

H&L Psychological Services, LLC

Informed Consent Statement

	Therapy Process
	<p>Our goal is to create an environment in which you feel safe and comfortable working through thoughts, experiences, and stressors. You can receive many benefits from the therapy process; such as a greater understanding and acceptance of self, more functional relationships, and a greater sense of consistency between goals and choices. Risks of therapy include the possibility of feeling an increase in painful emotions while working through difficult subjects. The decision to conclude therapeutic work is often a mutual agreement between therapist and client, however the decision to continue therapy is yours to make. If you decide to stop sessions before a close is agreed upon, a closing session will be scheduled.</p>
	Therapeutic Relationship
	<p>The therapeutic relationship differs from other relationships in your life. To examine and process aspects of your life in a safe and healthy way, it is important efforts are made to protect the professional and focused nature of this relationship. The therapeutic relationship will remain professional and all encounters will be held in the office setting. Therapists cannot accept gifts or social invitations.</p>
	Confidentiality
	<p>All information shared in treatment is confidential except in circumstances governed by law. Information will only be shared when requested and permitted by you in writing.</p> <p>Legal exceptions to confidentiality include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ When a client is intent on hurting self or others▪ When there is reason to suspect the abuse or neglect of a minor child▪ When records or information are ordered by a court of law <p>Clients under age 14 are not permitted to legally withhold session content or records from their parents/guardians. Upon reaching the age of 14, clients are granted the rights of confidentiality and power to consent to or refuse treatment.</p> <p>Clinical information, which may include your identifying information, is shared for the purposes of supervision and professional consultation with other therapists at H&L Psychological Services; all of our therapists are bound by confidentiality. Our Notice of Privacy Practices reviews other situations in which your information may need to be shared. Your therapist may participate in other professional consultation outside of H&L Psychological Services; your identifying information is not shared in these meetings to protect confidentiality.</p>
	Contact Information
	<p>Contact your therapist directly for scheduling. Generally, messages are returned within a 24-hour period. Email and text messaging are <u>only</u> to be used for scheduling purposes or to exchange forms or resources as these are not completely secure or confidential. Please do not include content related to your therapy sessions or evaluations. Electronic communication becomes a part of your record. Your therapist does <u>not</u> provide emergency mental health services. During an emergency, call 911, go to an emergency room, or call your county's crisis intervention number; Lehigh County 610-782-3127.</p>
	Billing & Payments
	<p>All payment is due at the time of service. Forms of payment accepted include cash, check, money order, and credit/debit card. Please have exact change if using cash. If using insurance, your protected health information will be shared with your insurance company. It is your responsibility to investigate what your plan covers, its limits, and its approval policies. Please call the number on your card to verify your coverage. You will be billed any applicable deductibles, copays, or coinsurance. It is your responsibility to promptly update the office about any change in coverage or insurance provider. A lapse in insurance coverage or an out-of-network plan may result in you being billed the full amount for sessions.</p>

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Attendance & Cancellation

If you need to cancel a session, please provide a minimum of 24-hour notice. If you do not attend your scheduled therapy appointment and have not provided at least 24-hour notice, there will be a \$100 no show/late cancellation fee. Appointments over 15 minutes late will need to be rescheduled and you may be charged the \$100 no show/late cancellation fee. Your therapist has reserved this time for you and it is important to communicate in advance if you will be unable to attend so your therapist has ample time to offer the appointment to someone else. We understand cancellations due to emergencies happen and ask that you give as much notice as possible. Frequent cancellations can impact the progress of therapy. If attendance issues arise, we will review the circumstances and your clinical needs. If attendance continues to be a problem, you will be discharged from services and provided with referrals to other therapists who may be able to better accommodate your schedule. If your therapist needs to cancel a session, this will be relayed to you and another session will be scheduled.

Risks of Opting for In-Person Services

By coming to the office, you are assuming the risk of exposure to COVID-19 (or other public health risk). This risk may increase if you travel by public transportation, cab, or ridesharing service. If you suspect you have COVID-19 or have tested positive, contact your therapist to reschedule or switch to telehealth. Please inform your therapist prior to coming to the office if you have had a recent COVID-19 exposure. If you feel safer doing sessions via telehealth or with masking for in-person sessions, your therapist will respect that decision, as long as it is feasible and clinically appropriate. At any time, your therapist may choose to wear a mask or may request masking or switching to telehealth.

Social Media Policy

Due to the risks associated with upholding client confidentiality, we do not communicate with clients through social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) nor can we accept any invitations from clients or clients' family members. It is not a regular part of our practice to search for clients on social media or search engines. Extremely rare exceptions may be made during times of crisis. If you use location-based services on your mobile phone, you may wish to be aware of the privacy issues related to using these services; it is possible others may surmise you are a therapy client due to regular "check-ins" at the office. You may find this practice listed with online business review sites, which can include forums for users to rate providers and add reviews. If you find a listing on any of these sites, please know this is not a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement from you as a client. Due to confidentiality, your therapist cannot respond to any reviews on these sites.

Building Rules & Regulations

Smoking

- No smoking is permitted anywhere within the building
- There is a designated smoking area on the northeast side of the building

Weapons

- No firearms or explosives of any type or nature are permitted anywhere within the building

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to review the Informed Consent Statement. If you have questions or concerns about any of these policies, please bring them to your therapist's attention. If you feel your therapist has done something harmful or unethical, you may contact their licensing board. Please keep this statement for your records.

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