

LAUREL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Effective Date: April 15, 2025

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

I. PLEDGE REGARDING HEALTH INFORMATION:

Laurel Psychological Services understands that health information about you and your health care is personal and protected. Our providers are committed to protecting health information about you. Your provider will create a record of the care and services you receive from our organization. Our practice needs this record to provide you with quality care and to comply with certain legal requirements. This notice applies to all of the records of your care generated by this mental health care practice. This notice will tell you about the ways in which we may use and disclose health information about you. This notice also describes your rights to the health information that is kept about you, and describes certain obligations it has regarding the use and disclosure of your health information. Laurel Psychological Services is required by law to:

- Make sure that protected health information (“PHI”) that identifies you is kept private.
- Give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to health information.
- Follow the terms of the notice that is currently in effect.
- Laurel Psychological Services may change the terms of this notice, and such changes will apply to all information it has about you. You will be made aware of the changes by your provider. Except in emergency situations, a good faith effort will be made to obtain your written acknowledgement of receipt of the new notice. The new notice will be posted in provider offices and available on the practice website. Your provider can also provide you with a copy upon request.

II. HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU:

The following categories describe different ways that Laurel Psychological Services uses and discloses health information. For each category of uses or disclosures this notice will explain what it means and try to give some examples. Not every use or disclosure in a category will be listed. However, all of the ways we are permitted to use and disclose information will fall within one of the categories.

TREATMENT

Federal privacy rules (regulations) allow health care providers who have direct treatment relationships with the patient/client to use or disclose personal health information without the patient’s written authorization to carry out the health care provider’s treatment, payment, or health care operations. We may also disclose your protected health information for treatment activities to other healthcare providers that are not currently treating you. This can be done without your written authorization.

Example: Your provider would like to consult with another mental health provider regarding your presenting issues and therapy approaches that may be most beneficial to you. This is to assist the provider in providing the best and most comprehensive treatment to you as the client.

Example: You are experiencing adverse effects that could be attributed to a psychotropic medication you are taking. Your provider may consult with a mental health prescribing provider about the situation to see if follow up with a medical provider is recommended.

Payment for Services

The treatment provided to you will be documented via our electronic healthcare record system and services rendered will be billed through this platform. Stripe is used to process these payments. Providers will never disclose your health information outside of the practice for billing purposes (i.e., bill your insurance) without your consent. If your account has not been paid for more than 30 days and arrangements for payment have not been established, Laurel Psychological Services may disclose PHI to secure payment. For most collection situations, only information regarding name, dates and times of service, nature of services, and amount due will be released.

Example: Your account has not been paid for 45 days and you have not discussed with your provider to make alternative arrangements. Your provider may share your PHI with a collection agency or attorney in attempt to secure payment.

Healthcare Operations

Laurel Psychological Services may use or disclose your health information in performing a variety of business activities called “healthcare operations.” These are activities required to run the practice effectively and ethically.

Example: Your provider receives a subpoena related to a legal matter in which you are involved. Your provider may need to share certain PHI with an attorney to ensure the provider responds to the request in an ethical and lawful manner.

Lawsuits and Disputes

If you are involved in a lawsuit, we may disclose health information in response to a court or administrative order. We may also disclose health information in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested.

III. CERTAIN USES AND DISCLOSURES REQUIRE YOUR AUTHORIZATION:

Psychotherapy Notes

Laurel Psychological Services does keep “psychotherapy notes” as that term is defined in 45 CFR § 164.501, and any use or disclosure of such notes requires your authorization unless the use or disclosure is:

1. For your treatment.
2. For training or supervising mental health practitioners to help them improve their skills.
3. For the practice’s use in defending itself in legal proceedings instituted by you.
4. For use by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to investigate the practice’s compliance with HIPAA.
5. Required by law and the use or disclosure is limited to the requirements of such law.
6. Required by law for certain health oversight activities pertaining to the originator of the psychotherapy notes.
7. Required by a coroner who is performing duties authorized by law.
8. Required to help avert a serious threat to the health and safety of others.

Marketing Purposes

Laurel Psychological Services will never use or disclose your PHI for marketing purposes.

Sale of PHI

Laurel Psychological Services will never sell your PHI in the regular course of business.

