

Somers Psychological Services, P.A.

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CLIENT INFORMATION

The process of a psychological consultation or psychotherapy requires the creation of a therapeutic contract. A therapist agrees to treat you with respect, and to apply skills and knowledge to help you with your presenting problems. A therapist agrees to practice ethically and to maintain your privacy and confidentiality. You agree to come to your appointments as scheduled, provide honest and accurate information to your therapist, pay your bills, and work to meet your therapy goals. Depending upon the situation, either you or I may discontinue this therapy contract. If you wish to continue therapy, I will help refer you to a different therapist. When the case is closed, the records will be stored for seven years and are then destroyed (or seven years past the age of 18 for minors).

Billing and Payment

If you have mental health benefits under your insurance policy and wish to use them, I will directly bill your insurance company. You are ultimately responsible for knowing the terms of your coverage, and are responsible for any charges not covered or disallowed by your policy. It is expected that you make any co-payment at the time of the session, and pay in case at the time of the appointment if you are not using insurance benefits. The assignment of benefits on the client registration form gives me permission to bill and collect money directly from your insurance company, and states that you understand that you are responsible for any costs not covered by insurance. Also included in this agreement is your permission for me to release necessary information to your insurance company so that they can process the claims; this typically includes the diagnosis, treatment plan, number and dates of visits, and a statement about the "medical necessity" of psychological treatment. Please be advised that accounts outstanding for longer than 30 days will accrue interest at the rate of 5% compounded monthly, and are liable for legal action and/or follow-up by a collections agency.

Appointments

Most appointments are approximately 50 minutes in length, although longer and shorter sessions can be arranged. There is no receptionist, so please contact me directly at the number on the top of this page with your scheduling needs. Please leave your name, a phone number, and a time when you can be reached and I will return your call shortly thereafter. It is my policy to charge of \$25.00 fee if you do not cancel your scheduled appointment within 24 hours. Medical insurance does not cover missed appointments, so this fee would be your responsibility.

Emergencies

In a life-threatening emergency, always call 911. During business hours Monday through Friday, you may leave a message for me and I will return your call as quickly as possible. On weekends, holidays, or other times when I may be unavailable, you may contact your local mental health crisis response team or call 911.

Client Rights

As a patient, client, or consumer of psychological services, you have a number of rights that are part of the laws of the State of Minnesota. These laws govern the licensure and practice of psychology and of ethical standards for a psychologist. Information regarding these laws is available from the Minnesota Board of Psychology located at 2829 University Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414 (phone: 612-617-2230). If you are dissatisfied with the services you receive, please discuss these concerns with me directly. If you feel uncomfortable doing this, you may contact the Minnesota Board of Psychology. Consumers of psychological services offered by licensed psychologists in the State of Minnesota have the right:

1. To expect that a psychologist has met the minimal qualifications of training and experience required by state law;
2. To examine public records which contain the credentials of the psychologist;
3. To receive a copy of the Rules of Conduct of the Board of Psychology;
4. To report complaints to the Board of Psychology;
5. To be told of the cost of professional services prior to receiving those services;
6. To be guaranteed confidentiality as defined by rule and statute;
7. To be free of discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, or other unlawful discrimination while receiving psychological services.

Confidentiality and Data Privacy

The information you share about yourself will be used to establish a diagnosis, to determine your treatment plan and goals, and to provide the services you request. The information will also be used to establish a payment plan for these services, and to collect reimbursement from third party payers (e.g. your insurance company). Child abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, and abuse of vulnerable adults must be reported to the county. If I determine that you are a clear and present danger to yourself or someone else, I will be obligated to reduce the likelihood of danger by involving the police or your family to take necessary action. You are not required to provide information about yourself. However, effective consultation and treatment may be impossible without complete, honest information. I will share information about your treatment with others at your request only if you sign a consent form.

About Me...

I received my Ph.D. degree in clinical psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology – San Diego in 1988, and have been a licensed psychologist in the State of Minnesota since 1990 (license #LP1856). I specialize in child/adolescent and family psychology, and psychological testing with all ages; a significant part of my practice also involves working with adults. I have been in private practice since 1994, full-time since 1998. I worked at the Washburn Child Guidance Center from 1990 to 1992, and was a staff psychologist at the North Region Mental Health Center in Coon Rapids from 1992 to 1998. I have also done consulting work for Learning Disabilities Association, Northern Wright/Sherburne County Special Education Cooperative, and various hospitals. I am a member of the American Psychological Association, Minnesota Psychological Association, and Minnesota Child Psychologists. Feel free to ask any questions about me that would help you for a safe, comfortable working relationship.