**Client Information Sheet**

**Client Name** Click or tap here to enter text. **DOB**Click or tap to enter a date.

**Phones/Cell** Click or tap here to enter text. **Home**Click or tap here to enter text.**Work**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Email**Click or tap here to enter text. **Gender:**Choose an item. **Ethnicity**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Address**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Social Security Number (for benefit or co-pay inquiry)**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Insurance Provider(s)**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Phone Number on Insurance Card**Click or tap here to enter text.

**ID #**Click or tap here to enter text. **Group #**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Emergency Contact Information:**

**Relationship**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Name**Click or tap here to enter text. **Phone**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Address**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Presenting Problem (What are you looking for help with?)** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Prior Psychological Treatment (Provider name and approximate treatment dates)**Click or tap here to enter text.

**\* All Information must be filled out completely to inquire about a co-pay amount or pre-authorization for treatment.**

**I understand that I am responsible to gather information directly from my insurance carrier on the details of my benefits and the provider is not responsible for the accuracy of information provided as a professional courtesy.**

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**Signature**

**Credit Card Authorization Form**

**The time scheduled for your appointment is assigned and held for you only. If you need to cancel or reschedule a session, we ask that you provide us with 24 hour notice. If you cancel with less than 24-hours’ notice, our policy is to collect $175 per session or the amount that your insurance pays us, if less. It is important to note that insurance companies do not provide reimbursement for cancelled sessions; thus, you will be responsible for the fee as described above. You are responsible for coming to your session on time; if you are late, your appointment will still need to end on time. If you will be more than 15 minutes late, please call to let me know you are still on your way. In events where cancellation becomes chronic we may need to evaluate your investment in therapy. All appointment changes or cancellations must be made at least 24 hours in advance. By providing your credit card number and signing this authorization form, you are authorizing us to charge your card for your missed appointment. There will be no charge unless you miss your appointment or cancel your appointment with less than 24 hour notice. This fee is non-refundable. We understand that there are times when circumstances create difficulties at the last minute. If we can accommodate a re-schedule for a missed appointment when there is space available within the same week we will not charge you a cancellation fee. This is determined by appointment availability.**

**Thank you for your cooperation on this matter.**

**Client Name:**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Cardholder Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Your credit card billing address as it appears on credit card statement including zip code:**

Click or tap here to enter text. **Zip Code:**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Credit Card Number:**Click or tap here to enter text.

**Expiration Date:**Click or tap to enter a date.**CVV code (on back of card):** Click or tap here to enter text.

**I,** Click or tap here to enter text.**, have read the above listed conditions and terms and agree to comply with them. Thus, I do herby authorize Charles Kairys, Psy.D., to bill my credit card listed above for any charges and fees should I fail to cancel within 24 hours, or appear for an appointment.**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:**Click or tap to enter a date.

**Informed Consent for Therapy Services**

**Psychologist-Client Service Agreement:** Welcome to my practice. This document contains important information about my professional services and business policies. It also contains summary information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), a federal law that provides privacy protections and patient rights about the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Information (PHI) for the purposes of treatment, payment, and health care operations. Although these documents are long and sometimes complex, it is very important that you understand them. When you sign this document, it will also represent an agreement between us. We can discuss any questions you have when you sign them or at any time in the future.

**Psychological Services:** Therapy is a relationship between people that works in part because of clearly defined rights and responsibilities held by each person. As a client in psychotherapy, you have certain rights and responsibilities that are important for you to understand. There are also legal limitations to those rights that you should be aware of. I, as your therapist, have corresponding responsibilities to you. These rights and responsibilities are described in the following sections.

Psychotherapy has both benefits and risks. Risks may include experiencing uncomfortable feelings, such as sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, frustration, loneliness and helplessness, because the process of psychotherapy often requires discussing the unpleasant aspects of your life.  However, psychotherapy has been shown to have benefits for individuals who undertake it.  Therapy often leads to a significant reduction in feelings of distress, increased satisfaction in interpersonal relationships, greater personal awareness and insight, increased skills for managing stress and resolutions to specific problems.  But, there are no guarantees about what will happen.  Psychotherapy requires a very active effort on your part. In order to be most successful, you will have to work on things we discuss outside of sessions.

