

CONFIDENTIALITY

The confidentiality of the material discussed in therapy will be upheld at all times. As a general rule, Carolina Psychological Associates, P.A. will not release any information without your written consent. We are a group practice. We can consult with our associates when clinically advisable. Each clinician in the group shares emergency coverage, and the clinician who is on-call will have access to information relevant to responding to emergencies.

THERE ARE SOME EXCEPTIONS TO THE CONFIDENTIALITY RULE:

When a child is in treatment and the parents are divorced, and the parents have joint custody, the N.C. Attorney General's Office has advised us that as psychotherapists, we are obligated to inform both parents that the child is in treatment and the nature and course of treatment.

If a therapist suspects that child abuse or neglect has occurred, the law requires that it be reported to the proper authorities. Child abuse includes sexual exploitation and physical or mental injuries that result in impaired functioning. Child neglect includes failure to provide for the basic needs of the child (including medical care) and inappropriate discipline.

If a therapist believes you to be a clear and imminent danger to yourself or another person, she or he must take steps to prevent that occurrence. These steps may require breaking confidentiality.

In a legal proceeding, client-therapist communications are privileged. A judge can, however, order the therapist to divulge confidential information if this information is deemed necessary for the proper administration of justice. There is one exclusion; N.C. law provides that a marriage counselor is incompetent to testify in any subsequent legal action regarding divorce.

Your records can be released without your consent to prove to the appropriate agencies that Carolina Psychological Associates, P.A. is in compliance with federally mandated HIPAA privacy laws.

Your records can be released without your consent upon request from the military for purposes of national security.

Per North Carolina Law (eff. 1/1/2012), mental health and medical providers may share client information with other mental health and medical providers, without obtaining the client's written consent, when necessary to coordinate care and treatment. This applies between mental health providers and other health care providers (such as psychiatrists, primary care physicians and pediatricians) regulated by the 1999 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. This allows a referring psychologist or physician to be informed about a client they have referred. We will follow this law's provisions unless you let us know otherwise.

Filing insurance always requires giving the insurance company, or third party payor, a diagnosis and the date of service. If you are covered through an employee group health plan, this information may come back to an insurance administrator at the place of employment. Sometimes insurance companies or third party payors require more extensive information before processing claims. This does not usually come back to the employer. If you are concerned about this, you should check to see how your company protects insurance information.

If the use of a collection agency or attorney is necessary to collect a past due balance, your right to confidentiality is curtailed. While no clinical information would be revealed, your name, your employer, etc. and the amount owed becomes available to the agents.

If you have any concerns regarding confidentiality, please feel free to discuss them with your therapist.

Signing below indicates that I have read and understand the limits to my confidentiality.

Client (or parent/guardian) Signature

Date

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(Client Copy)

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