

## **Informed Consent for Psychotherapy Services**

The following document contains information about the professional services I provide, my business policies, and your rights as a client. Please review it carefully.

### **A Little Bit About Myself and My Practice**

My name is Hanna Watkins. I am a Registered Psychotherapist (RP) with the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO; registration number: 004153). As well, I am a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist (RMFT) with the Canadian Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (CAMFT; member number 2017014). I hold a Master's Degree in Couple and Family Therapy from the University of Guelph (2014) and an Honour's Undergraduate Degree in Psychology also from the University of Guelph (2012).

As an integrative psychotherapist, I draw on a variety of different theoretical orientations, approaches, and techniques in my work with clients. I pride myself on offering a collaborative and strengths-based approach, and I hold a systemic, trauma-informed and anti-oppressive framework. I draw primarily from acceptance and commitment therapy, narrative approaches, and mindfulness practices, with elements from CBT, DBT and solution focused therapy. My couple's work draws from Emotion Focused Therapy, Gottman methods and attachment theory. Please see my website for further information (<https://hannawatkinspsychotherapy.com/>).

Throughout the course of therapy, I will do my best to be open with you about the process I am engaging in and my rationale for any interventions used. Psychotherapy works best when there is open communication and collaboration between the therapist and client(s), and that includes sharing thoughts and feelings about the therapeutic experience itself. I encourage you to ask any questions you may have at any time so that you are fully informed and empowered throughout the therapeutic process.

I am committed to on-going learning and professional development. As such, I regularly participate in professional trainings and workshops. As well, as needed, I consult with respected and experienced colleagues to help ensure I am providing the best care possible. As such, elements from our work together may be discussed, but I want to assure you that identifying information is never shared and that only the necessary information to have the consultation be effective is shared.

### **Code of Ethics**

I am governed by all legislation covering psychotherapy in Ontario. I hold myself accountable to the Code of Ethics and Practice Standards of the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario and the Code of Ethics of the Canadian Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

### **Personal Information and Record-Keeping**

Your personal information will be collected, used, and stored as necessary to ensure the provision of high-quality psychotherapy services and in accordance with the requirements of

relevant privacy laws. You have the right to see the notes stored in your file, to ask questions and receive clarification, and to request that changes be made to records if you believe them to be inaccurate. If you'd like to receive a copy of your records, an administrative fee may be charged.

## **Confidentiality**

All information discussed during psychotherapy is private and confidential, which means that I will not share your information with any outside parties without your expressed consent.

At times, it may be beneficial to consult with other health practitioners in your "circle of care" (e.g. your family doctor) if it is relevant to your progress in therapy, however I would ask for your expressed consent to do so prior to making contact or disclosing any information.

It is important to be aware of the exceptional circumstances under which I would be legally and ethically obligated to disclose your personal information without your consent, which are listed below:

1. If I have a concern that there is an imminent risk of serious bodily harm to either yourself or someone else, I will need to take action to ensure safety, which may include contacting the police or alerting other individuals of the potential danger.
2. If you disclose information about a child or elderly individual at risk of abuse or neglect, I will need to report it to the appropriate authorities.
3. If you inform me about another regulated health professional that has abused you or is abusing others, I will need to report this to the appropriate authorities.
4. If the College of Psychotherapists on Ontario (CRPO) conducts a quality assurance audit or asks me to hand over records as part of a review process, I am required to produce the records they request.
5. If I receive a subpoena or other court order, I may have to disclose your personal information as required by law.

Whenever possible, I will notify you if I need to take any of the actions outlined above prior to doing so, or as soon as possible afterwards.

## **Contacting Me**

If you need to contact me, I can be reached by phone at (289) 807-2739 or by email at hanna@hannawatkinspsychotherapy.com. I aim to be prompt in responding to messages, however, it is important to know that messages are only checked during business hours. Unfortunately, I am not able to provide crisis services. In the event of an emergency or crisis, please contact your local crisis hotline or proceed to your nearest emergency department.

Crisis Services Canada

1-833-456-4566

<https://www.crisisservicescanada.ca>

Suicide prevention and support, available 24/7/365

Or please see my website (<https://hannawatkinspsychotherapy.com/>) for local resources.