The first 2-4 sessions will involve a comprehensive evaluation of your need for services. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some initial impressions of what our work might include. At that point, we will discuss your treatment goals and create an initial treatment plan. You should evaluate this information and make your own assessment about whether you feel comfortable working with me. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, I will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

**Appointments:** Appointments will ordinarily be 45-50 minutes in duration, once per week at a time we agree on, although some sessions may be more or less frequent as needed. The time scheduled for your appointment is assigned to you and you alone. If you need to cancel or reschedule a session, I ask that you provide me with 24 hour notice. If you cancel with less than 24-hour notice, my policy is to collect $175 per session. If you do not cancel at all, you may be charged the full session fee. It is important to note that insurance companies do not provide reimbursement for cancelled sessions; thus, you will be responsible for the fee as described above. In addition, you are responsible for coming to your session on time; if you are late, your appointment will still need to end on time. If you will be more than 15 minutes late, please call to let me know you are still on your way. If cancellation becomes chronic you may be charged the full fee of 175.00 or the amount that your insurance provides if less.

**Professional Fees:** The standard fee for the initial intake is $200.00 and each subsequent session is $175.00 unless we agree on another amount after the intake is complete.  You are responsible for paying at the time of your session unless prior arrangements have been made. Payment can be made by check, cash, or credit card. Any checks returned to my office are subject to an additional fee of up to $25.00 to cover the bank fee that is incurred. If you refuse to pay your debt, I reserve the right to use an attorney or collection agency to secure payment which would require me to release some confidential information such as your name, address, and type of service for which you acquired a bill.

In addition to weekly appointments, it is my practice to charge this amount on a prorated basis (I will break down the hourly cost) for other professional services that you may require such as report writing, telephone conversations that last longer than 15 minutes, attendance at meetings or consultations which you have requested, or the time required to perform any other service which you may request of me. If you anticipate becoming involved in a court case, I recommend that we discuss this fully before you waive your right to confidentiality. If your case requires my participation, you will be expected to pay for the professional time required even if another party compels me to testify.

**Insurance:** In order for us to set realistic treatment goals and priorities, it is important to evaluate what resources you have available to pay for your treatment. If you have a health insurance policy, it will usually provide some coverage for mental health treatment. With your permission, I will assist you to the extent possible in filing claims and ascertaining information about your coverage, but you are responsible for knowing your coverage and for letting me know if/when your coverage changes.

Due to the rising costs of health care, insurance benefits have increasingly become more complex. It is sometimes difficult to determine exactly how much mental health coverage is available. Managed Health Care plans such as HMOs and PPOs often require advance authorization, without which they may refuse to provide reimbursement for mental health services. These plans are often limited to short-term treatment approaches designed to work out specific problems that interfere with a person’s usual level of functioning. It may be necessary to seek approval for more therapy after a certain number of sessions. While a lot can be accomplished in short-term therapy, some patients feel that they need more services after insurance benefits end. Some managed-care plans will not allow me to provide services to you once your benefits end. If this is the case, I will do my best to find another provider who will help you continue your psychotherapy.

You should also be aware that most insurance companies require you to authorize me to provide them with a clinical diagnosis. (Diagnoses are technical terms that describe the nature of your problems and whether they are short-term or long-term problems.  All diagnoses come from a book entitled the DSM 5. There is a copy in my office and I will be glad to review it with you for you to learn more about your diagnosis, if applicable.). Sometimes I have to provide additional clinical information such as treatment plans or summaries, or copies of the entire record (in rare cases). This information will become part of the insurance company files and will probably be stored in a computer. Though all insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential, I have no control over what they do with it once it is in their hands. In some cases, they may share the information with a national medical information databank. I will provide you with a copy of any report I submit, if you request it. By signing this Agreement, you agree that I can provide requested information to your carrier if you plan to pay with insurance.

