***YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REVIEW HIPAA & DISCLOSURE BEFORE SIGNING***

**PATIENT (CLIENT) NOTIFICATION OF PRIVACY RIGHTS "HIPAA NOTICE"**

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) has created patient (client) protections surrounding the use of protected health information. Commonly referred to as the “medical records privacy law”, HIPAA provides patient (client) protections related to the electronic transmission of data (“the transaction rules”), the keeping and use of patient records (“privacy rules”) and storage and access to health care records (“the security rules”). HIPAA applies to all health care providers, including mental health care, and providers and health care agencies throughout the country are now required to provide patients/clients a notification of their privacy rights as it relates to their health care records. You may have already received similar notices such as this one from your other health care providers.

 As you might expect, the HIPAA law and regulations are detailed and may be difficult to grasp. This Patient (Client) Notification of Privacy Rights is an attempt to inform you of your rights in a simple yet comprehensive fashion. Please read this document as it is important you know what client protections HIPAA affords all of us. In mental health care, you will find I will do all I can do to protect the privacy of your mental health records. If you have any questions about any of the matters discussed in this document, please do not hesitate to ask me for further clarification.

 By law, I am required to secure your signature indicating you have received this Patient (Client) Notification of Privacy Rights Document (HIPAA).

 I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, understand and have been offered a copy of Alisia Ives’ Patient (Client) Notification of Privacy Rights Document which provides a detailed description of the potential uses and disclosures of my protected health information, as well as my rights on these matters. I understand I have the right to review this document before signing this acknowledgment form.

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Client Signature for Parent if Minor or Legal Charge Date

**Sign below you have received the INFORMATION/DISCLOSURE form:**

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Client Signature Date

**Emergency Contact** Name, Relationship type (i.e. spouse), and Phone (insurance requires):

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name Relationship, Phone

**HIPAA NOTICE\***

**Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**

**\*Maine Board of Counseling Professionals has privacy rules, whichever provides more privacy prevails**

**THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW YOUR MENTAL HEALTH RECORDS MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION.**

**Please read it carefully.**

I. Preamble

The Counselor Ethics and Licensing Code provides very strong privileged communication protections for conversations between your Counselor and you *in the context of your established professional relationship*. There is a difference between privileged conversations and documentation in your mental health records. Records are kept documenting your care as required by professional standards, review procedures and law. HIPAA clearly defines what kind of information is to be included in your “designated medical record”.

HIPAA provides privacy protections about your personal health information, which is called “protected health information” (PHI) which could personally identify you. I am allowed to disclose PHI for these three (\*3) reasons: *treatment, payment, and health care operations*.

*Treatment* purposes refers to activities in which I provide, coordinate or manage your mental health care or services related to your mental health care. For examples, 1) a counseling session, or 2) talking with your primary care physician about your medication or overall medical condition.

*Payment* is when I obtain reimbursement for your mental health care. The clearest example of this is filing an insurance claim on your behalf to help pay for some of the costs of the services provided.

*Health care operations* are activities related to the performance of my practice such as quality assurance. In mental health care, the best example of health care operations is when utilization review occurs, a process in which your insurance company reviews our work together to see if your care is “medically necessary” or credential review.

The use of your protected health information (PHI) refers to activities my office conducts for filing your claims, scheduling appointments, keeping records and other tasks related to your care. Disclosures refer to information you authorize to release such as the sending of your PHI to other parties (i.e. your primary care physician).

*\*In the event HIPAA disclosure information differs with the Maine Board of Counseling Professionals Licensure, whichever protects clients’ privacy more prevails.*

II. Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information Requiring Authorization

Maine requires authorization consent for treatment, payment and healthcare operations. I may disclose your PHI for the purposes of treatment, payment and healthcare operations with your consent. You sign an authorization so I may bill your insurance company directly.

If you want me to send any of your protected health information (PHI) to anyone, you will first sign a specific authorization to release information to this outside party. A copy of that authorization form is available upon the request. The requirement of you signing an additional authorization form is an added protection to help insure your PHI is kept strictly confidential. An example of this type of release might be someone who wants me to speak with a spouse, parent, etc. as part of counseling. Before I talk with anyone, you will first sign the proper authorization.

