

Client-Therapist Agreement

The following information is important in my work with you. Please read this carefully and feel free to ask any questions or raise any concerns that you may have.

Regarding confidentiality: For therapy to be effective, it means that you talk about some very private things with me. To some extent, my ability to be helpful depends on how open you can be about your ideas, feelings, and behaviors. At first, it may be very hard for you to open up about some of these things, but as we continue to work together over time, it will begin to feel more and more safe to divulge what may feel embarrassing to you.

So that you can feel free to speak openly to me and that your right to privacy is protected, I have a legal and ethical obligation to keep information about you confidential. In general, this means that I cannot discuss you with anyone or send out information about you without your permission.

I may keep records of the session and payments you have made. These are just as confidential as what we talk about in the sessions. The law, professional ethics, and common sense require that whatever you say or do during a psychotherapy session not be shared with anyone else without your written permission. There are, however, certain exceptions to this rule:

1. If your records were subpoenaed, I would be obligated to surrender them.
2. If you tell me about anyone who is currently a child who is being or has been abused, I am required to report that to the authorities. I am required to report it if you say something that even raises the mere possibility of child abuse. This also applies to elders (people 65 years or older) and dependents. I am also required to report if I learn of explicit (e.g. nude) photos being sent by teens or children over the internet or by text or social media.
3. If you indicate that you intend to injure or kill yourself or someone else, I must act to try to prevent you from doing that.

Regarding fees: Sessions are 50 minutes in length with a fee of \$160 due and payable at the end of each session. (Or couples fee of \$195 75 min-90 min) This fee will be raised annually \$5 - \$10 subject to the cost of living. For payment I use Ivy Pay. A card will put on file that is secured in the app and will be charged after each session. Please notify me if any problems arise during the course of treatment regarding your ability to make timely payments. If I decide to raise my fee, I will give you a months notice.

Frequency of Sessions: I only work with patients at a minimum of once per week (unless you are seeing me for couples, we will agree to frequency before we start). I do not see patients every other week or monthly. The relationship with the psychotherapist is the key to working through emotional and relational difficulties hence making weekly sessions most conducive for this type of therapy to work.

I do not bill insurance agencies, and you are responsible for payment of services whether or not your insurance covers them. However, I will provide you with a receipt, and you may submit the receipt to your insurance company for reimbursement. The reimbursement check must be made out to you. Disclosure of confidential information, PHI, may be required by your insurance carrier in order to process your claims. Be advised that submitting a mental health invoice,

carries a certain amount of risk to confidentiality, privacy, or to future eligibility to obtain health or life insurance.

Cancellation of sessions: While you are in treatment with me, you are responsible to pay for all appointments. Any misses or cancellations will be charged regardless of how much notice you give me. If you miss or cancel an appointment for any reason, I will make every effort to arrange for you to make up that missed session if I am given appropriate notice. Rescheduled appointments that are missed or cancelled will not be rescheduled and will be charged.

While this may seem to be a strict and harsh policy, I find that in the long run both your interests and mine are better served in terms of continuity of care and predictability. You are not responsible to pay for appointments missed arising from my absence due to illness or vacation. I do not charge for sessions missed due to catastrophic events.

If you can't make it to my office, we can have the session via phone or Zoom in order to avoid the cancellation.

Telehealth sessions: I will send you a link where you can log in for our meeting.

Contact Between Sessions: If you need to get a hold of me between sessions, you can text me at (714) 348-6559, or email me at info@jennifermoffatmft.com. I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hr. Because texting and email are not entirely secure, the correspondence should be for scheduling or non-personal information. If you need to talk, let me know that I will get back to you when I can to set up a time. This out of office time is subject to a fee of my prorated rate of \$160 50 min. For a life or death emergency, call 911 or the 988 mental health hotline or go to your nearest emergency room.

I reserve the right to charge my standard rate for report writing and reading, consultation with other professionals, release of information, reading records, travel time and other expenditures of the time involved in your care outside of our therapy session.

Litigation Limitation: Due to the nature of the therapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters which may be of a confidential nature, it is agreed that should there be legal proceedings (such as but not limited to divorce or custody disputes, injuries, lawsuits, etc) neither you (client) nor your attorney, nor anyone else acting on your behalf will call on Jennifer Moffat, LMFT to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the psychotherapy records be requested

Legal Fees: If I do testify regarding your therapy, I cannot be an expert witness on your behalf as this would be a conflict of interest for a treating therapist. However, if I am called upon to write a report or to testify at a deposition or in court, my fee will be \$200 per 50 min. This fee includes time spent in research, preparation time, and driving time, as well as actual testimony or writing time and any time waiting to testify in court.

Consultation: In order to get outside perspective and keep my treatment skills honed, I (Jennifer Moffat, LMFT) consult from time to time with other professionals regarding my clients/clinical

work. However, clients' names and identifying information are not used. Your identity remains anonymous; confidentiality is maintained.

Termination: You may terminate at any time simply by letting me know you are ready to end. I recommend that you terminate in person, in a regularly scheduled session. The process of saying good-bye can be a pivotal point in your therapy. For example, perhaps you are not liking therapy, are not used to giving negative feedback and would rather just drop out without talking about it. Holding yourself to the discipline of an in person termination where you honestly air your dissatisfaction can be the beginning of a significant change for you.

Depending on how long you've been in therapy, it may be helpful to allow more than one session for terminating, even upwards to a month or longer. This allows us time to say good-bye and look at issues that may arise in the process of terminating.

Dual Relationship: Therapy never involves sexual or any other dual relationship that impairs the therapist's objectivity, clinical judgment, or therapeutic effectiveness or that can be exploitative in nature. But not all dual relationships are unethical or even avoidable. You may have chosen to do therapy with me because of some personal knowledge of me out in the community--e.g. we may attend a common social setting or a mutual friend may have referred you. Also, you may run into someone you know in the waiting room. In other words, our circles may overlap. I will not acknowledge being anyone's therapist unless I have his/her permission. If I see you out in public, I might not even say "hello" unless you speak first. This is to protect your privacy--not to snub you. But if our circles overlap in a way that is or becomes uncomfortable for you, talk with me about it. We will work to resolve your discomfort either through talking it through to less conflicted feelings, or, if necessary, through concrete steps to resolve the duality--termination if necessary.

Please note: I do not use Facebook, Instagram or any social media with clients.

Please provide a phone number where I can text you and an email that I can send information:

(Phone): _____ (Email): _____

I have read and understand these Office Policies.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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