

Karla A. Rennhofer, Ph.D.
Dr.Rennhofer@growtoday.one
<https://drkarlarennhofer.clientsecure.me/>
872-248-4278

EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS NOTICE

This notice went into effect on August 26, 2021.

Updated on 1/27/26.

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES:

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

I. MY PLEDGE REGARDING HEALTH INFORMATION:

I understand that health information about you and your health care is personal. I am committed to protecting health information about you. I create a record of the care and services you receive from me. I need this record to provide you with quality care and to comply with certain legal requirements. This notice applies to all of the records of your care generated by this mental health care practice. This notice will tell you about the ways in which I may use and disclose health information about you. I also describe your rights to the health information I keep about you, and describe certain obligations I have regarding the use and disclosure of your health information. I am required by law to:

1. Make sure that Protected Health Information ("PHI") that identifies you is kept private.
2. Give you this notice of my legal duties and privacy practices with respect to health information.
3. Follow the terms of the notice that is currently in effect.

I can change the terms of this Notice, and such changes will apply to all information I have about you. The new Notice will be available upon request and on my website.

II. HOW I MAY USE AND DISCLOSE HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU:

The following categories describe different ways that I use and disclose health information. For each category of uses or disclosures I will explain what I mean and try to give some examples. Not every use or disclosure in a category will be listed. However, all of the ways I am permitted to use and disclose information will fall within one of the categories.

1. For Treatment, Payment, or Health Care Operations: Federal privacy rules (regulations) allow health care providers who have a direct treatment relationship with the patient/client to use or disclose the patient/client's personal health information without the patient's written authorization, to carry out the health care provider's treatment, payment, or health care operations. For example, I may send your PHI to your insurance company or health plan in order to get payment for the health care services that I have provided to you. I could

also provide your PHI to business associates, such as billing companies, claims processing companies, and others that process health care claims for my office. The exception to this is Substance Use Disorder Records, which would require patient consent.

2. Lawsuits and Disputes: If you are involved in a lawsuit, I may disclose health information in response to a court or administrative order. I may also disclose health information in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested. Substance Use Disorder records and testimony may not be used in administrative, civil, criminal or legal proceedings without the patient giving written consent or a court order.

3. Other Disclosures, Such as Emergencies: Your consent isn't required if you need emergency treatment provided that I attempt to get your consent after treatment is rendered. In the event that I try to get your consent but you are unable to communicate with me (for example, if you are unconscious or in severe pain) but I think that you would consent to such treatment if you could, I may disclose your PHI.

III. CERTAIN USES AND DISCLOSURES REQUIRE YOUR AUTHORIZATION:

1. Psychotherapy Notes: I do keep "psychotherapy notes" as that term is defined in 45 CFR § 164.501, and any use or disclosure of such notes requires your Authorization UNLESS the use or disclosure is:

- a. For my use in treating you.
- b. For my use in training or supervising mental health practitioners in my practice to help them improve their skills in group, joint, family, or individual counseling or therapy.
- c. For my use in defending myself in legal proceedings instituted by you.
- d. For use by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to investigate my compliance with HIPAA.
- e. Required by law and the use or disclosure is limited to the requirements of such law.
- f. Required by law for certain health oversight activities pertaining to the originator of the psychotherapy notes.
- g. Required by a coroner who is performing duties authorized by law.
- h. Required to help avert a serious threat to the health and safety of others.

2. Marketing Purposes. As a psychotherapist, I will not use or disclose your PHI for marketing purposes.

3. Sale of PHI. As a psychotherapist, I will not sell your PHI in the regular course of my business.

IV. CERTAIN USES AND DISCLOSURES DO NOT REQUIRE YOUR AUTHORIZATION.

Subject to certain limitations in the law, I can use and disclose your PHI without your Authorization for the following reasons:

1. When disclosure is required by state or federal law, and the use or disclosure complies with and is limited to the relevant requirements of such law. When another law is more restrictive than HIPAA, the stricter standard applies.

2. For public health activities, including reporting suspected child, elder, or dependent adult abuse, or preventing or reducing a serious threat to your own or anyone's health, safety, or

property.

