

Confidential Information and Disclosures

One of the most important aspects of the therapeutic process is confidentiality. I uphold your right to confidentiality based on the ethical standards of the Board of Behavioral Sciences and the legal standards of California. Both law and ethics require your psychotherapist to keep appropriate written records. Personal information you disclose may be entered into this record. Measures to safeguard this information against unauthorized access and give you choice over confidentiality, with a few rare but important exceptions.

1. To maintain high standards of care, a psychotherapist occasionally obtains consultation from colleagues about cases. In such consultations, information, which would identify you, will not be disclosed.
2. If you present a danger to your self or others or are unable to care for yourself, limited information may be disclosed to facilitate hospitalization for your protection.
3. If you communicate to a psychotherapist a threat to harm an identifiable person or the public, or a threat of property damage, the psychotherapist must warn the person involved and the law enforcement agencies.
4. If there is reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child, elder, or dependent adult, a report may have to be made to designated agencies.
5. If a valid medical emergency exists, your psychotherapist may summon emergency services or the emergency contact you named on the information form.
6. In most legal proceedings, you have the right to confidentiality. However, in some circumstances where your emotional condition is an important issue, a judge may require records or testimony concerning you or your family without your consent.
7. When a couple is being seen in treatment, confidences cannot be kept the psychotherapist from either partner.
8. If you are under age 18, your parents have the right to know about your treatment. Non-custodial parents have a right to know about a minor's therapy. For teenagers I ask parent to waive access to details about a teenager's disclosures. Unless there is a serious danger, the psychotherapist will only provide general information.
9. If you fail to assume financial responsibility for your bill, limited personal information may have to be disclosed for purposes of debt collection, such as your name, nature of services you have received, and the amount due.
10. When services are paid by insurance, you usually have waived your right to complete confidentiality as part of the terms of your policy. A psychotherapist may therefore, be required by your carrier to disclose information or records in order to process a claim.
11. In the event your psychotherapist closes her practice, you hereby allow her to place your record in the custody of a trusted colleague for proper storage and disposal.

Client Signature

Spouse, Parent, or Responsible Person Signature