

# Practice Policies

TheraGeek Counseling

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## PRACTICE POLICIES

**APPOINTMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS** Please remember to cancel or reschedule 24 hours in advance. You will be responsible for half of the fee if cancellation is less than 24 hours. The standard meeting time for psychotherapy is 53-55 minutes. Payment is due at the time of service.

Cancellations and re-scheduled sessions will be subject to a charge if NOT RECEIVED AT LEAST 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE. This is necessary because a time commitment is made to you and is held exclusively for you. If you are late for a session, you may lose some of that session time.

**TELEPHONE ACCESSIBILITY** If you need to contact your provider between sessions, please leave a message on their voicemail. The Practice has a main line, and each provider has a direct line, Our voicemails are HIPPA compliant. However the main line is also checked by an administrator, so it is recommended to leave a voicemail directly with your provider. Providers are not immediately available; however, they will attempt to call you back in 1-2 business days. Email is preferred and you may receive a quicker response. Please note that Face-to-face (Telehealth) sessions are highly preferable to phone sessions. However, in the event of technical difficulties or the need for additional support, phone sessions are available. If a true emergency situations arises, please call 988 or 911/ any local emergency room. TheraGeek Counseling is a small group practice and is not equipped for emergency care.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATION

Due to the importance of your confidentiality and the importance of minimizing dual relationships, Providers WILL NOT accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc). 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 your Provider.

Telemedicine is defined as "the delivery of health care services through the use of interactive audio and video technology, permitting real-time communication between the patient at the originating site and the provider, for the purpose of diagnosis, consultation, or treatment. "Telemedicine" includes the use of audio-only telephone, but does not include facsimile or email." (RCW 70.41.020)

If you and your therapist choose 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, diagnoses, and interventions based not only on direct verbal or auditory communications, written reports, and third-person consultations, but also on direct visual 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, 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 they would consider important information, that you may not recognize as significant to present verbally to the therapist.

## ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Each provider's number is text-capable, this feature is intended for rescheduling or canceling appointments, which also may be done by email. Simple Practice has a secure messenger for more sensitive messages.

TheraGeek Counseling is not equipped for true emergencies, you may use the secure messenger for personal crises that DO NOT constitute imminent risk to yourself or others.

## Imminent Risk Definition

Imminent means: likely to occur at any moment, or near at hand. Not distant or remote.

Likelihood of serious harm means a substantial risk that a person will cause physical harm to themselves or another person, or substantial loss or damage to another person's property.

Evidence that there is a likelihood of serious harm might include:

- threats or attempts of suicide or harm to oneself;

- behavior that has physically harmed someone in the past, or makes a person reasonably fearful they will be physically harmed
- behavior that has caused substantial damage in the past
- a threat to someone else's physical safety, if the person making the threat has a history of one or more violent acts.

## MINORS

TheraGeek Counseling Services only serves clients 18 or older.

## TERMINATION

Ending relationships can be difficult. Therefore, it is important to have a termination process to achieve closure. The appropriate length of the termination depends on the length and intensity of the treatment. A provider may terminate treatment after appropriate discussion with you and a termination process if it is determined that the psychotherapy is not being effectively used or if you are in default on payment. A Provider 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 fail to schedule an appointment for three consecutive weeks, unless other arrangements have been made in advance, for legal and ethical reasons, your provider must consider the professional relationship discontinued.

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