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Consent for Returning to In-Person Psychological Services

This **Consent for Returning to In-Person Psychological Services** is a supplement to the general informed consent that we agreed to at the outset of our clinical work together. Please read this document carefully, and let me know if you have any questions.

The threat of COVID-19 or coronavirus is ongoing throughout the United States. As a way to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, our practice has transitioned to providing most services via telecommunications technology (i.e., telephone, conference call programs on a computer). Use of telecommunications technology reduces the need for persons to come into close contact with each other or to be in areas where exposure to COVID-19 may occur. Telecommunications technology can be useful and reliable. ***However, in some situations, teletherapy services may not be adequate, and in-person services may be more appropriate.***

We have determined that in-person services are appropriate for clients that include the following reason(s):

The client has no access to a computer, limited or no access to high-speed internet access, limited minutes allotted to certain cell phone plans, low risk health status in relation to current COVID-19 research, or lack of coverage by one's insurance company for telehealth services. There may be other reasons and these should be discussed with your provider before taking part in in-person services.

The decision about whether to engage in in-person services is based on current conditions as well as health and safety guidelines, which may change at any time. It is possible that a return to remote services will be necessary at some point based on consideration of health and safety issues. Such a decision will be made in consultation with you, but this office will make the final determination based on a careful weighing of the risks and applicable regulations.

It is also important to consider that, although insurance reimbursement for teletherapy services may have been mandated during the COVID-19 pandemic, such mandates may no longer be in effect, and teletherapy may no longer be reimbursed by your insurance company.

In order to provide you with in-person services, the following protocols must be followed by clients and providers:

- You and any person accompanying you to our clinic agree not to present for in-person services if you have: **a fever, shortness of breath, coughing, or any other symptoms associated with COVID-19 or if you have been exposed to another person who is showing signs of infection or has confirmed COVID-19 within the past two weeks.** If you are unable to come to your appointment because of these reasons, we will not charge you a late-cancellation fee.
- Clients, persons accompanying clients, and our staff will be required to wear masks while in the office. We will provide a mask for you.
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- Hand sanitizer will be provided at the office entrance and must be used upon entering the office.
- There will be no physical contact with others in the office, such as handshaking or assisting clients in and out of chairs.
- You will be asked to wait in your vehicle or outside the office until five minutes before your appointment time.
- You may only bring **one person** with you to this appointment. If you are bringing someone with you, you agree to inform him/her and encourage him/her to follow all of these protocols.
- We will both try to maintain a six-foot distance from others while in offices, waiting rooms, and other areas.

If You or Your Support Person is Sick

Please understand that we are committed to keeping you, our staff, and all of our families safe from the spread of this virus. If you show up for an appointment and the provider or office staff believe that you have a fever or other symptoms, or believe you have been exposed recently, we will require you to leave the office immediately.

Your Confidentiality in the Case of Infection

When an individual tests positive for the coronavirus, the health department usually calls to ask about the people with whom you have had contact in the recent past for contact tracing purposes. This means that the health department may contact us asking about your visit with us if you or we develop coronavirus. We are required by law to comply. However, we will only provide them the minimum amount of information necessary and will not go into any details about the reason for your visit. **By signing this form, you are agreeing that we may do so without an additional signed release.**

We remain committed to following state and federal guidelines and to adhering to prevailing professional healthcare standards to limit the transmission of COVID-19 in our offices. Despite our careful attention to sanitization, social distancing, and other protocols, there is still a chance that you will be exposed to COVID-19 in our office. If, at any point, you prefer to stop in-person services or to consider transitioning to remote services, please let me know.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you understand that there is still a potential risk of exposure and that you agree to follow the safety protocols outlined above in order to engage in in-person services.

Client

Date

Psychologist

Date