



INFORMED CONSENT FOR IN-PERSON SERVICES DURING COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

This document contains important information about resuming in-person services during the COVID-19 public health crisis. Please read this carefully and let us know if you have any questions by contacting Transitions main line at 781-742-4515 or emailing info@transitionsounselinginc.com.

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 coverage of telehealth services is not guaranteed. Transitions Counseling Services does not require nor ask clients if they have received the COVID-19 vaccine or not, so it is possible clients who have not been vaccinated may be in the office. You are meeting in person understanding this risk of exposure.

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. You knowingly and willingly consent to have therapy services during the COVID-19 pandemic. You understand that COVID-19 has a long incubation period during which carriers of the virus may not show symptoms and still be highly contagious. It is impossible to determine who has it and who does not, given the current limits in viral testing. You understand that Transitions and your therapist have adopted reasonable preventative measures intended to reduce the spread of Covid-19, but there is still a possibility of transmission as a result of attending in-person therapy.

Transitions Commitment to Minimize Exposure

Transitions is taking the following precautions to protect our clients and help slow the spread of the coronavirus:

- Office seating in the waiting room and in therapy rooms has been arranged for appropriate physical distancing.
- All staff will wear masks.
- Staff will maintain safe social distancing of at least 6 feet of space.
- Restroom soap dispensers are maintained and everyone is encouraged to wash their hands.
- Hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol is available in the therapy rooms and the waiting room.
- We schedule appointments at specific intervals to minimize the number of people walking in the suite at the same time.
- We ask all patients to wait in their cars or outside until no earlier than 5 minutes before their appointment times.
- Credit card pads, pens and other areas that are commonly touched are thoroughly sanitized after each use.
- Payments for services will continue to be collected via credit card and automatically shortly following your session.
- Physical contact is not permitted.
- Tissues and trash bins are easily accessed. Trash is disposed of on a frequent basis.
- Common areas are thoroughly disinfected at the end of each day.

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, other Transitions staff, and other patients) 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.

- You understand that due to the frequency of visits of other clients, the characteristics of the virus, and the length of time spent in the therapy office, you may have an elevated risk of contracting the virus simply by being in the office.
- You are aware that the guidelines from the CDC and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services that Outpatient Behavioral Health appointments should be done via Telehealth unless these are “*urgent procedures or services that cannot be delivered remotely and would lead to high risk or significant worsening of the patient’s condition if deferred.*”
- You confirm that you are seeking treatment for a condition that meets the above criteria.
- You will only keep your in-person appointment if you are symptom free.
- You agree to take the COVID-19 symptom screening assessment prior to each scheduled appointment (found on our website at [here](#)) If you have any symptoms of the coronavirus, you agree to change the appointment from in-person to telehealth.
- You will wait in your car until the time of your appointment and enter the suite no sooner than 5 minutes prior to your appointment time.
- You will wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when you enter the building (located at the elevator, first and second floor and throughout the hallways, as well as throughout the Transitions office suite).
- You will adhere to the safe distancing precautions we have set up in the waiting room and therapy room. For example, you won’t move chairs and will be respectful of others in the suite.
- You agree to wear a mask (even if vaccinated) while in the office suite as per the MA regulations our office is considered a “Behavioral Health Clinic” and classified under a Healthcare location that continues to require mask wearing by clients and staff despite the end of the State Emergency and general lifting of this mandate.
- You will try not to touch your face or eyes with your hands. If you do, you will immediately wash or sanitize your hands.
- If you are bringing your child, you will make sure that your child follows all of these sanitation and distancing protocols.
- You will take steps between appointments to minimize your exposure to COVID-19.
- If you have a job that exposes you to other people who are infected, you will immediately let our office or your therapist know.
- If a resident of your home tests positive for the infection, you will immediately let our office or your therapist know and we will then begin/resume treatment via telehealth.

We 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.

If You or I Are Sick

We commit to keeping each other, Transitions staff, and all of our families safe from the spread of this virus. If you show up for an appointment and I or Transitions office staff believe that you have a fever or other symptoms, or believe 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 other staff at Transitions test positive for the coronavirus, we will notify you so that you can take appropriate precautions.

Your Confidentiality in the Case of Infection

I understand that federal and state laws typically authorize public health departments to collect patient information to prevent or control disease and for related public health needs. I also understand that my therapist may be required to report Covid-19 related patient information to public health departments, HHS, or the CDC. For example, if anyone who has been in my therapist’s office tests positive for Covid-19, disclosure may be necessary for contact tracing or other data collection needs. If reporting is required, only the minimum necessary information will be disclosed. By signing this form, you are agreeing that we may do so without an additional signed release.

Informed Consent

This agreement supplements the general Client Psychotherapist Agreement that we agreed to at the start of our work together. I knowingly and willingly consent to have in-person sessions during the Covid-19 pandemic, and I acknowledge the health risk of Covid-19 during this pandemic. I have read the information provided above and discussed it with my therapist, and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Client/Guardian Signature

Print Name

Therapist Signature

Date

Relationship to Client

Date