3. For health oversight activities, including audits and investigations.
4. For judicial and administrative proceedings, including responding to a court or administrative order, although my preference is to obtain an Authorization from you before doing so.
5. For law enforcement purposes, including reporting crimes occurring on my premises.
6. To coroners or medical examiners, when such individuals are performing duties authorized by law.
7. For research purposes, including studying and comparing the mental health of patients who received one form of therapy versus those who received another form of therapy for the same condition.
8. For specialized government functions, including: ensuring the proper execution of military missions; protecting the President of the United States; conducting intelligence or counter-intelligence operations; or, helping to ensure the safety of those working within or housed in correctional institutions.
9. For workers' compensation purposes. Although my preference is to obtain an Authorization from you, I may provide your PHI in order to comply with workers' compensation laws.
10. For appointment reminders and health related benefits or services. I may use and disclose your PHI to contact you to remind you that you have an appointment with me. I may also use and disclose your PHI to tell you about treatment alternatives, or other health care services or benefits that I offer.

V. CERTAIN USES AND DISCLOSURES REQUIRE YOU TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBJECT.

1. Disclosures to family, friends, or others. I may provide your PHI to a family member, friend, or other person that you indicate is involved in your care or the payment for your health care, unless you object in whole or in part. The opportunity to consent may be obtained retroactively in emergency situations.
2. It is possible that I may have another clinician contact you in the event that I am incapacitated. That person is also bound to the same confidentiality rights as I am.
3. I may contact you to provide appointment reminders or other services that may be of interest to you.

VI. YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO YOUR PHI:

1. The Right to Request Limits on Uses and Disclosures of Your PHI. You have the right to ask me not to use or disclose certain PHI for treatment, payment, or health care operations purposes. I am not required to agree to your request, and I may say "no" if I believe it would affect your health care. In the unlikely event that your records would be disclosed for fundraising, you will be given the opportunity to opt out.
2. The Right to Request Restrictions for Out-of-Pocket Expenses Paid for In Full. You have the right to request restrictions on disclosures of your PHI to health plans for payment or health care operations purposes if the PHI pertains solely to a health care item or a health

care service that you have paid for out-of-pocket in full.

3. The Right to Choose How I Send PHI to You. You have the right to ask me to contact you in a specific way (for example, home or office phone) or to send mail to a different address, and I will agree to all reasonable requests.

4. The Right to See and Get Copies of Your PHI. Other than "psychotherapy notes," you have the right to get an electronic or paper copy of your medical record and other information that I have about you. I will provide you with a copy of your record, or a summary of it, if you agree to receive a summary, within 30 days of receiving your written request, and I may charge a reasonable, cost based fee for doing so.

5. The Right to Get a List of the Disclosures I Have Made. You have the right to request a list of instances in which I have disclosed your PHI for purposes other than treatment, payment, or health care operations, or for which you provided me with an Authorization. I will respond to your request for an accounting of disclosures within 60 days of receiving your request. The list I will give you will include disclosures made in the last six years unless you request a shorter time. I will provide the list to you at no charge, but if you make more than one request in the same year, I will charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for each additional request.

6. The Right to Correct or Update Your PHI. If you believe that there is a mistake in your PHI, or that a piece of important information is missing from your PHI, you have the right to request that I correct the existing information or add the missing information. I may say "no" to your request, but I will tell you why in writing within 60 days of receiving your request.

7. The Right to Get a Paper or Electronic Copy of this Notice. You have the right get a paper copy of this Notice, and you have the right to get a copy of this notice by e-mail. And, even if you have agreed to receive this Notice via e-mail, you also have the right to request a paper copy of it.

VII. WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS:

If you have a concern about these listed privacy practices that you feel you cannot resolve with me, you may send a written complaint to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services at 200 Independence Avenue S.W. Washington, D.C. 20201. You have the right to file this complaint without retaliation.

VIII. NOTIFICATIONS OF BREACHES

In the case of a breach, I will notify each affected individual whose unsecured PHI has been compromised. Even if such a breach was caused by a Business Associate, I am ultimately responsible for providing the notification directly or via the Business Associate. If the breach involves more than 500 persons, OCR (Office of Civil Rights) must be notified in accordance with instructions posted on its website. I bear the ultimate burden of proof to demonstrate that all notifications were given or that the impermissible use or disclosure of PHI did not constitute a breach and must maintain supporting documentation, including documentation pertaining to the risk assessment.

IX. PHI AFTER DEATH:

Generally, PHI excludes any health information of a person who has been deceased for more than 50 years after the date of death. I may disclose deceased individuals' PHI to non-family members, as well as family members, who were involved in the care or payment for healthcare of the decedent prior to death; however, the disclosure must be limited to PHI relevant to such care or payment, and cannot be inconsistent with any prior expressed preference of the deceased individual.