



Electronic Communication Policy

In order to maintain clarity regarding our use of electronic modes of communication during your treatment, we have prepared the following policy. This is because the use of various types of electronic communications is common in our society, and many individuals believe this is the preferred method of communication with others, whether their relationships are social or professional. Many of these common modes of communication, however, put your privacy at risk and can be inconsistent with the law and with the standards of my profession. Consequently, this policy has been prepared to assure the security and confidentiality of your treatment and to assure that it is consistent with ethics and the law.

If you have any questions about this policy, please feel free to discuss this with your therapist.

Email Communications

Ashar Counseling and Psychological Services, LLC and its therapists use email communication and text messaging only with your permission and only for administrative purposes unless we have made another agreement. That means that email exchanges and text messages with my office should be limited to things like setting and changing appointments, billing matters and other related issues. Please do not email your therapist about clinical matters because email is not a secure way to contact him or her. If you need to discuss a clinical matter with your therapist, please feel free to call him or her so we can discuss it on the phone, message him or her through the use of the client portal or Mytherapist app or wait so you can discuss it during your therapy session. The telephone or face-to-face context simply is much more secure as a mode of communication.

Text Messaging

Because text messaging is a very unsecure and impersonal mode of communication, we do not text message to nor do we respond to clinical text messages from anyone in treatment. We do respond to administrative text messages involving a request for a call back or confirmation/cancellation of appointments. Please do not text message your therapist for other matters unless you have made other arrangements with him or her.

You are welcome to message your therapist using the Mytherapist app, which employs military grade encryption and security measures that minimize the risk of a security breach.

Social Media

We participate on various social networks, but not in our professional capacity. If you have an online presence, there is a possibility that you may encounter your therapist. If that occurs, please discuss it with him or her during your time together. We believe that some communications with clients online have a potential to compromise the professional relationship and jeopardize privacy; we would like to discuss this issue during your session. In addition, please do not try to contact your therapist in this way to discuss professional or clinical matters.

Websites

We have a website that you are free to access. We use it for professional reasons to provide information to others about your therapist and our practice. You are welcome to access and review the information that we have on our website and, if you have questions about it, please discuss your questions during your therapy sessions.

Web Searches

We will not use web searches to gather information about you without your permission. We believe that this violates your privacy rights; however, we understand that you might choose to gather information about us in this way. In this day and age there is an incredible amount of information available about individuals on the internet, much of which may actually be known to that person and some of which may be inaccurate or unknown. If you encounter any information about your therapist through web searches, or in any other fashion for that matter, please discuss this with your therapist during your time together so that you and your therapist can deal with it and its potential impact on your treatment.

Recently it has become fashionable for clients to review their health care provider on various websites. Unfortunately, mental health professionals cannot respond to such comments and related errors because of confidentiality restrictions. If you encounter such reviews of your therapist or any professional with whom you are working, please share it with your therapist so you and your therapist can discuss it and its potential impact on your therapy. Please do not rate our work with you while you are in treatment with your therapist on any of these websites. This is because it has a significant potential to damage your ability to work together.

Client or Guardian Signature

Date