

# Practice Policies

Emerge Behavioral Health

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## PRACTICE POLICIES

### SESSIONS

The standard meeting time for psychotherapy is 50 minutes. It is up to you, however, to determine the length of time of your sessions. Requests to change the 50-minute session needs to be discussed with your therapist in order for time to be scheduled in advance. If you are late for a session, you may lose some of that session time.

### PAYMENT

All co-payments, deductible payments, coinsurance, or individual cash payments are due at the conclusion of each session. This includes payments made via a FSA, HSA, or HRA accounts. Payment is accepted via online credit card/debit payment via STRIPE (HIPAA compliant card processing), check, or cash. For patients using out-of-network benefits, a Super Bill will be provided patients to submit to their insurance company for reimbursement, or a claim will be filed on your behalf. A \*\$10.00\* service charge will be charged for any checks returned for any reason for special handling. **Payment(s) for your appointment must be paid in full before future appointments unless other arrangements are made with the Clinical Director.**

### TELEPHONE ACCESSIBILITY

If you need to contact your therapist between sessions, please call their number or the office number. While we are not always immediately available, someone will attempt to return your call within 24 hours.

### TELEHEALTH

Licensed psychotherapists are permitted to conduct telehealth sessions via HIPAA compliant electronic platforms in the State of New Jersey. The use of telehealth will be mutually agreed upon between client and therapist if deemed necessary, feasible, and appropriate. However, in the event that you are out of town (you must be physically in the State of New Jersey), sick or need additional support, phone and/or telehealth sessions may be available. If a true emergency situation arises, please call 911 or go to any local emergency room.

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATION** Due to the importance of your confidentiality and the importance of minimizing dual relationships, we do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.). We believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when you meet with you your therapist to discuss this issue.

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

We cannot ensure the confidentiality of any form of communication through electronic media, including text messages. If you prefer to communicate via email or text messaging for issues regarding scheduling or cancellations, we will do so. While your therapist may try to return messages in a timely manner, they cannot guarantee immediate response and request that you do not use these methods of communication to discuss therapeutic content and/or request assistance for emergencies.

Services by electronic means, including but not limited to telephone communication, the internet, facsimile machines, and e-mail is considered telemedicine by the State of New Jersey. Telemedicine is broadly defined as the use of information technology to deliver medical services and information from one location to another. If you and your therapist chose to use information technology for some or all of your treatment, you need to understand that: (1) You retain the option to withhold or withdraw consent at any time without affecting the right to future care or treatment or risking the loss or withdrawal of any program benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled. (2) All existing confidentiality protections are equally applicable. (3) Your access to all medical information transmitted during a telemedicine consultation is guaranteed, and copies of this information are available for a reasonable fee. (4) Dissemination of any of your identifiable images or information from the telemedicine interaction to researchers or other entities shall not occur without your consent. (5) There are potential risks, consequences, and benefits of telemedicine. Potential benefits include, but are not limited to improved communication capabilities, providing convenient access to up-to-date information, consultations, support, reduced costs, improved quality, change in the conditions of practice, improved access to therapy, better continuity of care, and reduction of lost work time and travel costs. Effective therapy is often facilitated when the therapist gathers within a session or a series of sessions, a multitude of observations, information, and experiences about the client. Therapists may make clinical assessments, diagnosis, and interventions based not only on direct verbal or auditory communications, written reports, and third person consultations, but also from direct visual and olfactory observations, information, and experiences. When using information technology in therapy services, potential risks include, but are not limited to the therapist's inability to make visual and olfactory observations of clinically or therapeutically potentially relevant issues such as: your physical condition including deformities, apparent height and weight, body type, attractiveness relative to social and cultural norms or standards, gait and motor coordination, posture, work speed, any noteworthy mannerism or gestures, physical or medical conditions including bruises or injuries, basic grooming and hygiene including appropriateness of dress, eye contact (including any changes in the previously listed issues), sex, chronological and apparent age, ethnicity, facial and body language, and congruence of language and facial or bodily expression. Potential consequences thus include the therapist not being aware of what he or she would consider important information, that you may not recognize as significant to present verbally the therapist.

## **MINORS**

If you are a minor, your parents may be legally entitled to some information about your therapy. Your therapist will discuss with you and your parents what information is appropriate for them to receive and which issues are more appropriately kept confidential.

## **TERMINATION**

Ending relationships can be difficult. Therefore, it is important to have a termination process in order to achieve some closure. The appropriate length of the termination depends on the length and intensity of the treatment. Your therapist may terminate treatment after appropriate discussion with you and a termination process if they determine that the psychotherapy is not being effectively used or if you are in default on payment. Your therapist will not terminate the therapeutic relationship without first discussing and exploring the reasons and purpose of terminating. If therapy is terminated for any reason or you request another therapist, we will provide you with a list of qualified psychotherapists to treat you. You may also choose someone on your own or from another referral source.

**Should you not schedule or miss/cancel an appointment for THREE consecutive weeks, unless other arrangements have been made in advance, for legal and ethical reasons, Emerge Behavioral Health must consider the professional relationship between you and your therapist discontinued.**

BY CLICKING ON THE CHECKBOX BELOW I AM AGREEING THAT I HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD AND AGREE TO THE ITEMS CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT.