

Maplewood Counseling
169 Maplewood Ave Suite 4
Maplewood, NJ 07040
973.793-1000

HIPAA NOTIFICATION & PRACTICE POLICIES

APPOINTMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

Our Cancellation Policy - Kindly call 973-793-1000 to give a minimum of 24 hours notice if you need to cancel or change an appointment to avoid the full fee for your visit (except for a true emergency). This allows us enough time to offer the appointment to someone on the waiting list. I understand I must call 973-793-1000 to cancel or change an appointment or I will be charged the full fee for a missed appointment or an appointment canceled with less than 24 hours notice.

The standard meeting time for psychotherapy is 45 minutes. There are options for a 60 minute session for an additional fee. The first session is billed the day before since our system has triple processing certain cards. This gives us enough time to let you know if there is an issue so we can resolve and your session can take place as planned.

Payment is due in full at each visit and charged the morning of the day of your session using the credit or debit card you entered on file. If there are insufficient funds we will send a link to use a different credit card or sufficient funds must be deposited to cover charges before the session unless arrangements are made in advance. We will attempt to discuss any billing issues and resolve them as soon as possible.

Credit and Debit Card Processing Issues:

Due to the high cost of billing, if we are unable to process the card on file more than once due to insufficient funds or other credit card processing issues (that have not been brought to our attention), we will need to charge future appointments the day prior to your next visit.

If requested, the appointment length can be changed to an intensive/double 90-minute session for an additional fee.

Credit cards are used for sessions. We also accept debit cards and will supply you with a receipt to submit to your FSA or HSA Flex account for reimbursement upon request. If a check is used and is returned there is a \$40.00 service charge will be charged for any checks returned for any reason for special handling.

Cancellations and the re-scheduled sessions will be subject to a full charge if **NOT RECEIVED AT LEAST 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE** by calling our office (we do not receive messages from the “no-reply” text and email alerts so we will have to charge for the session if we do not receive your message). This is necessary because the appointment time commitment is made for you and is held exclusively for you. If you are late for a session, you may lose some of that session time.

The fee for preparing documents requested by the client is \$50 for every 15 minutes of time for documents requested.

Late Fees

Full payment is expected at the time of service unless otherwise agreed upon. A grace period will be allowed with no late fee if payment is received by 6:00 pm the next business day. After 6pm on the next business day, there will be a \$20 charge for late payments made within the same week, and a \$30 charge the next business week. We do not permit clients to carry a balance of more than two sessions and if you are unable to pay this balance, we will discuss whether it makes sense to pause your care or develop another strategy. We will attempt to discuss any billing issues and resolve them as soon as possible.

TELEPHONE ACCESSIBILITY If you need to contact us between sessions, please leave a message on our voice mail. We are often not immediately available; however, We will attempt to return your call within 24-48 hours. If a true emergency situation arises, please call 911 or any local emergency room.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATION Due to the importance of your confidentiality and the importance of minimizing dual relationships, We do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, Linked In, etc). We believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk more about it.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION We cannot ensure the confidentiality of any form of communication through electronic media, including text messages. If you prefer to communicate via email or text messaging for issues regarding scheduling or cancellations only, we will do so. While we may try to return messages in a timely manner, we cannot guarantee immediate response and request that you do not use these methods of communication to discuss therapeutic content and/or request assistance for emergencies.

Services by electronic means, including but not limited to telephone communication, the Internet, facsimile machines, video conferencing, and e-mail is considered telemedicine by the State of New Jersey. Telemedicine is broadly defined as the use of information technology to deliver medical services and information from one location to another. If you and your therapist chose to use information technology for some or all of your treatment, you need to understand that: (1) You retain the option to withhold or withdraw consent at any time without affecting the right to future care or treatment or risking the loss or withdrawal of any program benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled. (2) All existing confidentiality protections are equally applicable. (3) Your access to all medical information transmitted during a telemedicine consultation is guaranteed, and copies of this information are available for a reasonable fee. (4) Dissemination of any of your identifiable images or information from the telemedicine interaction to researchers or other entities shall not occur without your consent. (5) There are potential risks, consequences, and benefits of telemedicine. Potential benefits include, but are not

limited to improved communication capabilities, providing convenient access to up-to-date information, consultations, support, reduced costs, improved quality, change in the conditions of practice, improved access to therapy, better continuity of care, and reduction of lost work time and travel costs.

Effective therapy is often facilitated when the therapist gathers within a session or a series of sessions, a multitude of observations, information, and experiences about the client. Therapists may make clinical assessments, diagnoses, and interventions based not only on direct verbal or auditory communications, written reports, and third-person consultations, but also on direct visual and olfactory observations, information, and experiences. When using information technology in therapy services, potential risks include, but are not limited to the therapist's inability to make visual and olfactory observations of clinically or therapeutically potentially relevant issues such as your physical condition including deformities, apparent height, and weight, body type, attractiveness relative to social and cultural norms or standards, gait and motor coordination, posture, work speed, any noteworthy mannerism or gestures, physical or medical conditions including bruises or injuries, basic grooming, and hygiene including appropriateness of dress, eye contact (including any changes in the previously listed issues), sex, chronological and apparent age, ethnicity, facial and body language, and congruence of language and facial or bodily expression. Potential consequences thus include the therapist not being aware of what he or she would consider important information, that you may not recognize as significant to present verbally to the therapist.

MINORS If you are a minor, your parents may be legally entitled to some information about your therapy. We will discuss with you and your parents what information is appropriate for them to receive and which issues are more appropriately kept confidential.

TERMINATION Ending relationships can be difficult. Therefore, it is important to have a termination process in order to achieve some closure. The appropriate length of the termination depends on the length and intensity of the treatment. We may terminate treatment after appropriate discussion with you and a termination process if we determine that the psychotherapy is not being effectively used or if you are in default on payment. We will not terminate the therapeutic relationship without first discussing and exploring the reasons and purpose of terminating. If therapy is terminated for any reason or you request another therapist, we will provide you with a list of qualified psychotherapists to treat you. You may also choose someone on your own or from another referral source.

Should you fail to schedule an appointment for three consecutive weeks, unless other arrangements have been made in advance, for legal and ethical reasons, we must consider the professional relationship discontinued.