

Notice of Privacy Practices

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

Privacy is a very important concern for all those who come to this office. It is also complicated, because of the many federal and state laws and the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy's professional code of ethics. Because the rules are so complicated, some parts of this notice are very detailed, and you probably will have to read them several times to understand them. If you have any questions, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S will be happy to help you understand these procedures and your rights.

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A. Introduction: To the Client of Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S.

This notice will tell you how Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S handles your medical information, including how this information is used in this office, how it is shared with other professionals and organizations, and how you can access it personally. It is important for you to know all of this information so that you can make the best decisions for yourself and your family. If you have any questions or want to know more about anything in this notice, please ask Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S for more explanations or more details.

B. What is meant by your medical information

Each time you visit this office or any doctor's office, hospital, clinic, or other health provider, information is collected about you and your physical and mental health. It may be information about your past, present, or future health or conditions, or the tests and treatments you received from this office or others, or about payment for health care. The information collected is referred to as "PHI", which stands for *Protected Health Information*. This information goes into your medical records in this office.

In this office, your PHI is likely to include these kinds of information:

- Your history: Things that happened to you as a child; your school and/or work experiences; your marriage and other personal history.
- Reasons you came for treatment: Your problems, complaints, symptoms, or needs.
- Diagnoses: These are the medical terms for your problems or symptoms.
- A Treatment Plan: This is a list of the treatments and other services that Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S thinks will best help you.
- Progress Notes: Each time you come in, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S will write down some things about how you are doing, what is noticed about you, and what you share in session.
- Records we get from others who have treated you or evaluated you.
- Psychological test scores, school records, and other reports.
- Information about the medications you have taken previously or are currently taking.
- Legal matters.
- Billing and insurance information.

There may also be other kinds of information that go into your PHI as a part of your health care record within this office.

PHI is used for many purposes. For example, it could be used to:

- Plan your care and treatment.
- Decide how well current treatments are working for you.
- Collaborate with other health care professionals who are also treating you, such as your family doctor, your dietitian, your psychiatrist, or the professional who referred you to this office.
- Provide proof that you actually received the services billed to you by this office.
- Assist in the gathering of medical or psychological research.
- Improve the way Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S does her job by measuring the results of her work with you.

When you understand what is in your record and what it is used for, you can make better decisions about who, when, and why others should have this information.

Although your health care records are maintained within this office, the information belongs to you. You can read your records, and if you want a copy, one can be made for you (Please note that requests for the compilation of copied records and subsequent mailing of these records do incur a \$25 Administrative Fee). In some very rare situations, you cannot see all of what is in your records. If you find anything in your records that you think is incorrect or believe that something important is missing, you can ask Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S to amend (add information to) your records, although in some rare situations, these amendments may not be made. If you have any questions about these types of situations, please feel free to ask Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S.

C. Privacy and the laws about privacy.

As a mental health provider, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S is required to tell you about privacy because of a federal law known as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). HIPAA requires this office to keep your PHI private and to give you this notice about the legal duties and privacy practices of Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S. This office will obey the rules described in this notice, and if these privacy practices change, they will apply to all the PHI kept within this office. Any changes made will be posted within this office as a new notice of privacy practices in a location made visible to the clients of this office. You or anyone else can also get a copy of these practices from Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S at any time.

D. How your protected health information can be used and shared.

Except in some special circumstances, when your PHI is used in this office or disclosed to authorized others, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S shares only the minimum necessary PHI needed for those people to do their jobs. The law gives you rights to know about your PHI, to know how it is used, and to have a say in how it is shared. Below you will find out more about what this office does with your information.

Mainly, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S will use and disclose your PHI for routine purposes to provide for your care. These instances are explained more below. For other uses, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S must tell you about them and ask you to sign a written authorization form. However, the law also says that there are some uses and disclosures that don't need your consent or authorization.

