

Client Service Agreement & Privacy Policy

Jessica Grant Counselling

Accredited Mental Health Social Worker



1. Introduction

This document outlines the terms and conditions of counselling services and how your personal information is managed. It is designed to support clarity, safety, and a shared understanding of how we will work together.

This document should be read alongside the Collection Notice. By engaging in services, you agree to the terms outlined below.

2. Personal information

Personal information means information or an opinion that identifies you or could reasonably identify you.

This may include your name, contact details, date of birth, and information about your health or circumstances.

Some information we collect (such as health information) is considered *sensitive information* and is given a higher level of protection under the Privacy Act 1988.

3. Scope of the service

Scope of service

Jessica Grant Counselling provides counselling, social work and mental health interventions for individuals aged 14 and over. Services may be delivered in person, via telehealth, or by phone where appropriate.

Reports for court will not be provided unless legally compelled.

4. Engagement in counselling

Counselling is voluntary.

To support meaningful progress, it is helpful for clients to:

- Have a general idea of what they would like support with
- Attend sessions regularly, as agreed
- Engage actively in the process

If engagement is difficult, we may review whether this service is the right fit.

5. Responsibilities

Counsellor responsibilities

Confidentiality and privacy

Your privacy is respected and maintained in accordance with legal and ethical obligations.

Information discussed in sessions will remain confidential except where:

- There is a risk of harm to yourself or others
- There are concerns regarding the safety of a child or vulnerable person
- Records are subpoenaed by a court of law
- Disclosure is otherwise required or authorised by law

Where possible, confidentiality limits will be discussed with you before information is shared.

Clinical records are maintained as a part of your care.

- Your information is stored securely in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988
- Records are retained for a minimum of 7 years (or longer for minors)
- You may request access to your records in writing

Duty of care – safety and risk

Jessica Grant Counselling is not a crisis service and cannot provide clinical support outside of scheduled appointments.

Email and SMS are used for administrative purposes only (e.g. scheduling) and are not suitable for therapeutic or urgent support. Responses may not be immediate.

If you require urgent support, please contact:

- 000 (Emergency)
- Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511

If there are serious concerns about your safety or the safety of others, appropriate steps may be taken, including contacting your nominated emergency contact or relevant services.

Counsellors are mandatory child protection reporters, and may be obligated to share information regarding safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

If a client requires acute and high intensity support, counselling may be paused until their situation stabilises.

Client responsibilities

As a client, you agree to:

- Complete required forms and provide accurate information.
- Provide an emergency contact
- Inform your counsellor of other supports you are engaging with
- Discuss any concerns about counselling with your counsellor
- Attend sessions on time and manage appointments, including cancellations
- Respect the counsellor as a person who is assisting you
- Commit to the sessions and actions agreed to with your counsellor
- Take responsibility for your wellbeing between sessions

6. Appointments and attendance

Appointments are available Monday-Thursday, excluding public holidays.

Standard sessions are 50 minutes duration.

Session frequency will be agreed upon together.

Attendance:

- Attend at the scheduled appointment time
- If unwell, telehealth will be offered
- No additional people may attend sessions without prior agreement, including children over 2years
- For duty of care, parents/carers must remain onsite when children/young people attend

Late arrival:

- Phone/text if running late – your session will be shortened
- The appointment will be forfeited after 15 minutes without contact and a cancellation will apply

7. Cancellations and non-attendance

At least 24hrs (Mon-Fri) notice is required to cancel or reschedule an appointment. Cancellations will apply if this notice is not given, or if appointments are not attended.

This may mean:

- Cancellation fees payable (full session fee, with future appointments paused until payment is received. Medicare/private health rebates are not available on cancellation fees.)
- Use of Victims Services cancellation (only 2 apply per claim, counsellors cannot accept cancellation payment from VS clients)
- Withdrawal of counselling if cancellations/missed appointments cannot be financially covered.
- Third-party funded sessions - The funding agency is financially responsible for missed or late cancelled sessions. (full session fee applies).