In addition, if you plan to use your insurance, authorization from the insurance company may be required before they will cover therapy fees. If you did not obtain authorization and it is required, you may be responsible for full payment of the fee. Many policies leave a percentage of the fee (which is called co-insurance) or a flat dollar amount (referred to as a co-payment) to be covered by the patient. Either amount is to be paid at the time of the visit. In addition, some insurance companies also have a deductible, which is an out-of-pocket amount that must be paid by the patient before the insurance companies are willing to begin paying any amount for services. This will typically mean that you will be responsible to pay for initial sessions with me until your deductible has been met; the deductible amount may also need to be met at the start of each calendar year. Once we have all of the information about your insurance coverage, we will discuss what we can reasonably expect to accomplish with the benefits that are available and what will happen if coverage ends before you feel ready to end your sessions. It is important to remember that you always have the right to pay for my services yourself to avoid the problems described above, unless prohibited by my provider contract.

If I am not a participating provider for your insurance plan, I will supply you with a receipt of payment for services, which you can submit to your insurance company for reimbursement. Please note that not all insurance companies reimburse for out-of-network providers.  If you prefer to use a participating provider, I will refer you to a colleague.

**Professional Records:** I am required to keep appropriate records of the psychological services that I provide. Your records are maintained in an electronic health record system that is encrypted with the highest level of security. I keep brief records noting that you were here, your reasons for seeking therapy, the goals and progress we set for treatment, your diagnosis, topics we discussed, your medical, social, and treatment history, records I receive from other providers, copies of records I send to others, and your billing records. Except in unusual circumstances that involve danger to yourself, you have the right to a copy of your file. Because these are professional records, they may be misinterpreted and / or upsetting to untrained readers.  For this reason, I recommend that you initially review them with me, or have them forwarded to another mental health professional to discuss the contents. If I refuse your request for access to your records, you have a right to have my decision reviewed by another mental health professional, which I will discuss with you upon your request. You also have the right to request that a copy of your file be made available to any other health care provider at your written request.

**Confidentiality:** My policies about confidentiality, as well as other information about your privacy rights, are fully described in a separate document entitled Notice of Privacy Practices. You have been provided with a copy of that document and we have discussed those issues. Please remember that you may reopen the conversation at any time during our work together. By signing this you are allowing me to call and leave messages at the phone number you provide to me. I may also send a letter to the address you provide. If either of these terms are not acceptable, please bring it to my attention immediately. Sessions are not to be recorded under any circumstances. Audio, video, or any other recording devices are prohibited.

**Parents and Minors:** While privacy in therapy is crucial to successful progress, parental involvement can also be essential. It is my policy not to provide treatment to a child under age 13 unless s/he agrees that I can share whatever information I consider necessary with a parent. For children 14 and older, I request an agreement between the client and the parents allowing me to share general information about treatment progress and attendance, as well as a treatment summary upon completion of therapy. All other communication will require the child’s agreement, unless I feel there is a safety concern (see also above section on Confidentiality for exceptions), in which case I will make every effort to notify the child of my intention to disclose information ahead of time and make every effort to handle any objections that are raised. For children 13 and younger, I can share information I consider necessary with a parent, but will do my best to inform the child of the information being shared, as age appropriate.

Therapy is most effective when a trusting relationship exists between the psychologist and the patient. Privacy is especially important in securing and maintaining that trust. One goal of treatment may be to promote a stronger and better relationship between children and their parents/caregivers. However, it is often necessary for children to develop a “zone of privacy” whereby they feel free to discuss personal matters with greater freedom. This is particularly true for adolescents who are naturally developing a greater sense of independence and autonomy. By signing this agreement, you will be waiving your right of access to your child’s treatment records. It is my policy to provide you with general information about treatment status as discussed above, but I will not disclose their private records.

Although my responsibility to your child may require my involvement in conflicts between both parents, I need your agreement that my involvement will be strictly limited to that which will benefit your child. This means, among other things, that you will treat anything that is said in session with me as confidential. Neither parent will attempt to gain advantage in any legal proceeding between the two of you from my involvement with your children. In particular, I need your agreement that in any such proceedings, neither of you will ask me to testify in court, whether in person, or by affidavit. You also agree to instruct your attorneys not to subpoena me or to refer in any court filing to anything I have said or done. Note that such agreement may not prevent a judge from requiring my testimony, even though I will work to prevent such an event. If I am required to testify, I am ethically bound not to give my opinion about either parent’s custody or visitation suitability. If the court appoints a custody evaluator, guardian ad litem, or parenting coordinator, I will provide information as needed (if appropriate releases are signed or a court order is provided), but I will not make any recommendation about the final decision.[[1]](#endnote-1)  Furthermore, if I am required to appear as a witness, the party responsible for my participation agrees to reimburse me at the rate of $250 per hour for time spent traveling, preparing reports, testifying, being in attendance, and any other case-related costs.

