

Informed Consent Information

For In-office counseling sessions during the COVID19 pandemic.

It is no secret that there is an epidemic, and important to understand that all of our activities, now, should take into account the risks and benefits entailed. In-person counseling has advantages over distance counseling done by telephone or by face-time platforms, but in-person counseling also entails risks that are avoidable. By agreeing to work in-person you also agree that you understand the risks and accept those risks.

The Covid19 virus often comes with no symptoms at all, but it can also be a very serious illness that may require medical treatment and, in some cases, hospitalization. People may have the illness and not know they have it, but still transmit the illness to others – who may suffer a more serious episode of the illness.

Our office will exercise as much care as is reasonably possible by the following steps, but your own safety and others' safety will require you to exercise similar care, as well:

1. All actions will be handled in way that will minimize your contact with others. Please remain in your car until session. When you come into our office, please maintain six feet of space between yourself and others in the waiting room.
2. Between appointments, we will do our best to disinfect the office. No effort to disinfect an office space can be perfect. You can be safer and make others safer by not touching anything in the office that you do not need to touch.
3. In that same vein, your child should bring her or his own toys to use in the play therapy rather than to use the toys in our office.
4. Masks are for others' protection, not our own, and are recommended to decrease the possible spread of the coronavirus, however, many clients and counselors believe they hinder communication. Therefore, most counselors choose not to wear a mask during session. If you are considering having in-office sessions, but prefer a counselor who wears a mask in session, please discuss this with the counselor. You might choose to remain in online sessions for the time-being.
5. If you, or if anyone in your family has any symptoms of the virus, you should notify us immediately, and you should cancel appointments, and not come to the office. There is a list of the symptoms offered by the CDC attached to this form. With these symptoms our office will still be able to provide counseling by some distance means. You will not need to terminate sessions.
6. If you or someone in our office tests positive for the virus, contact tracing may be required by a local, state, or federal authority. In that event our office would be compelled to disclose your name and contact information for the limited purpose of contact tracing.

We believe it should be your decision whether to participate in counseling in person or by means of distance devices. Our office will provide either form of counseling for you. By coming to our office, you agree, you understand, and you accept the risks entailed. You agree to cooperate with our efforts to protect you, to protect others, and to protect ourselves, by following safe practices including the steps listed above. Your signature affirms that you have had an opportunity to ask any questions and your questions have been answered.

Client (or responsible parent signature)

Date

The information below is from the website of the Mayo Clinic:¹

The signs and symptoms of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may appear two to 14 days after exposure. This time after exposure and before having symptoms is called the incubation period. Common signs and symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Other symptoms can include:

- Tiredness
- Aches
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Loss of smell
- Loss of taste
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Severe vomiting

Any symptoms you have might not seem severe, but the severity of symptoms is not an indicator of whether you can pass the virus to others. According to the CDC, if you have any of the symptoms in the first list, above, or two or more of the symptoms in the second list, contact our office and cancel your

¹ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/symptoms-causes/syc-20479963>

appointments until you can be tested and know whether you are at risk. Your counseling can continue by distance means.