1. Uses and Disclosures with your consent.

After you have read this notice, you will be asked to sign a separate consent form to allow us to use and share your PHI. In almost all cases, this office intends to use your PHI here or share it with other people or organizations to provide treatment to you, arrange payment for the services provided by PHI, or some other business functions called "health care operations." In other words, this information is needed about you and your condition to provide care for you. You have to agree to let the information be collected, used, and shared in order for Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S to care for you properly. Therefore, you must sign the consent form before Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S can begin to treat you. If you do not agree and consent, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S cannot treat you.

a. The basic uses and disclosure.

The next section will tell you more about how your information will be used for treatment, payment, and health care operations.

For treatment. This office uses your medical information to provide you with psychological treatment or services. These might include individual, couple, family, or group therapy; psychological, educational, or vocational testing; treatment planning; or measuring the benefits of the services of Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S.

Your PHI may be shared with others who provide treatment to you; however it is the practice of this office to obtain your consent prior to discussing your PHI with these professionals. In many cases, if you are being treated by a team of professionals, sharing your PHI with these team members can help each professional determine how their services best work together to meet your needs. The other professionals treating you will also enter their findings, the actions they took, and their plans into your medical record, and in so doing, we can all decide what treatments will work best for you. Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S may refer you to other professionals or consultants for services that this office cannot provide. When this is recommended for you, it is important that this office tell these professionals things about you and the conditions that led to the referral. When their findings and opinions are received by this office, that information will go into your PHI within this office. If you receive treatment in the future from other professionals, your PHI can also be shared with them. These are some examples so that you can see how this office uses and discloses your PHI for treatment.

For payment.

Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S may use your information to bill you so this office can be paid for the treatments

provided to you. As a non-insurance provider, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S does not accept insurance for payment of sessions; however, if you attempt to contact your insurance company to collect out-of-network reimbursement, please note that your insurance provider may request additional PHI which could include your diagnoses, any treatments received, any progress made with your condition, how many sessions you have received, and other similar things.

For health care operations.

Using or disclosing your PHI for health care operations goes beyond this office's care for you and your payment. For example, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S may use your PHI to see where improvements can be made to the care and services provided by this office. Sometimes, this office may be required to supply some information to government health agencies, so they can study disorders and treatment and make plans for services that are needed. If information such as this is shared in this way, your name and personal information will be removed from what is sent.

b. Other uses and disclosures in health care.

Appointment reminders. This office may disclose your PHI to schedule, re-schedule, or remind you of appointments for treatment or other care. If you would prefer a specific type of correspondence, this can typically be arranged without difficulty as long as you share with Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S.

Treatment Alternatives. This office may use and disclose your PHI to tell you about or recommend possible treatments or alternatives that may be of help to you.

Research.

This office may use or share your PHI to do research to improve treatments – for example, comparing two treatments for the same disorder to see which works better or faster or costs less. In all cases, your name, address, and other personal information will be removed from the information given to researchers. If they need to know who you are, we will discuss the research project with you, and we will not send any identifiable information unless you sign a special authorization form.

Business Associates.

Sometimes outside businesses are hired to do certain jobs for this office. In the law, they are referred to as this office's "business associates." Some examples might include a copy service to make copies of your health records, a billing service to determine, print, and mail out billing statements, or an accounting service to organize the financial aspects of this office. These business associates need to receive some of your PHI to do their jobs properly. To protect your privacy, any business associates used by this office will agree within their contract with Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S to safeguard your information.

Additional Disclosures.

If either this office or you would desire to use your information for any purpose besides those listed above, your permission would need to be obtained on an authorization form. As with any authorization to disclose your PHI, you can cancel that permission in writing at any time. This office would then stop using or disclosing your information for that purpose; however, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S would, of course, be unable to take back any information that had already previously been disclosed or used with your permission.

2. Uses and disclosures that don't require your consent or authorization.

The law allows this office to use and disclose some of your PHI without your consent or authorization in some cases. Here are some examples of when Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S might do this.

a. When required by law.