**Contacting Me:** My policy is to respond to phone messages as quickly as I can but I am often not immediately available by telephone. I can accept emails and text messages only in regards to scheduling of appointments. I cannot respond to therapeutic content via email or text. I do not answer my phone when I am with clients or otherwise unavailable.

At these times, you may leave a message on my confidential voice mail and your call will be returned as soon as possible, but it may take a day or two for non-urgent matters. If, for any number of unseen reasons, you do not hear from me or I am unable to reach you, and you feel you cannot wait for a return call or if you feel unable to keep yourself safe, 1) contact Ventura County’s Behavioral Health Crisis Team for adults at 866-998-2243 or for children under age 21, 866-431-2478, or Los Angeles’ Psychiatric Mobile Response Teams at (800) 854-7771, 2) go to your Local Hospital Emergency Room, or 3) call 911 and ask to speak to the mental health worker on call. I will make every attempt to inform you in advance of planned absences, and provide you with the name and phone number of the mental health professional covering my practice.

**Other Rights:** If you are unhappy with what is happening in therapy, I hope you will talk with me so that I can respond to your concerns. Such comments will be taken seriously and handled with care and respect. You may also request that I refer you to another therapist and are free to end therapy at any time. You have the right to considerate, safe and respectful care, without discrimination as to race, ethnicity, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, or source of payment. You have the right to ask questions about any aspects of therapy and about my specific training and experience. You have the right to expect that I will not have social or sexual relationships with clients or with former clients. **Consent to Psychotherapy:** Your signature below indicates that you have read this Agreement and the Notice of Privacy Practices and agree to their terms.

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Printed Name of Patient Signature Date

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Printed Name of Parent/Guardian Signature Date

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Printed Name of Parent/Guardian Signature Date

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Charles Kairys, Psy.D. Date

**HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices**

 THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

 This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how we may use and disclose your protected health information (PHI) to carry out treatment, payment or health care operations (TPO) and for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights to access and control your protected health information. “Protected health information” is information about you, including demographic information that may identify you and that relates to your past, present or future physical or mental health or condition related health care services.

**Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information**. Your protected health information may be used and disclosed by your physician, our office staff and others outside of our office that are involved in your care and treatment for the purpose of providing health care services to you, to pay your health care bills, to support the operation of the physician’s practice, and any other reuse required by law.

 **Treatment:** We will use and disclose your protected health information to provide, coordinate, or manage your health care and any related services. This includes the coordination or management of your health care with a third party. For example, we would disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to a home health agency that provides care to you. For example, your protected health information may be provided to a physician to whom you have been referred to ensure that the physician has the necessary information to diagnose and treat you.

**Healthcare Operations:** We may use or disclose, as-needed, your protected health information in order to support the business activities of you physician’s practices. These activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment activities, employee review activities, training of medical students, licensing, and conducting or arranging for other business activities. For example, we may disclose your protected health information to medical school students that see patients at our office. In addition, we may use a sign-in sheet at the registration desk where you will be asked to sign your name and indicate your physician. We may also call you by name in the waiting room when your physician is ready to see you. We may use or disclose your projected health information, as necessary, to contact you to remind you of your appointment.

We may use or disclose your protected health information in the following situations without your authorization. These situations include: as Required By Law, Public Health issues as required by law: Communicable Diseases: Health Oversight: Abuse or Neglect: Food and Drug Administration requirements: Legal Proceedings: Law Enforcement: Coroners, Funeral Directors, and Organ Donation: Research: Criminal Activity: Military Activity and National Security: Workers’ Compensation: Inmates: Required Uses and Disclosures: Under the law, we must make disclosures to you and when required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine our compliance with the requirements of Section 164,500.

 Other Permitted and Required Uses and Disclosures Will Be Made Only With Your Consent, Authorization or Opportunity to Object unless required by law.