8. Fees and payment (not applicable to NSW Victims Services clients)

- Standard fee: \$180 per 50 minutes session, longer sessions incur higher fees.
- A 50% deposit may be required when booking
- Payment is required on the day of appointment (direct deposit)

Medicare rebates (this is not a bulk billing practice)

- A valid Mental Health Treatment Plan and GP referral are required
- After payment of full fee is received a receipt is issued and you may claim the rebate
- You are responsible for tracking eligible sessions
- Consent must be provided to communicate with the GP referrer about your care

Health fund rebates

- A range of health funds provide rebates on sessions provided by Accredited Mental Health Social Workers, however there are different requirements for various health funds.
- If you would like to claim a rebate, contact your health fund to understand what is needed, and where possible, this will be supported.
- If eligible, after payment of full fee is received a receipt is issued and you may claim the rebate.

9. Discharge from service

Clients will be discharged due to:

- Mutual agreement that counselling is complete
- Discharge by the counsellor due to referral to a more suitable service, lack of engagement or other reasons
- Transfer to another counsellor via NSW Victims Services
- No contact for 12 weeks or no response to communication
- Exhaustion of available funding

Additional provisions:

- A "final report" is completed for NSW Victims Services clients
- A discharge letter is provided to GP or third-party referrers
- Re-accessing the service may be possible but is not guaranteed
- No reports or case management will be provided after discharge unless legally compelled.

10. Communication

Appointment confirmations and reminders are sent via email. If you prefer not to receive these, please advise.

If Jessica is temporarily or permanently unable to provide services, your contact details may be shared with a trusted professional to ensure continuity of care.

11. Collection of personal information

We collect personal information that is reasonably necessary to provide counselling services and manage our practice. This may include information collected through intake forms, sessions, emails, phone calls, and secure systems.

We may also collect information from third parties such as referrers or funding bodies where relevant to your care. If you choose not to provide certain information, this may limit our ability to provide safe and appropriate services.

12. Use & disclosure of information

The primary purpose of collecting your information is to provide counselling services and support your care.

Your information may be used or shared:

- to support your care and treatment
- with your consent (e.g. GP or other providers)
- to meet legal or regulatory obligations
- where there is a serious risk to safety

- in de-identified form for professional supervision
- Where possible, information will only be shared with your consent.

13. Overseas Storage and third party tools

Some service providers (e.g. secure cloud or clinical systems) may store data overseas, including in the United States, United Kingdom, or European Union.

We take reasonable steps to ensure these providers meet appropriate privacy and security standards. We may use third-party tools (such as Heidi Healthcare) for clinical documentation, including transcription and document generation. You may opt out of this where applicable.

14. Telehealth and Communication

Telehealth services involve some privacy risks. Reasonable steps are taken to use secure platforms; however, you are responsible for accessing sessions in a private environment.

Email and SMS are used for administrative purposes only and are not suitable for therapeutic or urgent support.

15. Storage and Security

Your information is stored securely in electronic and/or physical formats, including secure cloud systems.

We take reasonable steps to protect your information from misuse, loss, or unauthorised access. In the event of a data breach likely to result in serious harm, we will comply with the Notifiable Data Breaches scheme.

Records are retained for a minimum of 7 years (or longer for minors).

16. Access and Correction

You may request access to or correction of your personal information at any time.

Requests will be responded to within a reasonable timeframe. Identification may be required.

17. Feedback and complaints

If you have feedback or concerns, you are encouraged to raise them directly with Jessica Grant Counselling. You may also contact:

- Australian Association of Social Workers
- NSW Victims Services

18. Consent

By signing this form you acknowledge that you

- Understand the nature of the service
- Understand how your information is handled
- Have had the opportunity to ask questions
- Agree to participate voluntarily

Jessica Grant Counselling

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