



Outpatient Services Contract

Welcome to New Transitions Counseling Center, Ltd. This document contains important information about our professional services and business policies. It is important that you read these documents carefully and if you have questions, we can discuss them at our meeting. When you sign this document, it represents an agreement between us. However, you may withdraw from this agreement in writing at anytime. I will ask you to sign this document during our first meeting.

Psychological Services

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. Psychotherapy calls for a very active effort on your part. In order for therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both during our sessions and at home. Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. Psychotherapy has also been shown to have many benefits for individuals who go through it. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. However, there are no guarantees of what you will experience. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, I will be happy to provide you with a referral or help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

Meetings

Psychotherapy therapy sessions are 45-60 minutes long and scheduled according to the recommendation of your psychologist or therapist. Once an appointment is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it. If you need to cancel or reschedule an appointment, please give 24 business hours advance notice, otherwise you will be billed at the hourly rate. We sincerely appreciate your cooperation and at any time you have any questions regarding insurance, fees, balances or payments please feel free to ask.

Professional Fees

The hourly fee varies for the type of service provided in our office. New Transitions Counseling Center's fee for individual therapy is \$150 (for LCPC or LCSW) or \$165 for Psychologists. If we are under contract with your insurance company, our fees are governed by this contract and you are responsible for co-pays as outlined by carrier. Any fees, outside of the portion covered

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by insurance (if being billed by us), is due at time of service. In addition to scheduled appointments, I charge this amount for other professional services you may need, though I will break down the hourly cost if I work for periods of less than one hour. Others services include the following: report writing, travel time for meetings with other professionals you have authorized, lengthy conversations consulting with other professionals with your permission, preparation of records or treatment summaries, and time spent performing any other service you request of me.

Primary Insurance & Reimbursement

If you have medical insurance that covers mental health treatment, please provide New Transitions Counseling Center with information on your insurance card. In addition, we require that you provide us with a copy of your card on our files. If your insurance company indicates that coverage was terminated or that they need more information from you prior to processing claims, the balance is your responsibility until the matter is resolved. All co-pays, deductibles, and payment for non-insurance covered services are due at the time of treatment. In regards to reimbursement, I will fill out forms and provide you with whatever assistance I can in helping you receive the benefits to which you are entitled. However, you are responsible for full payment not your insurance company. As a result, it is important that you find out what mental health services your insurance policy covers.

It is important that you understand that most insurance companies require you to authorize me to provide them with a clinical diagnosis. Sometimes I have to provide additional clinical information such as a treatment plans or summaries, or copies of the entire record (in rare cases). This information will become part of the insurance company files and will probably be stored in a computer. Insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential; however, I have no control over what they do with it once it is in their hands. I will provide you with a copy of any report I submit, if you request it. You always have the right to pay for my services yourself to avoid potential problems mentioned above (unless prohibited by contract).

Contacting Me

As a result of my work schedule, I am not immediately available by telephone. When I am unavailable, my telephone is answered by voice mail that I monitor regularly. If you are unable to reach me and feel that you cannot wait for me to return your call, follow the instructions on my voicemail or go to the nearest emergency room. If I will be gone for an extended period of time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact, if necessary.

Professional Records

The law and standards of my profession require that I keep your treatment records. However, you are entitled to receive a copy of your records or I can prepare a summary of your treatment instead. Because these are professional records, they can be misinterpreted and/or upsetting to untrained readers. If you would like to see your records, I recommend that you initially review

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them in my presence, or have them forwarded to another mental health professional so you can discuss the contents. Patients will be charged \$50 per set of records due to copying fees.

Limits of Confidentiality

The law protects the privacy of communication between the patient and the therapist. In most situations, I can only release information about your treatment to others through your written permission. In the case of minors, those over 12 years of age must sign the release in addition to a parent/guardian (see below) However, there are expectations.

- You should be aware that I practice with other mental health professionals and that I contract with administrative staff. In most cases, I need to share protected information with these individuals for both clinical and administrative purposes, such as scheduling, billing and quality assurance. All of the mental health professionals are bound by the same rules of confidentiality.
- In most legal proceedings, you have the right to prevent me from providing any information about your treatment. The courts very much support therapist/patient confidentiality. In some proceedings involving child custody and those in which your emotional condition is an important issue, a judge may order my testimony if he/she determines that the issues demand it.
- I am legally obligated to take action to protect others from harm, even if I have to reveal some information about a patient's treatment. For example, if I believe that a child, elderly person or disabled person is being abused, I must file a report with the appropriate state agency.
- If a patient threatens to harm himself/herself, I may be obligated to seek hospitalization for him/her or to contact family members or others who can help provide protection. If I believe that a patient is threatening serious bodily harm to another, I may be required to take protective actions. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for the patient. These situations are unusual in my practice. However, if a similar situation occurs, I will make every effort to fully disclose it with you before taking any action.
- I may occasionally find it helpful to consult other professionals about a case. During consultation, I make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of my patient. The consultant is also legally bound to keep the information confidential. If you don't object, I will not tell you about these consultations unless I feel that it is important to our work together.

While this written summary of expectations to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing you about potential problems, it is important that we discuss any questions or concerns that you may have. The laws governing confidentiality can be quite complex, and I am not an attorney.

Legal Issues

If you become involved in legal proceedings that require my participation, you will be expected to pay for my professional time even if I am called to testify by another party. We require that you provide with a \$600 retainer before I become involved in this matter. We charge \$300 per hour for preparation and presence at any legal proceeding due to the complexity of legal involvement. Furthermore, you may be also required to sign a separate contract that specifically addresses legal issues.

Minors & Parents

Patients under 12 years of age and their parents need to be aware that the law permits parents to examine their child's treatment records. Parents of children between 12 and 18 cannot examine their child's records unless the child consents or unless I find that there are no compelling reasons for denying access. It is my policy to request an agreement from parents that they agree to give up access to your records. If they agree, I will provide them only with general information about our work together (child's progress & his/her attendance at scheduled sessions), unless I feel there is a high risk that you will seriously harm yourself or someone else. In this case, I will notify them of my concern. I will also provide parents with a summary of treatment when it is complete. Whenever possible, before giving parents any information, I will discuss the matter with the child.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and agree to abide by its terms during our professional relationship.

Signature of Patient

Date

Signature of Parent (if patient is a minor)

Date

Signature of Witness

Date