 You may revoke this authorization, at any time, in writing, except to the extent that your physician or the physician’s practice has taken an action in reliance on the use or disclosure indicated in the authorization.

 Your Rights Following is a statement of your rights with respect to your protected health information.

You have the right to inspect and copy your protected health information. Under federal law, however, you may not inspect or copy the following records; psychotherapy notes; information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or use in, a civil, criminal, or administrative action or preceding, and protected health information that is subject to law that prohibits access to protected health information.

You have the right to request a restriction of your protected health information. Disclose any part of your protected health information for the purposes of treatment, payment or healthcare operations. You may also request that any part of your protected health information not be disclosed to family members or friends who may be involved in your care or for notification purposes as described in this Notice of Privacy Practices. Your request must state the specific restriction requested and to whom you want the restriction to apply.

Your physician is not required to agree to a restriction that you may request. If your physician believes it is in your best interest to permit use and disclosure of your protected health information, your protected health information will not be restricted. You then have the right to use another Healthcare Professional.

You have the right to request to receive confidential communications from us by alternative means or at an alternative location. You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us, upon request, even if you have agreed to accept this notice alternatively i.e. electronically.

You may have the right to have your physician amend your protected health information. If we deny your request for amendment, you have the right to file a statement of disagreement with us and we may prepare a rebuttal to your statement and will provide you with a copy of any such rebuttal.

You have the right to receive an accounting of certain disclosures we have made, if any, of your protected health information. We reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and will inform you by mail of any changes. You then have the right to object or withdraw as provided in this notice.

**Complaints:** You may complain to us or to the Secretary of Health and Human Service if you believe your privacy rights have been violated by us. You may file a complaint with us by notifying your privacy contact of your complaint. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

This notice was published and becomes effective on/or before April 14, 2003

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of, and provide individuals with, this notice of your legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information. If you have any objections to this form, please ask to speak with our HIPAA Compliance Officer in person or by phone at our Main Phone number.

**Signature below is only acknowledgement that you have received this Notice of our Privacy Practices:**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ \_\_

1. **HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices – Client Copy**

 THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

 This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how we may use and disclose your protected health information (PHI) to carry out treatment, payment or health care operations (TPO) and for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights to access and control your protected health information. “Protected health information” is information about you, including demographic information that may identify you and that relates to your past, present or future physical or mental health or condition related health care services.

**Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information**. Your protected health information may be used and disclosed by your physician, our office staff and others outside of our office that are involved in your care and treatment for the purpose of providing health care services to you, to pay your health care bills, to support the operation of the physician’s practice, and any other reuse required by law.

 **Treatment:** We will use and disclose your protected health information to provide, coordinate, or manage your health care and any related services. This includes the coordination or management of your health care with a third party. For example, we would disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to a home health agency that provides care to you. For example, your protected health information may be provided to a physician to whom you have been referred to ensure that the physician has the necessary information to diagnose and treat you.

**Healthcare Operations:** We may use or disclose, as-needed, your protected health information in order to support the business activities of you physician’s practices. These activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment activities, employee review activities, training of medical students, licensing, and conducting or arranging for other business activities. For example, we may disclose your protected health information to medical school students that see patients at our office. In addition, we may use a sign-in sheet at the registration desk where you will be asked to sign your name and indicate your physician. We may also call you by name in the waiting room when your physician is ready to see you. We may use or disclose your projected health information, as necessary, to contact you to remind you of your appointment.

We may use or disclose your protected health information in the following situations without your authorization. These situations include: as Required By Law, Public Health issues as required by law: Communicable Diseases: Health Oversight: Abuse or Neglect: Food and Drug Administration requirements: Legal Proceedings: Law Enforcement: Coroners, Funeral Directors, and Organ Donation: Research: Criminal Activity: Military Activity and National Security: Workers’ Compensation: Inmates: Required Uses and Disclosures: Under the law, we must make disclosures to you and when required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine our compliance with the requirements of Section 164,500.

 Other Permitted and Required Uses and Disclosures Will Be Made Only With Your Consent, Authorization or Opportunity to Object unless required by law.

 You may revoke this authorization, at any time, in writing, except to the extent that your physician or the physician’s practice has taken an action in reliance on the use or disclosure indicated in the authorization.