There are some federal, state, or local laws that require Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S to disclose PHI:

- Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S is required by law to report suspected abuse to a protected class. There are three types of people that fall into the "protected class" category – elderly, children and disabled.
- If you are involved in a lawsuit or legal proceeding, and this office receives a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S may have to release some of your PHI. This will only be done after trying to tell you about the request, consulting with your lawyer (if applicable), or trying to get a court order to protect the information being requested.
- Some information must be disclosed to government agencies that check on this office to see that Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S is obeying privacy laws.

b. For law enforcement purposes.

This office may release medical information if asked to do so by a law enforcement official to investigate a crime or criminal.

c. For public health activities.

This office may disclose some of your PHI to agencies that investigate diseases or injuries.

d. For specific government functions.

Your PHI might be requested by military personnel and veterans to government benefit programs relating to eligibility and enrollment, or to workers' compensation and disability programs.

e. To prevent a serious threat to health or safety.

If Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S is given reason to believe that there is a serious threat to your health or safety, or that of another person, or that of the general public, it is the practice of Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S to disclose some of your PHI to persons who can prevent this danger from occurring.

3. Uses and disclosures where you have the opportunity to object.

This office can share information about you with your family and/or close others. Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S will only share information with those involved in your care and anyone else you choose, such as clergy, coaches, etc. It is the practice of this office to ask you which person(s) you want Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S to tell and what information you want told to them about your condition and treatment. You can tell Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S what you want, and your requests will be honored as long as it is not against the law.

If it is an emergency, and Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S cannot ask if you disagree, it is the practice of this office to share information if it is believed that it is what you would have wanted and if it is believed that sharing the information will be helpful. If information is shared in an emergency situation, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S will tell you as soon as possible. If you do not approve of this sharing, it will be stopped as long as it is not against the law.

4. Accounting of disclosures made by this office.

When Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S discloses your PHI, a record of who has been contacted, what was sent, and when it was sent will be maintained. You can get an accounting list of many of these disclosures at your request.

E. Your rights concerning your health information.

1. You can ask this office to communicate with you about your health and related issues in a particular way or at a certain place that is more private for you. For example, you can ask to be called at home, and not at work, to schedule or cancel an appointment, and this office's best efforts will be made to do as you request.
2. You have the right to ask this office to limit what we tell people involved in your care or with payment for your care, such as family members and friends. This does not imply that Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S will agree to your request, but if so, every effort will be made to honor your request except when it is against the law, or in an emergency, or when the information is necessary to treat you.
3. You have the right to look at the health information this office has collected about you, such as your medical and billing records. You can get a copy of these records, but please note that requests for the compilation of copied records and subsequent mailing of these records do incur a \$25 Administrative Fee.
4. If you believe that the information in your records is incorrect or missing something important, you can ask this office to make additions to your records to correct the situation. You have to make this request in writing and send it to Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S. You must also tell this office the reasons you are requesting these changes to be made.
5. You have a right to a copy of this notice. If this notice is changed in any way, Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S will post a new copy in a location made visible to the clients of this office. The Notice of Privacy Practices are also made available on this office's website at www.JennyDeitz.com.
6. You have the right to file a complaint if you believe your privacy rights have been violated. You can file a complaint with this office and with the Secretary of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. All complaints must be in made in writing. Filing a complaint will not change the health care Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S provides to you in any way.

F. If you have questions or problems.

If you need more information or have questions about the privacy practices described above, please speak with Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S. If you have a problem with how your PHI has been handled, or if you believe your rights have been violated, please contact Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S. As stated above, you have the right to file a complaint with this office and with the Secretary of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. This office upholds the integrity of this practice and will not limit your care here or take any action against you if you complain. If you have any questions or problems about this notice or this office's Health Information Privacy Policies, please contact Jenny Deitz, MA, LMFT-S, who can be reached by phone at (281) 846-4480 or email at JennyDeitz@gmail.com.

The effective date of this notice is January 8, 2019.