



General Policy

I will only collect personal information about you that is necessary to provide effective (neuro)psychological services. All secretarial staff and students that might be involved (with the client's consent) are also required to follow the practices outlined in this policy. A psychologist, secretarial staff or student who knows you personally will not be permitted to see or hear information about you unless there is an emergency or unless you give consent. Secretarial staff and students are allowed to see and handle information about you only if this is necessary as part of their job. A person who is carrying out an audit or review of your psychologist's practice may also see your personal information. However, we do not allow any information that identifies you to be taken from our office by such people unless you give consent.

Process for Obtaining Consent for the Collection, Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

During the intake session consent for the collection of personal information is implied since you are not required to answer any question that you do not wish to answer. However, written consent for the disclosure of personal information to third parties must be obtained.

Psychologists must respect the privacy of the people with whom they enter a professional relationship, refraining from gathering information and exploring aspects of private life that has no relation with the professional services agreed on with the client.

Psychologists, for the purpose of preserving professional secrecy, must not disclose any information on their client, except the information authorized in writing by the client, or verbally in an emergency, or unless so ordered by law.

However, psychologists may communicate information protected by professional secrecy *to prevent an act of violence*, including a suicide, where they have reasonable cause to believe that there is an imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury to a person or an identifiable group of people. Despite the foregoing, psychologists may only communicate the information to a person exposed to the danger or that person's representative, and to the persons who can come to that person's help. Psychologists may only communicate such information as is necessary to achieve the purposes for which the information is communicated.

All clients who are sixteen (16) years of age or older have the legal right to have personal information about them maintained as confidential. However, there are legal exceptions to confidentiality and two additional exceptions that apply



to clients of psychologists. I will reserve myself the right to share personal information about you with your parent or guardian if you are under 16 years of age and it is deemed by the practitioner to be in your best interests.

Written documents containing personal information, such as invoices, letters and reports may be handed directly to you. However, in some conditions, such information may only be shared with a third party with your written consent. In cases where the fee for service is paid for by a third party, such as an insurance company, there may be requirements to disclose information. If fees are covered by a workplace medical plan, they typically require your name and the registration number of the psychologist. If the fees are covered by automobile accident insurance, or short or long-term disability insurance, the company typically requires an initial assessment and treatment plan, progress reports and a termination report.

If you wish to have the costs of your treatment covered by your auto insurance company or short or long-term disability insurance, you must provide written consent for disclosure at intake. It is your responsibility to inform the assessing psychologist if you would like to review reports and letters before they are sent. If upon reviewing a report or letter you disagree with the content and the assessing psychologist maintains that the content is accurate, you have the option of either paying for the report, in which case it becomes your property. In this case the assessing psychologist will need to inform your insurance company that you did not want the letter or report sent and this could result in a termination of benefits. Alternatively, you may add a correction of information page to the letter or report (see below). Your psychologist will clarify the type of information that they are required to share with your insurance company in the intake session.

Unless arrangements are made, I will not send personal information about you to a third party via email. Such information may be sent by Canada Post and/or fax. When sending personal information by fax, a cover sheet is used that clearly indicates the intended recipient and specifies that the information contained in the fax is confidential. If you request that information be sent via email, you bear full responsibility for an unintended party obtaining access to that information during or after transmission.

Client's Right of Access to Their File

You have the right to access information about you that is contained in your file. Exceptions include the possibility of harm to you or someone else, and confidential information in the record about a person other than yourself. You must make an appointment with your treating psychologist to review your file to ensure that you understand the contents. After reviewing your file with the



treating psychologist, you may request a photocopy of the files content. You will be charged a nominal fee to cover the cost of the copying. Alternatively, you may take notes.

Your Right to Correct Information That Is in Your File

If you believe that information in your record is not accurate, you may request that the psychologist correct the information. If your psychologist does not agree with the requested correction, you may file a notice of disagreement in your record. In turn, the treating psychologist may add an explanation of why they deem the original information to be accurate. Any such corrections must be shared with all third parties who received the original information (ex.: insurance companies).

Retention and Destruction of Client Files

Your file will, at all times, be stored in a locked cabinet or locked storage area. It will be retained for ten (10) years after your psychologist's last contact with you (or 10 years past your 18th birthday if you are less than 18 years at the time of your last session). All personal information will be shredded prior to disposal.

Procedure Upon Death or Disability of Practitioner

In the event of death or disability of your psychologist, all active and terminated client files will be transferred to another psychologist, as specified on the individual practitioner's "Conditions of Service" form (attached). The "Conditions of Service" form will be reviewed with you in the first session and signed by you as confirmation that you have discussed and understood the contents of this form.

Complaints Process With Regards to Privacy Issues

If you believe that a psychologist has breached confidentiality, you should first speak to the psychologist in question about your concerns (if possible). If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you should contact the College of Psychologists at: (416) 961-8817, the Privacy Commissioner of Ontario at: (416) 326-3333 or 1-800-387-0073 or the College of Psychologists of Quebec (514) 738-1881 or 1-800-363-2644.

I have read and understand the above description of this privacy policy.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____