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You have the right to inspect and copy your protected health information. Under federal law, however, you may not inspect or copy the following records; psychotherapy notes; information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or use in, a civil, criminal, or administrative action or preceding, and protected health information that is subject to law that prohibits access to protected health information.

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You may have the right to have your physician amend your protected health information. If we deny your request for amendment, you have the right to file a statement of disagreement with us and we may prepare a rebuttal to your statement and will provide you with a copy of any such rebuttal.

You have the right to receive an accounting of certain disclosures we have made, if any, of your protected health information. We reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and will inform you by mail of any changes. You then have the right to object or withdraw as provided in this notice.

**Complaints:** You may complain to us or to the Secretary of Health and Human Service if you believe your privacy rights have been violated by us. You may file a complaint with us by notifying your privacy contact of your complaint. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

This notice was published and becomes effective on/or before April 14, 2003

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of, and provide individuals with, this notice of your legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information. If you have any objections to this form, please ask to speak with our HIPAA Compliance Officer in person or by phone at our Main Phone number.

**Signature below is only acknowledgement that you have received this Notice of our Privacy Practices:**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_YOUR COPY\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_YOUR COPY\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

**Informed Consent for Therapy Services - Client Copy**

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**Psychological Services:** Therapy is a relationship between people that works in part because of clearly defined rights and responsibilities held by each person. As a client in psychotherapy, you have certain rights and responsibilities that are important for you to understand. There are also legal limitations to those rights that you should be aware of. I, as your therapist, have corresponding responsibilities to you. These rights and responsibilities are described in the following sections.

Psychotherapy has both benefits and risks. Risks may include experiencing uncomfortable feelings, such as sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, frustration, loneliness and helplessness, because the process of psychotherapy often requires discussing the unpleasant aspects of your life.  However, psychotherapy has been shown to have benefits for individuals who undertake it.  Therapy often leads to a significant reduction in feelings of distress, increased satisfaction in interpersonal relationships, greater personal awareness and insight, increased skills for managing stress and resolutions to specific problems.  But, there are no guarantees about what will happen.  Psychotherapy requires a very active effort on your part. In order to be most successful, you will have to work on things we discuss outside of sessions.

The first 2-4 sessions will involve a comprehensive evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some initial impressions of what our work might include. At that point, we will discuss your treatment goals and create an initial treatment plan. You should evaluate this information and make your own assessment about whether you feel comfortable working with me. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, I will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

**Appointments:** Appointments will ordinarily be 45-50 minutes in duration, once per week at a time we agree on, although some sessions may be more or less frequent as needed. The time scheduled for your appointment is assigned to you and you alone. If you need to cancel or reschedule a session, I ask that you provide me with 24 hour notice. If you cancel with less than 24-hour notice, my policy is to collect $175 per session. If you do not cancel at all, you may be charged the full session fee. It is important to note that insurance companies do not provide reimbursement for cancelled sessions; thus, you will be responsible for the fee as described above. In addition, you are responsible for coming to your session on time; if you are late, your appointment will still need to end on time. If you will be more than 15 minutes late, please call to let me know you are still on your way. If cancellation becomes chronic you may be charged the full fee of 175.00 or the amount that your insurance provides if less.

**Professional Fees:** The standard fee for the initial intake is $200.00 and each subsequent session is $175.00 unless we agree on another amount after the intake is complete.  You are responsible for paying at the time of your session unless prior arrangements have been made. Payment can be made by check, cash, or credit card. Any checks returned to my office are subject to an additional fee of up to $25.00 to cover the bank fee that I incur. If you refuse to pay your debt, I reserve the right to use an attorney or collection agency to secure payment which would require me to release some confidential information such as your name, address, and type of service for which you acquired a bill.

In addition to weekly appointments, it is my practice to charge this amount on a prorated basis (I will break down the hourly cost) for other professional services that you may require such as report writing, telephone conversations that last longer than 15 minutes, attendance at meetings or consultations which you have requested, or the time required to perform any other service which you may request of me. If you anticipate becoming involved in a court case, I recommend that we discuss this fully before you waive your right to confidentiality. If your case requires my participation, you will be expected to pay for the professional time required even if another party compels me to testify.