IV. CERTAIN USES AND DISCLOSURES DO NOT REQUIRE YOUR AUTHORIZATION:

Subject to certain limitations in the law, Laurel Psychological Services can use and disclose your PHI without your authorization for the following reasons:

1. When disclosure is required by state or federal law, and the use or disclosure complies with and is limited to the relevant requirements of such law.
2. For public health activities, including reporting suspected child, elder, or dependent adult abuse, or preventing or reducing a serious threat to anyone's health or safety.
3. For health oversight activities, including audits and investigations.
4. For judicial and administrative proceedings, including responding to a court or administrative order, although the practice's preference is to obtain an authorization from the client before doing so.
5. For law enforcement purposes, including reporting crimes occurring at the practice location.
6. To coroners or medical examiners, when such individuals are performing duties authorized by law.
7. Specialized government functions, including, ensuring the proper execution of military missions; protecting the President of the United States; conducting intelligence or counterintelligence operations; or, helping to ensure the safety of those working within or housed in correctional institutions.
8. For workers' compensation purposes. Although our preference is to obtain an authorization from you, Laurel Psychological Services may provide your PHI in order to comply with workers' compensation laws.
9. Appointment reminders and health related benefits or services. Our practice may use and disclose your PHI to contact you to remind you that you have an appointment. We may also use and disclose your PHI to tell you about treatment alternatives, or other health care services or benefits that it offers.

V. CERTAIN USES AND DISCLOSURES REQUIRE YOU TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBJECT:

1. Disclosures to family, friends, or others. Laurel Psychological Services may provide your PHI to a family member, friend, or other person that you indicate is involved in your care or the payment for your health care, unless you object in whole or in part. The opportunity to consent may be obtained retroactively in emergency situations.

VI. YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO YOUR PHI:

1. The Right to Request Limits on Uses and Disclosures of Your PHI. You have the right to ask our practice not to use or disclose certain PHI for treatment, payment, or health care operations purposes. Laurel Psychological Services is not required to agree to the request, and may decline the request if it is believed it would affect your health care.
2. The Right to Request Restrictions for Out-of-Pocket Expenses Paid for In Full. You have the right to request restrictions on disclosures of your PHI to health plans for payment or health care operations purposes if the PHI pertains solely to a health care item or a health care service that you have paid for out-of-pocket in full.
3. The Right to Choose How Your Provider Sends PHI to You. You have the right to ask your provider to contact you in a specific way (for example, email or a certain phone number).

4. The Right to View and Obtain Copies of Your PHI. Other than “psychotherapy notes,” you have the right to get an electronic or paper copy of your medical record and other information that Laurel Psychological Services has entered into the electronic medical record system about you. Laurel Psychological Services will provide you with a copy of your record, or a summary of it if you agree to receive a summary, within 30 days of receiving your written request. Dependent upon the request, you may be charged a fee. This will be discussed prior to occurrence.
5. The Right to Get a List of the Disclosures Made. You have the right to request a list of instances in which Laurel Psychological Services has disclosed your PHI for purposes other than treatment, payment, or health care operations, or for which you provided your provider with an authorization. Laurel Psychological Services will respond to your request for an accounting of disclosures within 60 days of receiving your request.
6. The Right to Correct or Update Your PHI. If you believe that there is a mistake in your PHI, or that a piece of important information is missing from your PHI, you have the right to request correction of the existing information or addition of the missing information. Your provider may decline your request, but will tell you why in writing within 60 days of receiving the request.
7. The Right to Get a Paper or Electronic Copy of this Notice. You have the right to get a paper copy of this notice and you have the right to get a copy of this notice by email. And, even if you have agreed to receive this notice via email, you also have the right to request a paper copy of it.

COMPLAINTS

If you are unhappy with the services you are receiving you are strongly encouraged to discuss with your therapist so your concerns can be addressed. You also have the right as a client to lodge a complaint about unethical behavioral by a staff member to the state licensing board.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Privacy Notice

Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), you have certain rights regarding the use and disclosure of your protected health information. By checking the box below, you are acknowledging that you have received a copy of HIPPA Notice of Privacy Practices.

BY CLICKING ON THE CHECKBOX BELOW I AM AGREEING THAT I HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD AND AGREE TO THE ITEMS CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

Signature

Date