



Rights and Exceptions to Privacy

CLIENT NAME: _____

The work that we do here is **CONFIDENTIAL**. The things that you choose to discuss with me are strictly private and protected by Washington State laws. Except under unusual circumstances, which are discussed below, I will not share anything we talk about with others unless I have your written permission to do so. Occasionally it will be helpful for me to exchange information with others, such as your physician, school or work personnel, or other family members. I will always explain the need to do so, and discuss the specific information to be shared. If that is acceptable, I will ask for your permission in writing and ask you to complete a "Release of Information" form. Similarly, I will not seek or receive information from others who know you without first receiving your permission. If there is specific information that you believe would be helpful for me to know – particularly with regard to previous mental health treatment – please bring this to my attention as soon as possible.

It is very important for you to know that there are some things that, by law, **CANNOT BE KEPT PRIVATE**. Here are the exceptions to your rights to privacy:

- 1) If I am subpoenaed or court ordered to testify in court, I may have to give the courts information about you without your permission. If I am subpoenaed or receive a court order I will make an effort to contact you. If you oppose release of information, a court may nevertheless order me to disclose such information.
- 2) If I learn that harm has been done to a child, elderly person, or disabled person, I have a mandatory obligation to make a report to the appropriate authorities.
- 3) If I learn of a client's specific intent to bring harm to him- or herself, or to another person, or to commit an act of violence, it is my responsibility to protect both you and others. Under these circumstances I reserve the right to be able to inform other family members, intended victims, and/or authorities, as appropriate.
- 4) A non-custodial parent who wants to learn about their child's treatment may have the right to review their child's treatment record, and/or to discuss their child's care with me. Although these exceptions seldom occur, it is important that you be aware of them. I encourage you to discuss any concerns about privacy with me both at our first meeting and at any other time that privacy might become a concern for you.

Privacy is also an important issue when children or spouses are involved in treatment. When children and adolescents are referred for treatment, it is important to respect their need for some privacy while also identifying issues to be addressed by the entire family. Under the State of Washington minors have the right to restrict information released to other family members including parents. While such restrictions are critical, with the consent of the minor communication between all parties is permitted. Similarly, when both members of a couple are involved in treatment it is important to balance the need for individual privacy with the need for open communication. If you know that your spouse or other family members will be involved in treatment, or may be in the future, please discuss these issues with me as soon as possible.

Signature of Patient/Guardian

Date

Name of Parent/Guardian (printed)

Relationship to patient: ☐ Self ☐ Parent ☐ Guardian ☐ Other