

## GOOD LIFE COUNSELING & WELLNESS

### Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA)/Notice of Privacy Practices

[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.]

I am required by law to maintain the privacy and security of your protected health information (“PHI”) and to provide you with this Notice of Privacy Practices (“Notice”). I must abide by the terms of this Notice, and I must notify you if a breach of your unsecured PHI occurs.

I understand that information about you and your health care is personal. I am committed to protecting health information about you. I create a record of the care and services you receive from me. I need this record to provide you with quality care and to comply with certain legal requirements. This notice applies to all of the records of your care generated by my practice. This notice will tell you about the ways in which I may use and disclose health information about you. I also describe your rights to the health information I keep about you, and describe certain obligations I have regarding the use and disclosure of your health information. I am required by law to:

- Make sure that protected health information (“PHI”) that identifies you is kept private.
- Give you this notice of my legal duties and privacy practices with respect to health information.
- Follow the terms of the notice that is currently in effect.

I can change the terms of this Notice, and such changes will apply to all information I have about you. The new Notice will be available upon request, in my office, and on my website. The website will always have the most recent version.

Except for the specific purposes set forth below, I will use and disclose your PHI only with your written authorization (“Authorization”). It is your right to revoke such Authorization at any time by giving me written notice of your revocation.

Uses and Disclosures relating to Treatment, Payment, or Health Care Operations do not require your written consent. I can use and disclose your PHI without your Authorization for the following reasons:

1. **For treatment.** I can use and disclose your PHI to treat you, which may include disclosing your PHI to those involved in your care. For example, if a physician or a psychiatrist is treating you, I can disclose your PHI to him or her to help coordinate your care.
2. **For payment purposes:** PHI may be used for the purposes of billing and payment for the treatment & services provided to you. For example, PHI may be requested by your insurance company to determine eligibility, process claims, or determine ongoing medical necessity.
3. **For health care operations:** I can use and disclose, as needed, your PHI as it relates to business practices, such as quality assurance, conducting operations pertaining to my practice, including contacting an attorney to obtain advice about complying with applicable laws.

### **Certain Uses and Disclosures Require Your Authorization.**

1. Progress Notes. I do not keep “psychotherapy notes” as defined in 45 CFR § 164.501; rather, I keep a record of your treatment and you may request a copy of such record at any time, or you may request that I prepare a summary of your treatment. There may be reasonable, cost-based fees involved with copying the record or preparing the summary.
2. Marketing Purposes. As a psychotherapist, I will not use or disclose your PHI for marketing purposes. Marketing is defined as receiving financial remuneration for communicating about other businesses’ health-related services or products to patients.
3. Sale of PHI. As a psychotherapist, I will not sell your PHI in the regular course of my business.

### **Certain Uses and Disclosures Do Not Require Your Authorization.**

**(Subject to certain limitations mandated by law, I can use and disclose your PHI without your Authorization for the following reasons):**

- When disclosure is required by state or federal law, and the use or disclosure complies with and is limited to the relevant requirements of such law.
- For public health activities, including reporting suspected child, elder, or dependent adult abuse, or preventing or reducing a serious threat to anyone’s health or safety.
- For health oversight activities, including audits and investigations.
- For judicial and administrative proceedings, including responding to a court or administrative order, although my preference is to obtain an Authorization from you before doing so.
- For law enforcement purposes, including reporting crimes occurring on my premises.
- To coroners or medical examiners, when such individuals are performing duties authorized by law.
- For research purposes, including studying and comparing the mental health of patients who received one form of therapy versus those who received another form of therapy for the same condition.
- Specialized government functions, including, ensuring the proper execution of military missions; protecting the President of the United States; conducting intelligence or counter-intelligence operations; or, helping to ensure the safety of those working within or housed in correctional institutions.
- For workers' compensation purposes. Although my preference is to obtain an Authorization from you, I may provide your PHI in order to comply with workers' compensation laws.
- Appointment reminders and health related benefits or services. I may use and disclose your PHI to contact you to remind you that you have an appointment with me. I may also use and disclose your PHI to tell you about treatment alternatives, or other health care services or benefits that I offer.

### **Certain Uses and Disclosures Require You to Have the Opportunity to Object.**

Disclosures to family, friends, or others. I may provide your PHI to a family member, friend, or other person that you indicate is involved in your care or the payment for your health care, unless you object in whole or in part. *The opportunity to consent may be obtained retroactively in emergency situations.*

## *YOUR RIGHTS YOUR REGARDING YOUR PHI*

You have the following rights with respect to your PHI:

1. **The Right to Request Limits on Uses and Disclosures of Your PHI.** You have the right to ask me not to use or disclose certain PHI for treatment, payment, or health care operations purposes. I am not required to agree to your request, and I may say “no” if I believe it would affect your health care.
2. **The Right to Request Restrictions for Out-of-Pocket Expenses Paid for In Full.** You have the right to request restrictions on disclosures of your PHI to health plans for payment or health care operations purposes if the PHI pertains solely to a health care item or a health care service that you have paid for out-of-pocket in full.
3. **The Right to Choose How I Send PHI to You.** You have the right to ask me to contact you in a specific way (for example, home or office phone) or to send mail to a different address, and I will agree to all reasonable requests.
4. **The Right to See and Get Copies of Your PHI.** Other than “psychotherapy notes,” you have the right to get an electronic or paper copy of your medical record and other information that I have about you. To inspect and copy medical information, you must submit a request in writing. I will provide you with a copy of your record, or a summary of it, if you agree to a summary, within 30 days of receiving your written request, and I may charge a reasonable, cost-based fee for doing so.
5. **The Right to Get a List of the Disclosures I Have Made.** You have the right to request a list of instances in which I have disclosed your PHI for purposes other than treatment, payment, or health care operations, or for which you provided me with an Authorization. I will respond to your request for an accounting of disclosures within 60 days of receiving your request. The list I will give you will include disclosures made in the last six years unless you request a shorter time. I will provide the list to you at no charge, but if you make more than one request in the same year, I will charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for each additional request.
6. **The Right to Correct or Update Your PHI.** If you believe that there is a mistake in your PHI, or that a piece of important information is missing from your PHI, you have the right to request that I correct the existing information or add the missing information. I may say “no” to your request, but I will tell you why in writing within 60 days of receiving your request.
7. **The Right to Get a Paper or Electronic Copy of this Notice.** You have the right get a paper copy of this Notice, and you have the right to get a copy of this notice by e-mail. And, even if you have agreed to receive this Notice via e-mail, you also have the right to request a paper copy of it.

## *HOW TO COMPLAIN ABOUT MY PRIVACY PRACTICES*

If you think I may have violated your privacy rights, you may file a complaint with me. My address and telephone number are listed below. You can also file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights by:

1. Sending a letter to 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201;
2. Calling 1-877-696-6775;
3. Visiting [www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/) I will not retaliate against you if you file a complaint about my privacy practices.

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS NOTICE:** This notice went into effect on April 1, 2020.

### **Acknowledgement of Receipt of Privacy Notice**

Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), you have certain rights regarding the use and disclosure of your protected health information. By checking the box below, you are acknowledging that you have received a copy of HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices.

*Your signature below indicates that you have read, understood, and agree to the items contained in this document.*

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name

date

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