

**Renée Flam, LCSW, ACSW**

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## **PSYCHOTHERAPIST-CLIENT SERVICES AGREEMENT 2018**

Welcome, please read the following information carefully and ask any questions you may have. This agreement contains information about my services and policies.

### **Psychotherapeutic Services**

I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who has been in clinical practice for over 30 years. I work within a variety of treatment modalities. If the problems you or your family experience are outside of my expertise, I will help you with appropriate referrals to other professionals.

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements and varies depending on the mix of personalities and problems. Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks as it often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, and you may experience uncomfortable and intense emotions. On the other hand, psychotherapy has been shown to have many benefits including solutions to specific problems, better relationships, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. However, there are no guarantees of what you will experience.

The initial evaluation, or diagnostic interview, will last about 60 minutes and includes the evaluation of needs and a first impression of what the treatment plan will likely include. During this period you are able to evaluate information about my work and formulate your own opinions as to whether you feel comfortable with my style. Second opinions are always encouraged if desired, and referrals are available if you feel your needs would be better met elsewhere. Sessions after that continue to involve the ongoing evaluation of needs.

### **Contacting Me**

**Phone:** Due to my office arrangement, I am available by leaving a voice message with your name and best times and numbers for reaching you in my voice mailbox. I check for messages regularly and return calls within 24 hours, with the exception of some holidays and weekends. If you do not hear from me within that timeframe, it likely means that I did not hear your message due to a technological problem and would like you to call and leave another message. If you have an emergency, it is important that you call your psychiatrist if you have one, 911, or go to the nearest emergency room.

**Electronic Communication:** This policy is to assure security and confidentiality for clients and to assure that it is consistent with ethics and the law. With this agreement clients are giving me permission to send invoices by email via DropBox link. Email is otherwise limited to things like setting and changing appointments and other related issues. It is difficult to discuss clinical matters via email, therefore clients are asked to arrange phone time or session time to do so.

During weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. texting is a convenient way to communicate about making and changing appointments and clients are welcomed to use my cell phone number to do so. However, during off hours I ask that you do not text as the phone could then be used such that confidentiality can be compromised.

## Confidentiality

The law protects the privacy of communications between a client and a psychotherapist.

- In some cases I may ask you to sign a Release of Information, for example if it seems important to speak to another one of your health care providers.
- In some cases I will provide requested information by your insurance company unless you ask me to do otherwise.
- If I believe a client is in danger of hurting him/herself or someone else I am required to take necessary action to protect that person.

## Billing and Payment

My practice involves streamlining the billing process such that there is a minimum of paperwork and use of USPS. Therefore, unless other arrangements have been made, at the end of each month an email is sent to clients with a DropBox link that has an invoice showing an up-to-date balance. Payment is accepted in the form of check or cash. As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker I am considered an 'in-network' provider with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and an 'out-of-network' provider with all other insurances. What this means for clients with BCBS is that I am able to electronically file claims from my office and clients are responsible for co-pays, co-insurances and deductibles. For clients with other insurance the invoice provided includes the information necessary to submit to their insurance company. There are benefits through your insurance coverage to which you may be entitled as reimbursement for my services. Please talk with your insurance carrier or employee benefit program administrator to better understand the terms of your mental health coverage.

In circumstances of unusual financial hardship, there is a possibility of negotiating a different plan.

If an outstanding balance accrues for more than a 60 period and arrangements for payment have not been established or acted upon, I have the option of using legal means to secure payment. This may require me to disclose otherwise confidential information to a collection agency.

## Schedule of Fees

Initial Interview (Diagnostic Evaluation) – 55 minutes	\$140
Individual Psychotherapy Session – 45 minutes	\$125
Individual Psychotherapy Session – 55 minutes	\$140
Individual Psychotherapy Session – 75 minutes	\$200
Telephone Consultation – each 15 minute period	\$ 40
Out of Office Consultation; including transportation – per hour	\$200
Court Testimony - to be paid in advance – per hour	\$400

Your signature indicates that you have read, understand and agree to abide to the terms of this document.

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Signature

Date