You may in writing, revoke all authorizations to disclose protected health information (PHI) at any time. You cannot revoke an authorization for a disclosure that you already instructed me to do and has been done or if the authorization was obtained as a condition for obtaining insurance and Maine law provides the insurer the right to contest the claim under the policy.

III Business Associates Disclosures

HIPAA requires that I train and monitor the conduct of those performing ancillary administrative services for my practice and refers to these people as “Business Associates”. At present, I schedule all appointments and file all claims electronically through an insurance clearing house called Office Ally.

IV **Uses and Disclosures Not Requiring Consent or Authorization**

By law, protected health information (PHI) may be released without your consent or authorization in the following situations:

* Imminent serious threat of harm, sexual or other, to a child, elder, or someone physically or mentally disabled
* Health oversight activities (i.e. Maine Counseling licensing board; discuss diagnosis with other medical provider)
* Judicial or administrative proceedings (i.e. if you are ordered here by the court for counseling; to defend my practice in a legal action or other proceeding brought by client)
* Serious threat to health or safety to yourself or another (i.e. “Duty to Warn” Law)
* Worker’s Compensation claims (if you seek to have your care reimbursed under Worker’s Compensation, all of your care is automatically subject to review by your employer and/or insurer(s))

I do not release information of for marketing purposes nor for fundraising. No sale of PHI.

V Patient/Client Rights and My Duties

 You have a right to the following:

* The right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosure of your PHI which I may or may not agree to but if I do, such restrictions shall apply unless our agreement is changed in writing.
* The right to receive confidential communications by alternative means and at alternate locations. For example, you may not want your bills sent to your home address so I will send them to another location of your choosing.
* The right to inspect and copy your PHI in my designated mental health record set and any billing records for as long as PHI is maintained in the record
* The right to amend material in your protected health information, although I may deny any improper request and/or respond to any amendment(s) you make to your record of care.
* The right to an accounting of unauthorized disclosures of your PHI
* The right to a paper copy of notices/information from me, even if you have previously requested electronic transmission of notices/information, and
* The right to revoke your authorization of your PHI except to the extent that action has already been taken.

For more information on how to exercise each of these aforementioned rights, please do not hesitate to ask me for further assistance on these matters. I am required by law to maintain the privacy of your PHI and to provide you with a notice of your Privacy Rights and my duties regarding your PHI. I reserve the right to change my privacy policies and practices as needed with these current designated practices being applicable unless you receive a revision of my policies when you come for your future appointment(s). My duties as a Counselor on these matters include this notice unless it is changed and you are so notified.

VI Breach

If a breach of protected health information (PHI) occurs, I must report to you and Health and Human Services if the information was unsecured, for example, an email hacker.

VII Complaints

I am the appointed “Privacy Officer” for my practice per HIPAA regulations. If you have any concerns of any sort regarding your privacy rights, please do not hesitate to speak to me immediately about this matter. You will always find me willing to talk to you about preserving the privacy of your protected mental health information. You may also send a written complaint to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

The consequences of a privacy violation may include fines. I do complete risk analyses every so often and obtain outside objective professional input.

VIII This notice has been effect since September 15, 2009 and remains so with additional updates thus far most recently completely on January 20, 2015. Electronic Mail or Text Communication Notice

Alisia Ives, MS, LCPC, Licensed Counselor

 I do make use of e-mail communication via ives@alisiaives.com and text at 207-650-5681. Note that if there is a person behind the glass in the waiting area, that person does not work for me, contact me directly via text or call 207-650-5681 at all times.

 Be mindful of the things you send to me via electronic communication. It is important you keep your email password private to protect your personal information. I am the only one who has access to my office email account. Also, remember that electronic communication provides less non-verbal signals (i.e. facial expression, body stance) so messages may need clarification.

 If you have a question or concern about anything I have written; please ask and I will do the same.

 My goal is to reply within 24 hours Monday through Friday. If you write to me on a Friday, I may not check my email until Monday morning – please keep this in mind and call or text 207-650-5681 if you have a pressing matter. Even if I happen to reply on a weekend, that is not the norm. I will let you know when I am vacationing and who to contact during that period.

Please sign below that you have read and understand this Notice.

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Signature Date

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Print Name Email Address