

Aspire Psychological Services LLC

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www.aspirepsychservices.com



Aspire Psychological Services Privacy Practices Agreement

Welcome to Aspire Psychological Services. This document contains important information about our professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully and jot down any questions you might have so that we can discuss them at our next meeting. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

Psychological Services

Therapy is not easily described in general statements. There are different methods I may use to help those with problems. Therapy is not exactly like a medical doctor visit. Instead, it calls for a very active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both during our meetings and at home.

Therapy can have benefits and risks. Because it often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, therapy has also been shown to have benefits for people who go through it. It often leads to better sleep (especially if that is the focus), relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But, there are no guarantees as to what you will experience.

Our first meeting will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some first impressions of what our work will include and a treatment plan to follow, if you decide to continue with treatment. You should evaluate this information along with your own opinions about whether you feel comfortable working with our team. At the end of the evaluation, I will notify you if I believe that I am not the right provider for you and, if so, I will give you referrals, if applicable, to other practitioners whom I believe are better suited to help you.

Treatment involves a large commitment of time, money, and energy, so you should be careful about the provider you select. If you have questions about procedures, discussion should occur whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, I will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health provider for a second opinion.

Meetings

I normally conduct an evaluation during the initial visit and during this time we can both decide if I am the best person to provide the services you need in order to meet your treatment goals. If we agree to begin treatment, I will usually schedule one 45-minute meeting per week, at a time we agree on, although some sessions may be longer or more frequent. Once an appointment hour (45-minute meeting) is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide at least one business days' notice in advance of cancellation [unless we both agree that you were unable to attend due to circumstances beyond your control]. If it is possible, I will try to find another time to reschedule the appointment.

Professional Fees

My fee is \$150 for initial consultation and \$125 per ongoing meeting. If we meet more than the usual time, I will charge accordingly. In addition to weekly appointments, I charge this same hourly rate for other professional services you may need, though I will prorate the hourly cost if I work for periods of less than one hour. Other

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professional services include report writing, telephone conversations lasting longer than 10 minutes, attendance at meetings with other professionals you have authorized, preparation of treatment summaries, and the time spent performing any other service you may request of me. If you become involved in legal proceedings that require my participation, you will be expected to pay for any professional time I spend on your legal matter, even if the request comes from another party. I charge \$200 per hour for professional services I am asked or required to perform in relation to your legal matter.

Billing and Payments

You will be expected to pay for each session at the time it is held, unless we agree otherwise. Thus, the patient will pay their fee online through our scheduling portal on our website with a credit card.

If your account has not been paid for more than 60 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, I have the option of using legal means to secure the payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court. In most collection situations, the only information I will release regarding a patient's treatment is his/her name, the dates, times, and nature of services provided, and the amount due.

Insurance Reimbursement

Aspire Psychological Services does not accept any insurances at this time. Patients have an option to request an itemized receipt of payment for services which will be fulfilled at the end of each month. This may be used to submit to your insurance company. It is the patient's responsibility to handle this submission.

Aspire providers believe in the value of spending time with patients and providing comprehensive care. Due to decreasing reimbursement rates and increasing costs associated with following up on insurance claims it has become quite difficult to provide optimal care while taking insurance. Many of our patients with high deductible health plans were paying for services out of pocket anyway, and actually pay less through our current practice model. Our patients have also expressed concerns about their privacy and the impact the diagnoses our providers submitted to insurance could have on their health or life insurance rates.

Your appointment is specifically held for you and as a courtesy to others, please call at least 24 hours (at least 1 business day) before your appointment to cancel. If you are not present for your scheduled meeting and have not given a 24-hour (at least 1 business day) notification to your provider, you will be required to pay the full cost of the meeting.

Confidentiality / Contacting Me

I am often not immediately available by telephone. Though I am often in my office between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM, I probably will not answer the phone when I am with a patient. When I am unavailable, my telephone is answered by an answering service that I monitor. I will make every effort to return your call as soon as possible, with the exception of weekends and holidays. If you are difficult to reach, please inform me of sometimes when you will be available. If you are unable to reach me and feel that you cannot wait for me to return your call, contact your family physician or the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychologist or psychiatrist on call.

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In general, the privacy of all communications between a patient and a psychologist is protected by law, and I can only release information about our work to others with your written permission. But there are a few exceptions.

Due to the nature of treatment, communication through e-mail and/or telephone may be needed between the provider and patient to provide documents such as handouts or forms or for general communication purposes. Though maintaining provider-patient confidentiality is the ultimate goal, due to the nature of electronic communication such as e-mail, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. If you would prefer to not utilize e-mail and/or telephone communication with your provider, please let your provider know. Otherwise, by signing this document below you acknowledge the risks of e-mail or telephone communication and agreed to use these forms of communication in the future.

In most legal proceedings, you have the right to prevent me from providing any information about your treatment. In some legal proceedings, a judge may order my testimony if he/she determines that the issues demand it, and I must comply with that court order.

There are some situations in which 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 or has been abused, I must make a report to the appropriate state agency.

If I believe that a patient is threatening serious bodily harm to another, I am required to take protective actions. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for the patient. If the 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 a similar situation occurs in the course of our work together, I will attempt to fully discuss it with you before taking any action.

I may occasionally find it helpful to consult other professionals about a case. During a consultation, I make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of my patient. The consultant is also legally bound to keep the information confidential. Ordinarily, I will not tell you about these consultations unless I believe that it is important to our work together.

Although this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality is intended to inform you about potential issues that could arise, it is important that we discuss any questions or concerns that you may have at our next meeting. I will be happy to discuss these issues with you and provide clarification when possible.

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