

HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices

This notice describes how mental health and medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully.

I. Uses and Disclosures for Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations

I may use or disclose your protected health information (PHI), for treatment, payment and health care operations purposes with your written authorization. To help clarify these terms, here are some definitions:

- “PHI” refers to information in your health record that could identify you.
- “Treatment” is when I provide, coordinate, or manage your health care and other services related to your health care. An example of treatment would be when I consult with another health care provider, such as your family physician or another mental health provider.
- “Payment” is when I obtain reimbursement for your healthcare. Examples of payment are when I disclose your PHI to your health insurer to obtain reimbursement for your health care or to determine eligibility or coverage.
- “Health Care Operations” are activities that relate to the performance and operation of my practice. Examples of health care operations are quality assessment and improvement activities, business-related matters such as audits and administrative services, and case management and care coordination.
- “Use” applies only to activities within Azita Afshar, Psy.D., such as sharing, employing, applying, utilizing, examining, and analyzing information that identifies you.
- “Disclosure” applies to activities outside of Azita Afshar, Psy.D., such as releasing, transferring, or providing access to information about you to other parties, or mental health providers outside Azita Afshar, Psy.D.
- “Authorization” is your written permission to disclose confidential mental health information. All authorizations to disclose must be on a specific legally required form.

II. Other Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization

I may use or disclose PHI for purposes outside of treatment, payment or health care operations when your appropriate authorization is obtained. In those instances when I am asked for information for purposes outside of treatment, payment, or health care operations, I will obtain an authorization from you before releasing this information. I also need to obtain an authorization before releasing your Psychotherapy Notes. “Psychotherapy Notes” are notes I have made about our conversation during a private, group, joint, or family counseling session, which I have kept separate from the rest of your record. These notes are given a greater degree of protection than PHI. You may revoke all such authorizations (of PHI or Psychotherapy Notes) at any time, provided each revocation is in writing. You may not revoke an authorization to the extent that (1) I have relied on that authorization; or (2) if the authorization was obtained as a condition of obtaining insurance coverage, law provides the insurer the right to contest the claim under the policy.

III. Uses and Disclosures without Authorization

I may use or disclose PHI without your consent or authorization in the following circumstances:

- Child Abuse - If I have reasonable cause to believe a child known to me in my professional capacity may be an abused child or a neglected child, I must report this belief to the appropriate authorities.

- **Adult and Domestic Abuse** – If I have reason to believe that an individual (who is protected by state law) has been abused, neglected, or financially exploited, I must report this belief to the appropriate authorities.
- **Health Oversight Activities** – I may disclose protected health information regarding you to a health oversight agency for oversight activities authorized by law, including licensure or disciplinary actions.
- **Judicial and Administrative Proceedings** – If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information by any party about your evaluation, diagnosis and treatment and the records thereof, such information is privileged under state law, and I must not release such information without a court order. I can release the information directly to you on your request. Information about all other psychological services is also privileged and cannot be released without your authorization or a court order. The privilege does not apply when you are being evaluated for a third party or where the evaluation is court ordered. You must be informed in advance if this is the case.
- **Serious Threat to Health or Injury** – If you communicate to me a specific threat of imminent harm against another individual or if I believe that there is clear, imminent risk of physical or mental injury being inflicted against another individual, I may make disclosures that I believe are necessary to protect that individual from harm. If I believe that you present an imminent, serious risk of physical or mental injury to yourself, I may make disclosures necessary to protect you from harm.
- **Worker's Compensation** – I may disclose protected health information regarding you as authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to worker's compensation or other similar programs, established by law, that provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness without regard to fault.

IV. Patient's Rights and Mental Health Provider's Duties

Patient's Rights:

- **Right to Request Restrictions** – You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information. However, I am not required to agree to a restriction you request.
- **Right to Receive Confidential Communications by Alternative Means and at Alternative Locations** – You have the right to request and receive confidential communications of PHI by alternative means and at alternative locations. (For example, you may not want a family member to know that you are seeing me. On your request, I will send your bills to another address.)
- **Right to Inspect and Copy** – You have the right to inspect or obtain a copy (or both) of PHI in my mental health and billing records used to make decisions about you for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record and Psychotherapy Notes. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the request for access process.
- **Right to Amend** – You have the right to request an amendment of PHI for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. I may deny your request. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the amendment process.
- **Right to an Accounting** – You generally have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of PHI. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the accounting process.
- **Right to a Paper Copy** – You have the right to obtain a paper copy of the notice from me upon request, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically.

Mental Health Provider's Duties:

- I am required by law to maintain the privacy of PHI and to provide you with a notice of my legal duties and privacy practices with respect to PHI.

- I reserve the right to change the privacy policies and practices described in this notice. Unless I notify you of such changes, however, I am required to abide by the terms currently in effect.
- If I revise my policies and procedures, I will provide a written notice regarding any changes and mail them to you.

V. Questions and Complaints:

- If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with my office. All complaints must be in writing. Please contact:

Azita Afshar, Psy.D.

30 N. Michigan Ave. Suite 900

Chicago, IL 60602

- A complaint must name the entity that is the subject of the complaint and describe the acts or omissions believed to be in violation of the applicable requirements of HIPAA or this Privacy Policy. A complaint must be received by me or filed with the Secretary of Department of Health and Human Service (DHHS) within 180 days of when you knew or should have known that the act or omission complained of occurred. You will not be retaliated against for filing any complaint.
- *This form will be retained in your medical record. Effective date: December 7, 2009.*