

Confidentiality Information

It is important that what you say will stay private when you talk to a person on your care team.

The law states that in some cases your provider will have to share your information without your permission:

- **If you are doing something that could be dangerous towards yourself or someone else.**
- **If you talk about wanting to hurt someone else or their property.**
- **If we have reason to believe that you or someone else is being abused.**
- **To bill or be paid for services.**
- **To follow the law and respond to lawsuits and legal actions.**

Confidentiality is a critical part of the therapy relationship, which is carefully protected by law. This means that information you share with your therapist cannot be divulged to anyone except other staff of this agency, without your permission. If you do choose to release information, that information cannot be provided to any further party without your permission.

However, there are several specific circumstances under which we must break confidentiality and divulge information because the law requires us to do so. These are:

1. When there is indication that the client may engage in behavior that could be dangerous to self or others;
2. When the client makes threats of violence toward others, or toward the property of others in some circumstances;
3. When cases of abuse or exploitation are reported, no matter what the age or the relationship of the victim.

The parties to be notified and the manner of reporting are different in each case above, and are spelled out in the various laws.

Funding and accreditation bodies often require us to divulge information to substantiate that we provided the services we said we did, and that the services met quality standards. This is done for the protection of the client.

Finally, if a client enters his/her mental status into any legal procedure, he/she is assumed to have waived the right to privileged communication and information regarding the treatment received can be released at the request of the court or the client. In this situation, if the client does not want information to be released, efforts will be made to protect his/her rights and desires. Occasionally a court may, by power of subpoena, attempt to obtain the release of privileged information against the client's wishes; in such cases, attempts are made to protect the client's rights, but success at doing so cannot be guaranteed and we may be ordered to release the information.

Release of information necessary to collect just debts (e.g., name, address, telephone number, amount of indebtedness) is not considered breaking confidentiality and is protected by law.

In order to improve the quality of services, data is collected and reported to Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This information is de-identified prior to submission.

