



*PsychoEducational Consultant Group
Licensed School Psychologists*

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*Notice of School Psychologist's Policies and Practices to
Protect the Privacy of Your Health Information*

This notice describes how a client's psychoeducational information may be used and disclosed, and how he/she can gain access to this information. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

I. Uses and Disclosures for Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations

We may use or disclose your *protected health information (PHI)*, for *treatment, payment, and health care operations* purposes with your *consent*. To help clarify these terms, here are some definitions:

- “You” and “your” refer to the client. In the case the client is a minor, references to psychoeducational and medical information relate to the minor and references to accessing this information relate to the parent/legal guardian.
- “PHI” refers to information in your health record that could identify you.
- *Treatment* is when we provide, coordinate or manage your health care and other services related to your health care. An example of treatment would be when we consult with another health care provider, such as your family physician or another psychologist/school psychologist.
- *Payment* is when we obtain compensation for your healthcare. At this time, health insurance is not accepted. Parents/legal guardians are responsible for full payment for services.
- *Health Care Operations* are activities that relate to the performance and operation of our practice. Examples of health care operations are quality assessment and improvement activities; business-related matters such as audits and administrative services; and case management and care coordination.
- “Use” applies only to activities within our office such as sharing, employing, applying, utilizing, examining, and analyzing information that identifies you.
- “Disclosure” applies to activities outside of our office, such as releasing, transferring, or providing access to information about you to other parties.

II. Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization

- We may use or disclose *PHI* for purposes outside of treatment, payment, and health care operations when your appropriate authorization is obtained. An “*authorization*” is written permission above and beyond the general consent that permits only specific disclosures. In those instances when we are asked for information for purposes outside of treatment, payment and health care operations, we will obtain an authorization from you before releasing this information.
- We would also need to obtain an authorization before releasing your therapy notes. “*Therapy notes*” are notes we have made about our conversation(s) during a private, group, joint, or family counseling session, which we have kept separate from the rest of your medical record. These notes are given a greater degree of protection than *PHI*.
- You may revoke all such authorizations (of *PHI* or therapy notes) at any time, provided each revocation is in writing. You may not revoke an authorization to the extent that 1) we have relied on that authorization or 2) if the authorization was obtained as a condition of obtaining insurance coverage, and the law provides the insurer the right to contest the claim under the policy.

III. Uses and Disclosures with Neither Consent nor Authorization

We may use or disclose *PHI* without your consent or authorization in the following circumstances:

- **Child Abuse:** If we know, or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver or other person responsible for the child's welfare, the law requires that we report such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Department of Child and Family Services.
- **Adults and Domestic Abuse:** If we know, or have reasonable cause to suspect, that a vulnerable adult (disabled or elderly) has been or is being abused, neglected, or exploited, we are required by law to immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Central Abuse Hotline.
- **Health Oversight:** If a complaint is filed against us with the Florida Department of Health on behalf of the Board of School Psychology, the Department has the authority to subpoena confidential mental health information from us relevant to that complaint.
- **Judicial or Administrative Proceedings:** If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information about your diagnosis or treatment and the records thereof, such information is privileged under state law. We will not release information without the written authorization of you or your legal representative, or a subpoena of which you have been properly notified and you have failed to inform us that you are opposing the subpoena or a court order. The privilege does not apply when you are being evaluated for a third party or where the evaluation is court ordered. You will be informed in advance if this is the case.
- **Serious Threat to Health or Safety:** When you present a clear and immediate probability of physical harm to yourself, to other individuals, or to society, we may communicate relevant information concerning this to the potential victim, appropriate family member, or law enforcement or other appropriate authorities.
- **Worker's Compensation:** If you file a worker's compensation claim, we must, upon request of your employer, the insurance carrier, an authorized qualified rehabilitation provider, or the attorney for the employer or insurance carrier, furnish your relevant records to those persons.

IV. Patient's Rights and School Psychologist's Duties

Patient's Rights

▪ Right to Request Restrictions

You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information about you. However, we are not required to agree to a restriction you request.

▪ Right to Receive Confidential Communications by Alternative Means and at Alternative Locations

You have the right to request and receive confidential communications of *PHI* by alternative means and at alternative locations. (For example, you may not want a family member to know that you are seeing us. Upon your request, we will send your bills to another address.)

▪ Right to Inspect and Copy

You have the right to inspect or obtain a copy (or both) of *PHI* in our mental health and billing records used to make decisions about you for as long as the *PHI* is maintained in the record. Upon your request, we will discuss with you the details of the request process.

▪ Right to Amend

You have the right to request an amendment of *PHI* for as long as the *PHI* is maintained in the record. We may deny your request. Upon your request, we will discuss with you the details of the amendment process.

▪ Right to an Accounting

You generally have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of *PHI* regarding you. Upon your request, we will discuss with you the details of the accounting process.

- Right to a Paper Copy

You have the right to obtain a paper copy of the notice from us upon request, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically.

School Psychologist's Duties

- We are required by law to maintain the privacy of *PHI* and to provide you with a notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to *PHI*.
- We reserve the right to change the privacy policies and practices described in this notice. Unless we notify you of such changes, however, we are required to abide by the terms currently in effect. If we revise our policies and procedures, we will notify you by mail.

V. Questions and Complaints

- If you have questions about this notice, disagree with a decision we make about access to your records, or have other concerns about your privacy rights, you may contact us at (904) 874-6164.
- If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated and wish to file a complaint with us, you may send your written complaint to 9191 RG Skinner Parkway, Suite 603 Jacksonville, Florida 32256.
- You may also send a written complaint to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The person listed above can provide you with the appropriate address upon request.
- You have specific rights under the Privacy Rule. We will not retaliate against you for exercising your right to file a complaint.

VI. Effective Date, Restrictions and Changes to Privacy Policy

- This notice will go into effect on October 1, 2008.
- We reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and to make the new notice provisions effective for all *PHI* that we maintain.