

INFORMED CONSENT FOR IN-PERSON SERVICES DURING COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

This document contains important information about the decision of both you, as the client, and your therapist at the Samaritan Counseling Center to resume in-person services in light of the public health crisis. Please read this carefully and let your therapist know if you have any questions.

Decision to Meet Face to Face

My therapist at the Samaritan Counseling Center (SCC) and I, the client or the parent/guardian of the client, have agreed to meet in person for some or all future sessions. If there is a resurgence of the pandemic or if other health concerns arise, however, your therapist may require that you again meet via Videotherapy. If you have concerns about going back to Videotherapy, please discuss this with your therapist in order to try to address the issue. Please be aware that your therapist may determine that a return to Videotherapy is necessary for everyone's well-being.

If you decide at any time that you would feel safer staying with, or returning to, Videotherapy services, your therapist will respect that decision, as long as it is clinically appropriate. Reimbursement for Videotherapy services, however, is determined by the insurance companies and applicable law, so please be sure to check with your insurance company that Videotherapy services are covered.

Risks of Opting for In-Person Services

Please understand that by coming to the office, you are assuming the risk of exposure to the coronavirus (or other public health risk). This risk may increase if you travel by public transportation, cab, or ridesharing service.

Your Responsibility to Minimize Your Exposure

To obtain services in person, you agree to take certain precautions which will help keep everyone (you, your family members, SCC staff and their family members, and other clients) safer from exposure, sickness and possible death. Your failure or refusal to adhere to these safeguards may result in starting/returning to a Videotherapy arrangement. Initial each to indicate that you understand and agree to these actions:

- _____ You will only keep your in-person appointment if you are symptom free.
- _____ If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or traveled outside the country or to a state identified for quarantine within the last 14 days, please contact the Center to change your appointment to a virtual session.
- _____ If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you may only be seen for an in-person session when you have been symptom and fever free for at least 72 hours.
- _____ You will wash your hands or use hand sanitizer when you enter the building.
- _____ You will adhere to the safe distancing precautions in your therapist's office or anywhere else in the building.
- _____ You will wear a mask in all general areas of the office, including the waiting room and hallways.
- _____ If you are requested to wear a mask, you agree to do so.
- _____ You will maintain a distance of 6 feet and there will be no physical contact (e.g. no shaking hands) with SCC staff.
- _____ If you are bringing your child, you will make sure that your child follows all of these sanitation and distancing protocols. (Please, only bring a child if that child is the client.)
- _____ If a resident of your home tests positive for the infection, you will immediately let SCC staff know and your therapist will then begin or resume treatment via Videotherapy.
- _____ You are/are not (circle one) fully vaccinated for the COVID-19 virus.

SCC staff may change the above precautions if additional local, state or federal orders or guidelines are published. If that happens, your therapist will discuss any necessary changes.

SCC’s Commitment to Minimize Exposure

Samaritan Counseling Center has taken steps to reduce the risk of spreading the virus within the office. Please let us know if you have questions about these efforts.

In the Event of Illness

You understand that SCC is committed to keeping you, SCC staff and all of our families safe from the spread of this virus. If you show up for an appointment and your therapist or other SCC staff believe that you have a fever or other symptoms, or believe you have been exposed, SCC will require you to leave the office immediately. Your therapist can follow up with services by Videotherapy as appropriate.

If a member of the SCC staff with whom you have had contact tests positive for the coronavirus, SCC will notify you so that you can take appropriate precautions.

Your Confidentiality in the Case of Infection

If you later test positive for the coronavirus, or if you have been exposed to someone at our office who then tests positive, SCC staff may be required to notify local health authorities that you have been in the office. If SCC has to report this, we will only provide the minimum information necessary for their data collection and will not go into any details of the reason(s) for your visit(s). By signing this form, you are agreeing that Samaritan Counseling Center may do so without an additional signed release.

Informed Consent

This agreement supplements to the *Acknowledgement of Receipt of Notice of Privacy Practices*, the *Counseling Policy* and the *Fee Policy* that you signed at the start of our work together.

Your signature below shows that you agree to these terms and conditions.

Client signature (or parent/guardian if client is a minor)

Date

Signature of minor client, if minor is 14 years or older

Date

Therapist

Date

Our/My Safety Precautions in Effect during Pandemic

Our office is taking the following precautions to protect our clients and help slow the spread of the coronavirus.

- Seating throughout the building has been arranged to allow for appropriate physical distancing.
- Restroom soap dispensers are maintained and everyone is required to sanitize or wash their hands upon entry to the building.
- Hand sanitizers that contain at least 60% alcohol are available at each entrance, at the reception counter, and in every office and meeting room.
- Credit card pads, pens and other areas that are commonly touched are thoroughly sanitized after each use.
- Physical contact is not permitted.
- Tissues and trash bins are easily accessed.
- Common areas are thoroughly disinfected each day.