate authorization form allowing me to contact your emergency contact person as needed during such a crisis or emergency.

If the session is interrupted for any reason, such as the technological connection fails, and you are having an emergency, do not call me back; instead, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room. Call me back after you have called or obtained emergency services.

If the session is interrupted and you are not having an emergency, disconnect from the session and I will wait two (2) minutes and then re-contact you via the telepsychology platform on which we agreed to conduct services. If you do not receive a call back within two (2) minutes, then call me on the phone number I provided you (919-623-1448).

If there is a technological failure and we are unable to resume the connection, you will only be charged the prorated amount of actual session time.

Fees

The same fee rates will apply for telepsychology as apply for in-person services/therapy. However, insurance or other managed care providers may not cover sessions that are conducted via telecommunication. If your insurance, HMO, third-party payor, or other managed care provider does not cover electronic services/therapy sessions, you will be solely responsible for the entire fee of the session. Please contact your insurance company prior to our engaging in telepsychology sessions in order to determine whether these sessions will be covered.

Records

The telepsychology sessions shall not be recorded in any way unless agreed to in writing by mutual consent. I will maintain a record of our session in the same way I maintain records of in-person sessions in accordance with my policies.

Informed Consent

This agreement is intended as a supplement to the general informed consent that we agreed to at the outset of our clinical work together and does not amend any of the terms of that agreement. Your signature below indicates agreement with its terms and conditions.

Client (Self/Parent) Signature

Date (expires one year from date)

Print Name

Print Name of minor (if applicable)

Date of Birth