

Privacy/Confidentiality and Office Practices Notice

As a service provider to you, I am committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information in compliance with the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, 2004 (PIPEDA), the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA), and the regulations set out by the Social Work profession. I work in a multidisciplinary team clinic setting where all practitioners are obligated to comply with these acts and the regulations set out by our regulatory bodies. I maintain dialogue and planning with the team surrounding ongoing compliance and optimization of our privacy and confidentiality practices.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you about the personal information I collect, how it is used, and how I protect its confidentiality and your rights in respect of this information.

The nature of personal information I collect may include:

- Information required to maintain a working file according to the standards of my profession and the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers such as your name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, other contact information, names of others who are significant to your situation (family, your doctor, and other professionals) and sometimes their contact information. I also collect information about our work together. This would include notes detailed enough to reflect the scope of the work and my actions in this regard, any correspondence sent or received, any consents or other documents you have signed, copies of papers you have given me, and other documentation particular to the nature of our involvement.
- Information necessary for billing purposes, which may include information about your health insurance plans, information collected to comply with the policies of your Employee Assistance Program and their standards, information about other third party payers, copies of all receipts given to you, copies of invoices and billing records.
- Information related to the scheduling of appointments with you.

I collect this information for the following reasons:

- To maintain a clinical file or working file that meets the standards of my profession and the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.
- To provide this service for you in a manner that ensures your safety.
- To maintain a high standard of professionalism in the provision of service.
- To assist in the process of billing for my services.
- To meet other legal and regulatory requirements.
- To maintain records pertaining to the operations of a business and to make these records available if requested.

There will be times when I ask you if I may speak with others about you and your situation. There will be times when you will ask me to do this as well. On these occasions, I will always discuss this information-sharing with you and we will look at the benefits and consequences of speaking to others about your situation. I would then ask for your informed, written consent for me to share your information. These practices would also apply if you wish to be referred to another practitioner in the OMWC clinic. As part of my accountability to provision of services, there are times when I consult with a Therapist Supervisor for the purposes of reflection and therapeutic skill development. Any consultation surrounding your case would be done without revealing any identifying information about you.

There may be occasions when I must share information about you or your situation without your consent. These situations are very exceptional but may include the following:

- *If I have any information about abuse or risk of abuse of a child then I must report this to the proper authority.*
- *If I have a concern about any risk that you may do harm to yourself or harm to another person then I must take action to ensure your safety or the safety of others.*
- *If I am required by law to release information such as receiving a subpoena to court.*
- *If I must report a colleague to the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.*
- *If I must defend myself against a complaint filed with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers or any other court action.*

I make every attempt to safeguard your personal information. I would like you to know the following:

- Your file contains all the personal information about you and your situation including copies of billing information such as receipts and electronic payments. Files are stored in my own drawer of a lockable filing cabinet in a secure area. The reception and waiting room area are locked at all times when the Receptionist is not at the desk. Receptionist access to your file is for scheduling and billing purposes only, and I keep this part of the file clearly indicated in a separate folder.
- OMWC policy is that other practitioners do not access your file or contact you unless you have indicated written consent for them to become involved in your care.
- A computer system that is password protected for each practitioner is used for scheduling clients and contains only your name, contact information and appointment times. If I prepare a document about you on the computer it may, on occasion, be stored on a removable storage device and kept in your file. I have a separate OMWC email account that is password protected if you choose to communicate with me by email.
- Your file is maintained according to regulations set by my profession and the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers and in accordance with other legal requirements.
- When information about you is no longer required, it is cross-cut shredded and disposed of by me.
- In the event of incapacity or death, a designated social worker would have some access to your information in order to assist you in a transfer to another therapist or to maintain the file according to legal and regulatory standards. This social worker would also be a member of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers and would be obligated to provide all services to the same standard that I would.

Telephone calls and emails: For scheduling and general inquires please contact OMWC reception at 905-842-0287 or omwc@omwc.ca. If you have private/confidential personal matters to discuss please contact me directly at 647-267-3439 or amber@omwc.ca. I do attempt to return all my calls and emails within 24 hours during the business week. On rare occasions I may return your call or email within 48 business hours. Please ensure that I have your current contact numbers. Please let me know if there is any reason why I should not leave a message when I call back. If you are in crisis and require immediate support please contact one of the supports provided below:

Distress Centre Oakville	905-849-4541
Rock Crisis Line (Halton)	905-878-9785
Peel Crisis Services (Mississauga)	905-278-9036
Distress Centre Peel (Mississauga)	905-278-7208

Fees, Billing, Cancellation Policy: This information is posted in the reception area.

You have the right to request to see any personal information that I have collected about you or your situation. You have the right to view your clinical file. I will assist you to understand all of what has been written in your file. If you believe that some information about you is incorrect, you may request that the information be changed. I will then correct this information with any third parties who may have been given the wrong information. If you wish to view your file or if you have any concerns about the privacy of your information, please contact me directly.

Your Rights as Clients Receiving a Social Work Service:

I make every attempt to provide my services in a professional, ethical and respectful manner. I would be pleased to discuss any concerns that you have in an open and honest fashion. The services I provide to you are regulated by the **Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers**.

Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers

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I hereby indicate that I have reviewed and understand the above information. I consent to psychotherapy and counselling care, including the associated practices for record keeping, privacy, confidentiality and disclosure of personal information. The specific nature of and approach to my care will be established through assessment discussion and ongoing provision of services.

Client Signature: _____

Date: _____

Therapist Signature: _____

Date: _____