



PRIVACY POLICY

Freethought Counseling is committed to ensuring your privacy. Client data is stored on a separate, password protected hard drive. Data is protected by SSL encryption protocols and a secure firewall. All unauthorized access is strictly prohibited. Like traditional therapy services, client record information is maintained according to professional guidelines and ethical codes, securely stored and kept confidential. Your information is not used in any other manner, and is not shared with any third parties or companies. Occasionally, depending upon the circumstances, your counselor may seek consultation with another mental health professional. If this happens, your identity will remain confidential and only the circumstances for which the counselor is consulting on will be disclosed. **There are some legally required limits to confidentiality.**

LIMITS TO CONFIDENTIALITY: Your verbal communication and clinical records are strictly confidential except for

- information you report about physical or sexual abuse of a child or children (the counselor is legally mandated to report this information the appropriate child welfare authorities),
- when you sign a release of information to have specific information shared with the entity specified in the release,
- if you provide information that you are in danger of harming yourself or others and
- when required by law (such as through a court order).

POTENTIAL FOR BREACH OF PRIVACY: Although the counselor is required to do everything possible to protect your confidentiality and the privacy of your information, there are risks associated with electronic communications. Freethought Counseling's website is encrypted and secure. However, as with any electronic communication, it is possible that someone could hack into your computer or your online live chat session. If you share a computer with another person, that person may have access to read your e-mails and other files. It is also possible your computer could become infected with a virus. If you plan to use online counseling services, you should keep your antivirus, antispyware and adware, and Internet security software up-to-date. Protect your files with a password, do not let anyone else access your e-mail or files, and if you share a computer with another person or think someone may be able to access your computer, provide the counselor with a codeword that can be used to identify you. Do not share the codeword with anyone.

THE PRIVACY OF THE COUNSELOR: We expect that you will protect the confidentiality of the counselor by not using session material outside of the scope of your own personal treatment purposes, and not distributing, sharing, forwarding or reprinting any session material. If the counselor gives you a cell phone number as a contact option, please do not share this cell phone number with anyone else.

COORDINATION OF TREATMENT: It is important that all health care providers work together. As such, we would like your permission to communicate with your primary care physician, psychiatrist, and/or any other mental health provider you currently work with. Your consent is valid for one year. **Please understand that you have the right to revoke this authorization, in writing, at any time by sending notice to Freethought Counseling. However, a revocation is not valid to the extent that we have acted in reliance on such authorization.**

If you do not want your counselor to coordinate your treatment with other providers, you do not need to take any action. If you DO want your counselor to coordinate treatment, please give the other treatment provider's name and contact information on the registration form and check the box indicating that you are giving your consent to release information to this provider.