Note that communications sent via email or other web-based services are not as secure as communications conveyed in person or over the phone. As such, I do not recommend that you send me extensive personal information via email, as the security and confidentiality of this information cannot be guaranteed.

### **Virtual Psychotherapy**

I offer virtual therapy either over the phone or via secure videoconferencing. While there are a lot of benefits to virtual sessions, including accessibility and convenience, it is important to be aware of the drawbacks. Some information is lost when conducting therapy via video conferencing services (e.g. body language). As well, technical issues can arise that may cause interruptions in the session or result in reduced audio or video quality. When these issues arise, I will do my best to resolve them to be able to proceed with our session. As a participant in our work together, I invite you to ensure you are fully prepared to participate in each of our sessions, which includes having access to reliable internet/phone connection and ensuring you can participate in our session from a quiet place where you are not going to be worried about being overheard or interrupted. Please note, that sessions will not be conducted if I have concerns around confidentiality (i.e. in a busy or public place) or while driving.

### **In Person Psychotherapy**

My office is located at 35 Main Street North, Waterdown, Ontario, L0R 2H6, Canada. My office is on the second floor (24A) and there is an elevator to take you up. Turn right out of the elevator and proceed down the hallway to the end, make a right turn and wait in the little waiting area for me to come get you for our session. The office is fully accessible.

### **Contact Outside of Therapy (including Social Media Policy)**

As a general rule, I do not form or maintain relationships with clients or former clients outside of the professional relationship involved in the provision of psychotherapy services. This includes on social media, wherein I will not elicit or accept social media contact of a personal nature (including “friend requests” on Facebook). In the event of incidental contact outside of therapy (e.g. if we ran into each other in a public place), I would leave it up to you to decide whether or not you’d like to initiate contact in order to respect your rights to privacy and confidentiality.

### **Fees and Billing**

My fee for a 50-minute session of individual or couple psychotherapy session is \$150 and my fee for an 80-minute couples counselling session is \$240. These fees factor in the direct services provided in session as well as out-of-session administrative tasks such as record-keeping, appointment scheduling, and other tasks as required. Payment is due at the beginning of each session. My rates may change over time (no more frequently than annually) to keep up with inflation and my increasing skills and competence. You will be advised any fee increases well in

advance, and space will be created to discuss any impacts a fee increases might have on our abilities to continue to have sessions.

Additional fees may be charged if you require letters or reports to be written on your behalf or for telephone conversations lasting longer than 10 minutes (prorated to my normal hourly charge). In such cases, I will inform you and obtain your consent in advance of doing any work that would result in additional fees.

I currently only accept e-transfer as a payment method. Payment may be made out to hanna@hannawatkinspsychotherapy.com.

My services as a Registered Psychotherapist (RP) and Registered Marriage and Family Therapist (RMFT) **may** be covered by your extended health care benefits. Please confirm the specific details and requirements of your coverage by contacting the provider of your benefits, and/or your employer. Receipts for sessions will be provided upon payment. I do not offer direct billing.

### **Late or Missed Appointments, and Cancellation Policy**

I understand that life happens and sometimes sessions might need to be cancelled or rescheduled. If you need to cancel an appointment for any reason, please give me as much notice as possible. If I need to cancel an appointment for any reason, I will give you as much notice as possible.

I strive to provide timely and accessible services with little to no waitlist. As such, it is very important to have advanced notice of a cancellation or reschedule request so that I may fill that slot with another client. As such, I require 48 hours of notice for any cancellation or reschedule, otherwise my full session fee will be charged. This fee will also be charged if you do not show up to our scheduled session and do not provide any notice. You will not be able to rebook until this fee is paid. If you are late for an appointment for any reason, we will be able to continue for the remainder of the session time. Unfortunately, I will not be able to extend the length of the session time. You will be charged the full rate. If there are extenuating circumstances, please reach out and we can discuss.

**A special note for couples counselling:** If one or both partners are unable to keep the appointment, it will need to be cancelled and rescheduled according to the guidelines above. I will not see one partner alone unless this is previously arranged (and I do so for all partners). This is to ensure there are no secrets and to prevent unhelpful dynamics (ex. perceptions of siding) to emerge.

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**By signing this document, you are indicating that you have read and understand the contents of this document, have had the opportunity to ask any questions you may have and had them answered, and that you consent to engage in the psychotherapy services being offered.**