

Sofari PLLC

Notice of Privacy Practices; Patient Bill of Rights; Good Faith Estimate (No Surprises Act)

This document describes the following:

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

PATIENT BILL OF RIGHTS

GOOD FAITH ESTIMATE (NO SURPRISES ACT)

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 practice or after receipt from third parties. 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:

Make sure that protected health information ("PHI") that identifies you is kept private.

Give you this notice of my legal duties and privacy practices with respect to health information.

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, in my office, 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.

For Treatment Payment, or Health Care Operations: Federal privacy rules (regulations) allow health care providers who have 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 own treatment, payment or health care operations. I may also disclose your protected health information for the treatment activities of any health care provider. This too can be done without your written authorization. For example, if a health care provider were to consult with another licensed health care provider about your condition, we would be permitted to use and disclose your personal health information, which is otherwise

confidential, in order to assist the health care provider in diagnosis and treatment of your condition.

Disclosures for treatment purposes are not limited to the minimum necessary standard. Because other health care providers need access to the full record and/or full and complete information in order to provide quality care, the word "treatment" includes, among other things, the coordination and management of health care providers with a third party, consultations between health care providers and referrals of a patient for health care from one health care provider to another.

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 about your child 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.

III. CERTAIN USES AND DISCLOSURES REQUIRE YOUR AUTHORIZATION:

Session Notes: I do keep "Session notes" and any use or disclosure of such notes requires your Authorization unless the use or disclosure is:

- For my use in treating you.

- For my use in training or supervising associates to help them improve their clinical skills.

- For my use in defending myself in legal proceedings instituted by you.

- For use by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to investigate my compliance with HIPAA.

- Required by law and the use or disclosure is limited to the requirements of such law.

- Required by law for certain health oversight activities pertaining to the originator of the session notes.

- Required by a coroner who is performing duties authorized by law.

- Required to help avert a serious threat to the health and safety of others.

- Marketing Purposes.** As a health care provider, I will not use or disclose your PHI for marketing purposes.

- Sale of PHI.** As a health care provider, 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:

- 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.

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

- For health oversight activities, including audits and investigations.

- 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.

- For law enforcement purposes, including reporting crimes occurring on my premises.

- To coroners or medical examiners, when such individuals are performing duties authorized by law.

- For research purposes, including studying and comparing the patients who received one form of care versus those who received another form of care for the same condition.

- Specialized government functions, including, ensuring the proper execution of military missions; protecting the President of the United States; conducting intelligence or counterintelligence operations; or, helping to ensure the safety of those working within or housed in correctional institutions.

- 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.

- 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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

The Right to See and Get Copies of Your PHI. Other than “session 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.

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.

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.

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.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS NOTICE

This notice went into effect on 10 November 2020.

Patient Bill of Rights

As a client, you have the right to:

- Select a professional counselor who meets your needs.

- Receive specific information about your counselor’s qualifications, including education, experience, national counseling certifications, and state licensure.

- Obtain a copy of the code(s) of ethics your counselor must follow.

- Receive a written explanation of services offered, time commitments, fee scales, and billing policies prior to receipt of services.

- Understand your counselor’s areas of expertise and scope of practice (e.g., career development, adolescents, couples, etc.).

- Ask questions about confidentiality and its limits as specified in state laws and professional ethical codes.

Receive information about emergency procedures (e.g., how to contact your counselor in the event of a crisis).

Ask questions about counseling techniques and strategies, including potential risks and benefits.

Establish goals and evaluate progress with your counselor.

Request additional opinions from other mental health assessment professionals.

Understand the implications of diagnosis and the intended use of psychological reports.

Obtain copies of records and reports.

Terminate the counseling relationship at any time.

Share any concerns or complaints you may have regarding a professional counselor's conduct with the appropriate professional counseling organization or licensure board.

As a client you have responsibilities for the following:

In order for your counselor to provide the highest quality of services, it is important that clients:

Adhere to established schedules. If you must miss an appointment, contact your counselor as soon as possible.

Pay your bill in accordance with the billing agreements.

Follow agreed-upon goals and strategies established in sessions.

Inform your professional counselor of your progress and challenges in meeting your goals.

Participate fully in each session to help maximize a positive outcome.

Inform your counselor if you are receiving mental health services from another professional.

Consider appropriate referrals from your counselor.

Avoid placing your counselor in ethical dilemmas, such as requesting to become involved in social interactions or to barter for services.

If you are dissatisfied with the services of your counselor:

Express concerns directly to the counselor, if possible.

Seek the advice of the counselor's supervisor if the counselor is practicing in a setting where he or she receives direct supervision.

Terminate the counseling relationship if the situation remains unresolved.

Contact the appropriate state licensing board, national certification organization, or professional association if you believe the counselor's conduct to be unethical.

Good Faith Estimate (No Surprises Act)

Effective January 1, 2022, laws regulating healthcare have been updated to include the "No Surprises" act, which requires a wide variety of providers to give current and potential future clients a "Good Faith Estimate" on the cost of treatment.

You have the right to receive a "Good Faith Estimate" explaining how much your medical and mental health care will cost. Under the law, health care providers need to give patients who don't have insurance or who are not using insurance an estimate of the expected charges for medical services, including psychotherapy services.

The estimate below is the cost that is likely for most new patients. Until I do an initial evaluation and we start to work together, I will not have a clear picture of your specific diagnosis, issues and needs. I typically see therapy patients for a range sessions. But cases may be more complicated, so we may need additional sessions during the time covered by this estimate. If you have questions about this estimate, please contact us.

Details of Estimate:

Individual therapy:

Intake (90791): \$250

Subsequent sessions, weekly for 8 weeks (90837): \$1,440

Total estimated cost: \$1,690

Couples therapy:

Intake (90791): \$250

Subsequent sessions, weekly for 8 weeks (90847): \$1,600

Total estimated cost: \$1,850

Disclaimer

This Good Faith Estimate shows the costs of services that are reasonably expected for the expected services to address your mental health care needs. The estimate is based on the information known to us when we did the estimate.

The Good Faith Estimate does not include any unknown or unexpected costs that may arise during treatment. You could be charged more if complications or special circumstances occur. If this happens, federal law allows you to dispute (appeal) the bill.

If you are billed for more than this Good Faith Estimate, you have the right to dispute the bill.

You may contact the contact listed above if billed charges are higher than the Good Faith Estimate. You can request an update to the bill to match the Good Faith Estimate, ask to negotiate the bill, or ask if there is financial assistance available.

You may also start a dispute resolution process with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). If you choose to use the dispute resolution process, you must start the dispute process within 120 calendar days (about 4 months) of the date on the original bill.

There is a \$25 fee to use the dispute process. If the agency reviewing your dispute agrees with you, you will have to pay the price on this Good Faith Estimate. If the agency disagrees with you and agrees with the health care provider or facility, you will have to pay the higher amount.

To learn more and get a form to start the process, go to:

www.cms.gov/nosurprises or call CMS at 1-800-985-3059.

For questions or more information about your right to a Good Faith Estimate or the dispute process, visit www.cms.gov/nosurprises or call CMS at 1-800-985-3059.

This Good Faith Estimate is not a contract. It does not obligate you to accept the services listed above.