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Informed Consent for In-Person Services During COVID-19 Public Health Crisis

This document contains important information about our decision (yours and mine) to resume in-person services in light of the COVID-19 public health crisis. This document is based on best practices during COVID-19 as determined by professional organizations such as the American Psychological Association. Please read this carefully and let me know if you have any questions. When you sign this document, it will be an official agreement between us.

Decision to Meet Face-to-Face

We have agreed to meet in person for some or all future sessions. If there is a resurgence of the pandemic or if other health concerns arise, however, I may require that we meet via telehealth. If you have concerns about meeting through telehealth, we will talk about it first and try to address any issues. You understand that, if I believe it is necessary, I may determine that we return to telehealth for everyone's well-being.

If you decide at any time that you would feel safer staying with, or returning to, telehealth services, I will respect that decision, as long as it is feasible and clinically appropriate. Reimbursement for telehealth services, however, is also determined by the insurance companies and applicable law, so that is an issue we may also need to discuss. It is important for you to know that telehealth services may be covered at a different rate than in-person services. For example, during the COVID pandemic many insurance providers actually cover the full cost of therapy including any copayment, while in-person therapy requires you to make a copayment.

On rare occasions you may ask your therapist if they would meet with you outdoors. This may be a reasonable option in certain situations, but it would be unusual, you would have to agree to be seen in public with your therapist (thus losing a bit of confidentiality), and your therapist always has the option of not working this way. If it is agreed to, all other requirements in this informed consent still apply.

Risks of Opting for In-Person Services

You understand that by coming to the office, you are assuming the risk of exposure to the coronavirus (or other public health risk). This risk may increase if you travel by public transportation, cab, or ridesharing service.

Your Responsibility to Minimize Your Exposure

To obtain services in person, you agree to take certain precautions which will help keep everyone (you, me, our families, my colleagues, and other clients) safer from exposure, sickness and possible death. If you do not adhere to these safeguards, it may result in our starting/returning to a telehealth arrangement. Please initial each statement below to indicate that you understand and agree to these actions:

- You will only keep your in-person appointment if you are symptom free. _____
- You will take your temperature before coming to each appointment. If it is elevated (100 Fahrenheit or more), or if you have other symptoms of the coronavirus, you agree to cancel the appointment or proceed using telehealth. If you wish to cancel for this reason, I won't charge you our normal cancellation fee. _____
- You will wait in your car or outside until you are contacted by your therapist. Your therapist will meet you at the door to the building and let you enter. _____

- You will use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when you enter the building. _____
- You will adhere to safe distancing precautions while in our building. _____
- You will wear a mask in all public areas of the office, from the time you enter the building until you are inside your therapist's office, and again from the time you leave your therapist's office until you are outside the building. SFPS and RCS therapists will do the same. You and your therapist will discuss any concerns you each have about removing masks during the therapy session, and decide together whether or not to do so. _____
- You will keep a distance of 6 feet and there will be no physical contact (e.g. no shaking hands) with me or SFPS or RCS staff. _____
- You will try not to touch your face or eyes with your hands. But if you do (and we all know it is hard not to do so), you will immediately wash or sanitize your hands. _____
- If you are bringing your minor child for an appointment, you will make sure that your child follows all of these sanitation and distancing protocols. _____
- You will take responsible steps between appointments to minimize your exposure to COVID. _____
- If you have a job that exposes you to other people who are infected, you will immediately let me and/or our staff know. _____
- If your commute or other responsibilities or activities put you in close contact with others (beyond your family), you will let me know. _____
- If a resident of your home or someone with whom you have had close contact tests positive for the infection, you will immediately let me and/or our staff know and we will then continue treatment via telehealth. _____
- If you are the person who has a scheduled appointment, then only you will come into the building. If you are a parent or caregiver transporting a minor client to their session, you and your child's therapist will mutually determine what procedures best fit your child's needs, and both therapist and parent/caregiver will accommodate to the needs of your child under the direction of the therapist. _____

I may change the above precautions if additional local, state or federal orders or guidelines are published. If that happens, we will talk about any necessary changes.

My Commitment to Minimize Exposure

My practice has taken steps to reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus within the office and we have posted our efforts on our website and in the office. Please let me know if you have questions about these efforts.

If You or I Are Sick

You understand that I am committed to keeping you, me, our SFPS and RCS staff, and all of our families safe from the spread of this virus. If you show up for an appointment and I or another staff member believes that you have a fever or other symptoms, or believes you have been exposed, I will have to require you to leave the office immediately. We can follow up with services by telehealth as appropriate.

If I or someone you interacted with on our staff tests positive for the coronavirus, I will attempt to notify you so that you can take appropriate precautions.

Informed Consent

This agreement supplements the general informed consent/business agreement that we agreed to at the start of our work together.

Your signature below shows that you agree to these terms and conditions.

Client Name (**please print**): _____

Legal Guardian (if applicable): _____ Relationship to Client: _____

Client/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Office Safety Precautions in Effect During the Pandemic

The SFPS and RCS offices are taking the following precautions to protect our clients and help slow the spread of the coronavirus. We are committed to serving you in as safe an environment as possible.

- Office seating in therapy rooms has been arranged for appropriate physical distancing. The waiting room seating, if the waiting room becomes available, will also be arranged for appropriate physical distancing.
- Our therapists wear masks in the public areas of the building (hallways, open areas), and may require both therapist and client to wear a mask in their personal office during the session.
- Our staff maintain safe distancing.
- Hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol is available throughout our offices and open areas, although you are also strongly encouraged to carry some with you at all times for your personal use.
- We schedule appointments at specific intervals to minimize the number of people entering or leaving the building at or near the same time.
- We ask all clients to wait in their cars or outside until they are contacted by their therapist. Their therapist will then meet the client at the outside door and invite the client into the building.
- Areas that are commonly touched are thoroughly sanitized after each use, and no client will have been in your therapist's office for the previous hour.
- Payments for services (copayments or payment on a bill) can be given directly to your therapist in the form of cash or check. If you have a copayment and you are paying with cash, please have the exact amount since therapists will not be able to make change. Payments by credit card can take place using our client portal or by calling in and providing the necessary information to our office staff. Office staff will not be available in person, but can be contacted by phone to address billing and scheduling issues.
- Physical contact is not permitted.
- Tissues and trash bins are easily accessed. Trash is disposed of on a frequent basis.