

Limits of Confidentiality

Therapy sessions between a counselor/therapist and client are confidential and release of Protected Health Information requires your written permission, except under certain legally defined situations:

- If a clinician become aware that a client intends to harm him/herself, harm another, or if s/he is unable to provide self-care at a level necessary for basic survival, we are ethically and legally bound to take appropriate action to protect against such dangers.
- State law requires the report of suspected child, vulnerable adult, or otherwise dependent abuse or neglect when there is reasonable belief that it has occurred.
- Under the US Patriot Act, the clinician is required to release records if requested by the federal government if a client is suspected of involvement in terrorism.
- In response to a court order, the clinician may have to release records or testify.
- If you are utilizing an insurance company to reimburse you for out-of-network benefits, you will be required to consent to the release of information such as your clinical diagnosis, and your records may be reviewed.
- If a client files a complaint or lawsuit against me, the clinician may disclose relevant information regarding that client in order to defend myself.
- At times the clinician may employ administrative staff to help with scheduling and quality assurance practices. The clinician may need to share protected information, such as your name and telephone number, with these individuals for purely administrative purposes.
- Regarding collection situations (see payment section above), the clinician is permitted to release your name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due.
- Finally, on occasion to benefit the treatment, the clinician may consult with another clinician. This is done with great respect for your privacy and identifying information is omitted whenever possible.

If you participate in marital or family therapy, the marriage and family therapist will not disclose confidential information about your treatment unless all person(s) who participated in the treatment with you provide their written authorization to release such information.

However, it is important that you know that the marriage and family therapist utilizes a “no secrets” policy when conducting family or marital/couples therapy. This means that she does not keep secret information gathered in individual conversations (whether on the phone or in an individual session) if the information revealed in some way violates the integrity of the couples/family therapy (such as revealing an affair, substance problem, or intent to leave the relationship). Such information will need to be revealed to the other partner for therapy to effectively continue. Please feel free to ask me about my “no secrets” policy and how it may apply to you.