

Initial and sign
page 4 -- please bring
to your first session
with Alexandria

AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES

Introduction

Please read this document carefully as federal law requires Alexandria to obtain your initials and signature on page 4, acknowledging you have been provided with the following information:

(1) This document, "Agreement For Services," contains important information about Cedar Rapids Counseling & Psychotherapy's (CRCPG) office policies and billing procedures found under the subheading "Office and Billing Policies." It also contains information about the "Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act" (HIPAA), a federal law that provides you with privacy protections and patient rights regarding the use and disclosure of the protected health information located in your clinical record. You will find this information on page 3, under the subheading of "Privacy Protections and Patient Rights." *You may download an extra copy of the "Agreement For Services" from Alexandria's website page for your own records.* There is also one copy available, for reading purposes, in a three ring notebook in the Alexandria's reception room.

(2) Federal law also requires CRCPG to offer you a copy of another document entitled "Notice of Privacy" that explains HIPAA in greater detail and how it applies to your personal health information. *You may download a copy of the "Notice of Privacy" from Alexandria's website page for your own records.* There is also one copy available, for reading purposes, in a three ring notebook in Alexandria's reception room.

When you sign this "Agreement For Services," it represents a professional agreement between you and Alexandria, as well as with CRCPG. You may revoke this agreement by providing a written notice to Alexandria and that revocation will be binding, unless action has already been taken based on your initial agreement.

OFFICE AND BILLING POLICIES

CRCPG Therapists

Cedar Rapids Counseling & Psychotherapy Group, LLP, is a Limited Liability Partnership consisting of the following Licensed Independent Social Workers: Hedy Bextine, Alexandria Carey and Penny Freeman. There is one Licensed Clinical Psychologist in practice with CRCPG: Dr. Laurel Langholz. Our offices are located in the "Executive Plaza" building located at 4403 First Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52402-3221.

Standard Fees and Billing

First therapy session (intake)	\$170.00	45 minute therapy session	\$110.00
20 -30 minute therapy session	\$79.00	60 minute therapy session	\$156.00

If you have health insurance coverage for psychotherapy, you are required to pay your entire co-payment at each session. If you do not have health insurance coverage, you are expected to pay for each session, in full, at the time of service, unless other arrangements have been made. CRCPG will gladly arrange for submission of an insurance claim to your

health insurance carrier (HIC) provided that we have the necessary information to do so. It is always wise to contact your HIC to ensure the following: (1) if psychotherapy is a covered benefit, (2) if Alexandria is an approved provider, (3) the amount of your co-payment, (4) whether psychotherapy is subject to a deductible, and (5) if you require a pre-authorization for psychotherapy. If your HIC does not pay as you anticipated, *you are responsible* for the amount that your HIC does not cover. If financial difficulties arise for you, please let Alexandria know immediately so you can discuss an alternative payment schedule or make other arrangements for therapy.

Other Fees

Alexandria may charge the standard fee (prorated by time) for any other professional services you request, for example, a specific type of assessment, proof of attendance, and/or verbal consultation or written correspondence with outside parties such as physicians, attorneys, or schools. If you become involved in legal proceedings that could require Alexandria's participation, check to ensure that she is able and willing to provide these services. If so, you will be expected to pay for all of her professional time, including preparation and transportation costs. You will also be billed for any necessary photocopies. In addition, you will be billed for any or all of these charges even if Alexandria is called to testify or is deposed by another party involved in the litigation.

If you choose to consult by telephone with Alexandria for reasons other than routine appointment scheduling or clarifications about insurance or billing, please be aware that your HIC *will not* provide reimbursement for these services. Depending upon your arrangement with Alexandria, you may be required to pay for these services yourself.

Insurance and Information Release

Please know that if you expect your HIC to provide reimbursement for your mental health treatment, they require you to have a diagnosable condition (i.e., depression, anxiety, difficulty adjusting to a life event), and Alexandria is required to provide that diagnosis to your HIC. By selecting 'Option A' on the "Client Information" form, you are authorizing Alexandria to provide your HIC with that clinical diagnosis. Sometimes an HIC will request additional health information such as treatment plans, clinical summaries, or copies of your entire clinical record. In such situations, Alexandria will make every effort to release only the minimum information that is necessary for the purpose requested. Though HICs claim to keep such information confidential, Alexandria has no control over and is not responsible for what they do with your information once it is in their possession. Upon request, Alexandria will provide you with a copy of any documentation submitted to your HIC. If your HIC requests additional health information, this will require special authorization, and if you refuse such authorization, the HIC can, *and probably will*, deny payment of your claims. If your HIC denies payment, *you will be responsible* for paying full fee for your treatment.

After Hours Calls/Emergencies

CRCPG does not provide an answering service during non-office hours. During these non-office hours (evenings, weekends, holidays, therapist vacations), the CRCPG telephone is answered with a recorded message and you are encouraged to leave a message on Alexandria's individual voice mail. You will have the opportunity to clarify Alexandria's policy about returning phone calls during your sessions.

If you are in crisis and/or believe you cannot wait for Alexandria's return call, please consider calling Foundation 2 Crisis Center (362-2174) or the Iowa City Crisis Center (351-0140) and request phone counseling. We also suggest you contact your family physician, your psychiatrist, or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

Late Cancellations and Missed Appointments

If it is necessary for you to cancel an appointment, please try to provide Alexandria with a 24 hour notice. It is important to note that insurance companies *do not provide reimbursement* for late cancellations or missed appointments; therefore, you will be billed a fee for those late cancellations and missed appointments that are not due to emergencies. If cancellations or missed appointments become a persistent problem, the feasibility of continuing your treatment will be addressed in session. Alexandria will provide you with her written policy for these fees at your first session.

