



## HIPAA & The Limits of Confidentiality

### **What is HIPAA?**

Pursuant to the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996* (HIPAA), which became effective on April 14, 2003, we are required to maintain the privacy of your protected health information and to provide you with written notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to such protected health information. We are required to abide by the terms of the notice currently in effect. We reserve the right to change the terms of our notice at any time and to make the new provisions effective for all protected health information that we maintain. In the event that we make a material revision to the terms of our notice, you will receive a revised notice within sixty (60) days of such revision. Should you have any questions or require further information, please contact our Privacy Officer at (888) 636-1306 and the following individual will be happy to assist you: Dr. Jessica L. Tommasi, LMHC.

The following signature indicates my acknowledgement of having been informed about HIPAA and that I have received a copy of the *Notice of Privacy Practices* by my treatment provider:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Patient or Parent/Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*My signature above indicates that I have been provided with a copy of the Notice of Privacy Practices, and that I understand and consent to this notice.*

Documented Concerns if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

### **Limits of Confidentiality**

Contents of all therapy sessions are considered to be confidential. Both verbal information as well as written records about a patient cannot be shared with another party without the written consent of the client or the client's legal guardian. However, there particular situations when confidentiality no longer applies. The noted exceptions are as follows:

1. *Duty to Warn and Protect*: When a client discloses intentions or a plan to harm another person, the mental health professional is required to warn the intended victim and report this information to legal authorities. In cases in which the client discloses or implies a plan for suicide, the health care professional is required to notify legal authorities and make reasonable attempts to notify the family of the client.
2. *Abuse of Children and Vulnerable Adults*: If a patient states or suggests that he or she is abusing a child (or vulnerable adult) or has recently abused a child (or vulnerable adult), or a child (or vulnerable adult) is in danger of abuse, the mental health professional is required to report this information to the appropriate social service agency and/or legal authorities. Professionals are also required to report admitted prenatal exposure to controlled substances that are potentially harmful.
3. *Minors*: Parents or legal guardians of non-emancipated minor clients have the right to access the clients' records.
4. *Insurance Providers (when applicable)*: Insurance companies and other third-party payers are provided with information upon regarding services to clients. Such Information includes, but is not limited to, the type of services provided, dates/times of services, diagnosis, treatment plan, description of impairment, progress of therapy, case notes, and summaries.

*I agree to the above limits of confidentiality and understand their meanings and ramifications.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date