

Women's Solutions, LLC
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INFORMED CONSENT

Welcome to **Women's Solutions!** As a new client, I appreciate the opportunity to provide you with quality care. To make your session most helpful, this form clarifies what you might expect to receive from counseling and of my counseling policies.

What is counseling and how does it help? Counseling is designed to help solve problems and change patterns by making changes in feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. The relationship between us is the fundamental and essential ingredient to counseling. The initial focus of counseling is on understanding thoughts, emotions and behaviors, and the life situations that concern you. Counseling then offers you support, skills, and direction to make desired changes. We will determine your goals for counseling and the probable length within the first few sessions and will re-evaluate them often. Length of therapy varies. We agree to end counseling when we agree that your goals have been satisfactorily addressed or there is some other reason to end. *You have the right to end counseling at any time.* I would ask that you discuss your decision for at least one session before you finish.

There are benefits as well as risks to counseling. A positive counseling experience offers you the opportunity to learn about yourself, to develop skills, and to integrate both past and present life experiences leading to improved coping strategies and more satisfying relationships. The risks associated with counseling include the awareness of negative or uncomfortable feelings and situations, some of which may not be changed to your satisfaction. While counseling is expected to be helpful, there is no guarantee that counseling will be the best way to reach your desired goals. Every counseling experience is unique, and it is important that you feel free to discuss any concerns you have about the course of treatment. As a client, you have the right to seek a second opinion from another therapist.

In my experience, I have found three ways you can increase the benefit of our work together:

1. Be honest with yourself and your therapist.
2. Push yourself to talk about things you find the hardest to discuss. Issues kept hidden tend to grow in the dark. Bringing them out is a big step toward making them more manageable.
3. Between our sessions, do the work we agree you need to do. Changing one's thoughts, feelings and/or relationships requires practice. What you do in between our meetings is crucial in achieving your goals.

Confidentiality: The information you share is confidential. This means that all information about you cannot leave the office without your permission. Access to your case material or file is permissible only with your consent by signing a **Release of Information Form**, which is consistent with State and Federal regulations. The exceptions to confidentiality are as follows:

- As in all states, Pennsylvania has a mandatory child abuse law. This requires me to make a report to the Office of Children and Youth if I have reason to **suspect** child abuse and/or neglect.
- If there is clear intention on your part to do serious harm to yourself or someone else, I will share that information appropriately to prevent that harm from occurring.
- There have been instances where counseling records have been subpoenaed into court. I make every attempt not to release your records, but in the instance of a court subpoena, I would be held in contempt of court if I did not provide the records to the court.

Appointments and Fees: The first session is an information-gathering session, which will last 45-60 minutes. Subsequent counseling sessions will be 55-60 minutes. Shorter sessions, 30-minute or 45-minute can be available upon request. To minimize unexpected charges, below is a list of my fees. Initial session (90791) is \$175.00; 55-minute sessions are \$150.00; 45-minute sessions are \$125; and 30-minute sessions are \$100. All co-pays and deductibles are due at the time services are rendered.

Office Hours: Counseling sessions are by appointment only.

Insurance: If you plan to use insurance, **you are responsible** for learning about the specifics of your mental health coverage. I am an in-network provider on several local panels. Please check the website for more information. Any co-pays or coinsurance are due at the time services are rendered. Please verify whether a referral is needed. If you use insurance, I may be asked to release the following information: symptoms, diagnosis, treatment plan, and progress towards goals. You will be asked to sign a form granting permission to share this confidential information with your insurance company. PLEASE BE SURE YOUR PLAN COVERS TELETHERAPY.

Miscellaneous Fees: The following is a list of services that generates an additional fee, which will be your responsibility to pay since they are *not reimbursable* by insurance plans:

- Completion of documents (i.e.: disability, custody, DUI, etc.): **\$25** [3 or more pages]
- Phone consultations (i.e.: attorneys, PO's, Custody Evaluators, etc.): **\$25** per 15-minute increment
- Email consultations (i.e.: attorneys, PO's, doctors, schools, etc.): **\$25** per email
- Attendance in court (i.e.: custody, disability, divorce, etc.): **\$2500** (I will set aside an 8-hour day)
- Attendance at meetings (i.e.: schools, evaluations, disability, etc.): **\$150** per hour

Missed Appointments and Cancellations: Cancellation of counseling sessions must be made 24 hours in advance to avoid being billed for that session. **I DO BILL FOR SESSIONS MISSED WITHOUT 24 HOURS NOTICE.** There are several reasons why this policy is strictly adhered to. 1) For counseling to work, regular appointments are necessary. 2) Frequently, others would like to use the time set aside for you should it become available; 24 hours gives people sufficient time to arrange to come in. *Exceptions:* when an illness or accident leads to a doctor or hospital visit. The fee associated with missing an appointment or failing to cancel in time is \$75. Future sessions will not be scheduled until the No Show Fee has been paid.

Reaching Me by Phone/Email/Text: When you contact Women's Solutions, you will need to leave a message. I check these messages Monday through Friday between 8 AM and 6 PM. I do not check for messages in the evening (after 6 PM) or on weekends (from Friday 6 PM until Monday 8 AM). If you leave a message, please leave details as to where and when you can be reached. You will know in advance when I plan to be absent. When I am absent, I do not check messages.

Emergencies: I make every attempt to be available to clients during crisis times in their lives. Emergency or extra appointments can be made during regular office hours. In the case of a clinical emergency for which you need immediate assistance, please call Crisis Intervention (610.252.9060 or text 741741), dial 911 or go to your local emergency room.

Information about Credentials: I am a *Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC)*, having received my M.Ed. from Lehigh University. I am required to attend continuing education on a yearly basis to maintain skills and develop new skills. I belong to the American Psychological Association, as well as local organizations. If you have questions or concerns regarding my qualifications or modality of therapy, please contact the State of Pennsylvania Board of Licensed Social Workers, Marriage & Family Therapists and Professional Counselors { www.pa.state.org }.

Client Signature: _____ **Date:** _____
I have read the information presented in this disclosure statement. My signature indicates that I understand the information, agree with the conditions of counseling that are either stated or implied here, and agree to comply with them. I understand I have the right not to sign this form and can choose to discuss my concerns before counseling begins. I understand that once counseling begins, I still retain the right to withdraw my consent to participate in counseling at any time.

Therapist Signature: _____ **Date:** _____