**Insurance:** In order for us to set realistic treatment goals and priorities, it is important to evaluate what resources you have available to pay for your treatment. If you have a health insurance policy, it will usually provide some coverage for mental health treatment. With your permission, I will assist you to the extent possible in filing claims and ascertaining information about your coverage, but you are responsible for knowing your coverage and for letting me know if/when your coverage changes.

Due to the rising costs of health care, insurance benefits have increasingly become more complex. It is sometimes difficult to determine exactly how much mental health coverage is available. Managed Health Care plans such as HMOs and PPOs often require advance authorization, without which they may refuse to provide reimbursement for mental health services. These plans are often limited to short-term treatment approaches designed to work out specific problems that interfere with a person’s usual level of functioning. It may be necessary to seek approval for more therapy after a certain number of sessions. While a lot can be accomplished in short-term therapy, some patients feel that they need more services after insurance benefits end. Some managed-care plans will not allow me to provide services to you once your benefits end. If this is the case, I will do my best to find another provider who will help you continue your psychotherapy.

You should also be aware that most insurance companies require you to authorize me to provide them with a clinical diagnosis. (Diagnoses are technical terms that describe the nature of your problems and whether they are short-term or long-term problems.  All diagnoses come from a book entitled the DSM 5. There is a copy in my office and I will be glad to review it with you for you to learn more about your diagnosis, if applicable.). Sometimes I have to provide additional clinical information such as treatment plans or summaries, or copies of the entire record (in rare cases). This information will become part of the insurance company files and will probably be stored in a computer. Though all insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential, I have no control over what they do with it once it is in their hands. In some cases, they may share the information with a national medical information databank. I will provide you with a copy of any report I submit, if you request it. By signing this Agreement, you agree that I can provide requested information to your carrier if you plan to pay with insurance.

In addition, if you plan to use your insurance, authorization from the insurance company may be required before they will cover therapy fees. If you did not obtain authorization and it is required, you may be responsible for full payment of the fee. Many policies leave a percentage of the fee (which is called co-insurance) or a flat dollar amount (referred to as a co-payment) to be covered by the patient. Either amount is to be paid at the time of the visit. In addition, some insurance companies also have a deductible, which is an out-of-pocket amount that must be paid by the patient before the insurance companies are willing to begin paying any amount for services. This will typically mean that you will be responsible to pay for initial sessions with me until your deductible has been met; the deductible amount may also need to be met at the start of each calendar year. Once we have all of the information about your insurance coverage, we will discuss what we can reasonably expect to accomplish with the benefits that are available and what will happen if coverage ends before you feel ready to end your sessions. It is important to remember that you always have the right to pay for my services yourself to avoid the problems described above, unless prohibited by my provider contract.

If I am not a participating provider for your insurance plan, I will supply you with a receipt of payment for services, which you can submit to your insurance company for reimbursement. Please note that not all insurance companies reimburse for out-of-network providers.  If you prefer to use a participating provider, I will refer you to a colleague.

**Professional Records:** I am required to keep appropriate records of the psychological services that I provide. Your records are maintained in an electronic health record system that is encrypted with the highest level of security. I keep brief records noting that you were here, your reasons for seeking therapy, the goals and progress we set for treatment, your diagnosis, topics we discussed, your medical, social, and treatment history, records I receive from other providers, copies of records I send to others, and your billing records. Except in unusual circumstances that involve danger to yourself, you have the right to a copy of your file. Because these are professional records, they may be misinterpreted and / or upsetting to untrained readers.  For this reason, I recommend that you initially review them with me, or have them forwarded to another mental health professional to discuss the contents. If I refuse your request for access to your records, you have a right to have my decision reviewed by another mental health professional, which I will discuss with you upon your request. You also have the right to request that a copy of your file be made available to any other health care provider at your written request.

**Confidentiality:** My policies about confidentiality, as well as other information about your privacy rights, are fully described in a separate document entitled Notice of Privacy Practices. You have been provided with a copy of that document and we have discussed those issues. Please remember that you may reopen the conversation at any time during our work together. By signing this you are allowing me to call and leave messages at the phone number you provide to me. I may also send a letter to the address you provide. If either of these terms are not acceptable, please bring it to my attention immediately. Sessions are not to be recorded under any circumstances. Audio, video, or any other recording devices are prohibited.

