

## HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices

1. Information shared in therapy sessions or under other circumstances by a minor client will be shared with the parents if the therapist finds it to be beneficial to the therapeutic process. High-risk behaviors may or may not be reported to parents including sexual activity and drug use. These disclosures are protected at a more stringent standard as stated in Alaska statutes.
2. As is common practice, the therapist may occasionally find it helpful to consult with other mental health professionals about a case. Should this occur, the therapist makes every effort to avoid revealing the identity of the client. The consulting mental health professional is also legally bound to keep any information confidential. Unless instructed otherwise by the client, the therapist may not reveal a consultation unless it is important to the work being done together.
3. Different health insurance companies require different documentation in order to process payments for claims. Depending on the client's insurance provider a clinical diagnosis treatment plan and/or other relevant information may be required in order for a benefit to be approved. All insurance companies are also bound by law to protect privacy and keep information confidential; however, Secure Connections AK has no control over what is done with the information once it passes to the insurance company.
4. There are some situations where therapists are required or permitted to disclose information without either the client's consent or authorization. If such a situation arises the therapist will make every effort to discuss it with the client before taking any action as well as trying to limit any disclosure to what is absolutely necessary. Furthermore, when reporting child abuse, it may be deemed that it is not in the minor's best interest to discuss the situation with the parent/legal guardian.
5. The law requires a therapist to report both physical and sexual abuse of a minor including both past, unreported events as well as current events. Included in this requirement is domestic violence witnessed by a minor as well as substance use resulting in neglect of a minor.
6. An attorney may subpoena treatment records. It is Secure Connections AK policy to protect client confidentiality. In the event a treatment record is subpoenaed, alternatives such as treatment summaries will be offered in lieu of the full record in order to protect privacy and confidentiality as much as possible. If so ordered by the court, Secure Connections AK is legally obligated to disclose any information requested.
7. If the therapist believes that a client is threatening serious bodily harm to him/herself or another, protective actions are required to be taken. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, and/or notifying the police. In the case of suicidal preoccupation or intent, hospitalization for the client or contact with family members or others who can help provide protection may be sought.
8. If a government agency is requesting information for health oversight activities, the therapist is required to provide the specified information. An example of this could be COVID-19 contact tracing.
9. If a client files a complaint or lawsuit against Secure Connections AK, or the therapist, relevant information may be disclosed in defense of the complaint or lawsuit.

## Client Rights and Responsibilities

HIPAA provides the client with several rights with regard to the treatment record and the disclosure of Protected Health Information (PHI).

The client may:

1. Request to have his/her medical record amended.
2. Request restriction on what information from his/her medical record is disclosed to

others.

3. Request an accounting of most disclosures of PHI that the client has neither consented to or authorized.
4. Determine the location to which PHI disclosures are sent.
5. Have documentation of a disagreement with Secure Connections AK's policies and procedures recorded in the record.
6. Request a copy of this document.

Please feel free to discuss any of these rights with Secure Connections AK.

The client has the right:

1. To be treated with respect and kindness.
2. To participate in ethical, professional treatment for one's own mental health.