PRIVACY PROTECTION AND PATIENT RIGHTS

Limits of Confidentiality

It is important that the guidelines regarding confidentiality be well understood before therapy begins. Alexandria will review this material with you at your first appointment but please read this material carefully so that any concerns or questions you have are adequately addressed.

The law protects privacy of all communications between patient and a therapist. In most situations, Alexandria can only release information about your treatment to others if you sign a written authorization form that meets certain legal requirements imposed by HIPAA and/or Iowa law. However, in the following situations, no authorization is required:

- Alexandria may occasionally find it helpful to consult with other CRCPG therapists about your care. During a consultation, she will conceal your actual identity, as well as any other identifying information. The other CRCPG therapists are also legally bound to keep any information confidential and all receive regular training about the rules, regulations, and ethics of confidentiality.
- Insurance and patient billing is done within our office by an independent contractor. Our independent contractor has received training about the rules, regulations, and ethics of confidentiality and completely understands the importance of protecting your privacy. The independent contractor never has access to your clinical record and is only provided with enough information to bill your HIC and/or the responsible party using the address you provided.
- If Alexandria needs to contract with another business, such as an accountant for the purpose of a full audit, she is required by HIPAA to have a formal “Business Associate Contract” in place with that business. In this contract, the other business promises to maintain the confidentiality of any data provided by Alexandria except as specifically allowed in the contract or otherwise required by law.
- If you are involved in a court proceeding, and a request is made for information concerning the professional services that have been provided by Alexandria, such information is protected by the “therapist-patient privilege” law. Alexandria cannot provide any information without your written authorization or a court order. Please note your records can be *subpoenaed*, which is a court order that requires Alexandria to provide the requested information. If you are involved in, or contemplating litigation, you should consult with your attorney to *carefully* consider whether or not it is in your best interest to ask Alexandria to disclose your mental health information to any entity, *including your own lawyer*, involved in the litigation.
- If a government agency is requesting information for health oversight activities, Alexandria may be required to provide that particular information.
- If patient files a complaint or a lawsuit against Alexandria or CRCPG, she may have to disclose relevant information regarding that treatment in order to defend herself.
- If a patient files a worker’s compensation claim, Alexandria must, upon appropriate request, provide any information concerning the employee’s physical or mental condition relative to the claim.
- There are some situations in which Alexandria is legally obligated to take actions, which she believes are necessary in order to attempt to protect patients or others from harm and, under such circumstances, she may need to reveal some information about a patient. These situations are unusual in practice but are as follows:
 - *If a patient communicates an imminent threat of serious physical harm to him/herself, including suicide, she may be required to disclose confidential information in order to take protective actions. These actions may include initiating hospitalization, contacting a family physician or psychiatrist, contacting*

the police for a safety check, or contacting family members or others who can assist in providing protection.

- *If a patient communicates an imminent threat of serious harm to an identifiable victim, she may be required to disclose information in order to take protective actions. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for the patient.*
- *If she has reasonable cause to believe that a child, to whom she has provided professional services, has been abused OR if she suspects that a dependent adult, to whom she has provided professional services, has been abused, the law requires that she file a report with the appropriate government agency, usually the Department of Human Services. Once such a report is filed, she may be required to provide additional information.*

If such a situation arises, Alexandria will make every effort to discuss it fully with you before taking any action, and she will limit her disclosure to only what is necessary. In the event of your death, your right to confidentiality continues. The administrator or executor of your estate assumes your right to sign on your behalf for release or disclosure of your records. While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing you about potential problems, it is important that any questions or concerns are discussed. The laws governing confidentiality can be quite complex, and in situations where specific advice is required, a formal legal consultation may be necessary.

Patient Rights

HIPAA provides you with several new or expanded rights with regard to your clinical record and disclosures of protected health information. These rights include requesting that Alexandria amend your record, requesting an accounting of disclosures of protected health information that you have consented to or authorized, determining the location to which protected information disclosures are sent, having any complaints you make about these policies and procedures recorded in your records, and the right to a paper copy of the “Agreement for Services” and the “Notice of Privacy” documents. Alexandria will be happy to discuss any of these rights with you.

Minor Children and Parents

If you are a parent, you should be aware that the law may allow you to examine your child’s treatment record if s/he is under 18 years of age and is not emancipated. Because privacy in psychotherapy is often crucial to successful progress, particularly with teenagers, Alexandria will probably have a discussion with you about the negative impact of demanding to see a copy of your child’s treatment record. In lieu of reading your child’s record, Alexandria will provide you with information about the progress of your child’s treatment and his/her attendance at scheduled sessions. As each case is different, you are encouraged to ask Alexandria for more specific details on this issue at the beginning of treatment. If a step-parent is involved, a legal parent will be asked to sign a release of information form before information regarding the minor child is discussed with a step-parent; even if the child’s primary residence is with that step-parent.

_____ I have read this copy of the “Agreement for Services.” I was informed that I can download a copy of this form
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initial) ring notebook in Alexandria’s reception room.

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(your from Alexandria’s website page, request a paper copy from Alexandria, or read the copy available in a three ring
initial) notebook in Alexandria’s reception room.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and agree to abide by its terms during the duration of your professional relationship with Alexandria, as well as with CRCPG.

Patient/Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

Date