**Parents and Minors:** While privacy in therapy is crucial to successful progress, parental involvement can also be essential. It is my policy not to provide treatment to a child under age 13 unless s/he agrees that I can share whatever information I consider necessary with a parent. For children 14 and older, I request an agreement between the client and the parents allowing me to share general information about treatment progress and attendance, as well as a treatment summary upon completion of therapy. All other communication will require the child’s agreement, unless I feel there is a safety concern (see also above section on Confidentiality for exceptions), in which case I will make every effort to notify the child of my intention to disclose information ahead of time and make every effort to handle any objections that are raised. For children 13 and younger, I can share information I consider necessary with a parent, but will do my best to inform the child of the information being shared, as age appropriate.

Therapy is most effective when a trusting relationship exists between the psychologist and the patient. Privacy is especially important in securing and maintaining that trust. One goal of treatment may be to promote a stronger and better relationship between children and their parents/caregivers. However, it is often necessary for children to develop a “zone of privacy” whereby they feel free to discuss personal matters with greater freedom. This is particularly true for adolescents who are naturally developing a greater sense of independence and autonomy. By signing this agreement, you will be waiving your right of access to your child’s treatment records. It is my policy to provide you with general information about treatment status as discussed above, but I will not disclose their private records.

Although my responsibility to your child may require my involvement in conflicts between both parents, I need your agreement that my involvement will be strictly limited to that which will benefit your child. This means, among other things, that you will treat anything that is said in session with me as confidential. Neither parent will attempt to gain advantage in any legal proceeding between the two of you from my involvement with your children. In particular, I need your agreement that in any such proceedings, neither of you will ask me to testify in court, whether in person, or by affidavit. You also agree to instruct your attorneys not to subpoena me or to refer in any court filing to anything I have said or done. Note that such agreement may not prevent a judge from requiring my testimony, even though I will work to prevent such an event. If I am required to testify, I am ethically bound not to give my opinion about either parent’s custody or visitation suitability. If the court appoints a custody evaluator, guardian ad litem, or parenting coordinator, I will provide information as needed (if appropriate releases are signed or a court order is provided), but I will not make any recommendation about the final decision. Furthermore, if I am required to appear as a witness, the party responsible for my participation agrees to reimburse me at the rate of $250 per hour for time spent traveling, preparing reports, testifying, being in attendance, and any other case-related costs.

**Contacting Me:** My policy is to respond to phone messages as quickly as I can but I am often not immediately available by telephone. I can accept emails and text messages only in regards to scheduling of appointments. I cannot respond to therapeutic content via email or text. I do not answer my phone when I am with clients or otherwise unavailable. At these times, you may leave a message on my confidential voice mail and your call will be returned as soon as possible, but it may take a day or two for non-urgent matters. If, for any number of unseen reasons, you do not hear from me or I am unable to reach you, and you feel you cannot wait for a return call or if you feel unable to keep yourself safe, 1) contact Ventura County’s Behavioral Health Crisis Team for adults at 866-998-2243 or for children under age 21, 866-431-2478, or Los Angeles’ Psychiatric Mobile Response Teams at (800) 854-7771, 2) go to your Local Hospital Emergency Room, or 3) call 911 and ask to speak to the mental health worker on call. I will make every attempt to inform you in advance of planned absences, and provide you with the name and phone number of the mental health professional covering my practice.

**Other Rights:** If you are unhappy with what is happening in therapy, I hope you will talk with me so that I can respond to your concerns. Such comments will be taken seriously and handled with care and respect. You may also request that I refer you to another therapist and are free to end therapy at any time. You have the right to considerate, safe and respectful care, without discrimination as to race, ethnicity, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, or source of payment. You have the right to ask questions about any aspects of therapy and about my specific training and experience. You have the right to expect that I will not have social or sexual relationships with clients or with former clients.

**Consent to Psychotherapy:** Your signature below indicates that you have read this Agreement and the Notice of Privacy Practices and agree to their terms.

**Client Copy** [↑](#endnote-ref-1)