

**Jennifer L. Scott, PsyD**

Licensed Clinical Psychologist, KY#1415

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**OFFICE POLICIES AND GENERAL INFORMATION AGREEMENT  
FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY & TESTING SERVICES**

*This form provides you (patient) with information that is additional to the detailed in the notice of privacy practices and it is subject to HIPAA preemptive analysis.*

**Confidentiality**

All information disclosed within sessions and the written records pertaining to those sessions are confidential and may not be revealed to anyone without your (client's) written permission, except where disclosure is required by law. Most of the provisions explaining when the law requires disclosure were described to you in the notice of privacy practices that you received with this form.

**When disclosure is required by law**

Some of the circumstances where disclosure is required by the law are: where there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent, or elder abuse or neglect; and where a client presents a danger to self, to others, to property, or is gravely disabled (for more details see also notice of privacy practices form).

**When disclosure may be required**

Disclosure may be required pursuant to a legal proceeding. If you place your mental status at issue in litigation initiated by you, the defendant may have the right to obtain the psychotherapy records and/or testimony by Dr. Scott. In couple and family therapy, or when different family members are seen individually, confidentiality and privilege do not apply between the couple or among family members. Dr. Scott will use clinical judgment when revealing such information. Dr. Scott will not release records to any outside party unless so authorized to do so by **all** adult family members who were part of the treatment. Considering all of the above exclusions, if it is still appropriate, upon your request, Dr. Scott will release information to any agency/person you specify unless Dr. Scott concludes that releasing such information might be harmful in any way.

**Emergencies**

If there is an emergency during our work together, or in the future after termination, where Dr. Scott becomes concerned about your personal safety, the possibility of you injuring someone else, or about you receiving proper psychiatric care, she will do whatever she can within the limits of the law to prevent you from injuring yourself or others and to ensure that you receive the proper medical care. For this purpose, she may also contact the police, hospital, or the person whose name you have provided on the biographical sheet. Dr. Scott will make an attempt to contact or speak with you first before contacting anyone else if at all possible.

### **Health Insurance and Confidentiality of Records**

Disclosure of confidential information may be required by your health insurance carrier or HMO/PPO/MCO/EAP in order to process the claims. If you so instruct Dr. Scott only the minimum necessary information will be communicated to the carrier. Unless authorized by you explicitly, the psychotherapy notes will not be disclosed to your insurance carrier. Dr. Scott has no control or knowledge over what insurance companies do with the information she submits or who has access to this information. You must be aware that submitting a mental health invoice for reimbursement carries a certain amount of risk to confidentiality, privacy, or to future eligibility to obtain health or life insurance. The risk stems from the fact that mental health information is entered into insurance companies' computers and soon will also be reported to the Congress-approved National Medical Data Bank. Accessibility to companies' computers or to the National Medical Data Bank database is always in question, as computers are inherently vulnerable to break-ins and unauthorized access. Medical data have been reported to have been sold, stolen, or accessed by enforcement agencies; therefore, you are in a vulnerable position.

### **Confidentiality of e-mail, cell phone, text, and fax communication**

It is very important to be aware that e-mail and cell phone (also cordless phones) communication (including text messages) can be relatively easily accessed by unauthorized people and, hence, the privacy and confidentiality of such communication can be easily compromised. E-mails, in particular, are vulnerable to such unauthorized access due to the fact that servers have unlimited and direct access to all e-mails that go through them. Faxes can be sent erroneously to the wrong address. Please notify Dr. Scott at the beginning of treatment if you decide to avoid or limit in any way the use of any or all of the above-mentioned communication devices. There is a specific question on the Intake form you will receive prior to or on your first visit that asks you about email and text messaging communication. Please do not use e-mail or faxes in emergency situations.

### **Therapy Dog**

Dr. Scott regularly brings her personal therapy dog (s) to the office for specific clients who benefit from their presence. The dog(s) are well-trained, socialized indoor dogs, healthy and regularly vaccinated. If you are allergic or possess any fears to dogs, please let Dr. Scott know in case your appointment is scheduled on one of the days when the dog will be present. Dr. Scott strives to respect your preferences and values and wants you to feel as safe as possible during your appointment. Therefore, if you prefer not to have a dog present for any reason, Dr. Scott will make an effort to not have the dog(s) present during your appointment time.

### **Litigation Limitation**

Due to the nature of the therapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters that may be of a confidential nature, it is agreed that should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to, **divorce and custody disputes**, injuries, lawsuits, etc.), neither you (client) nor your attorney, nor anyone else acting on your behalf will call on Dr. Scott to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the psychotherapy records be requested. In forensic assessments, court testimony is acceptable to Dr. Scott and

generally expected. If you are seeking a forensic assessment (court-ordered, custody evaluation, legal-related evaluations), please inform Dr. Scott of your intentions if you have not done so already, and she will provide you with additional or alternative paperwork that explains forensic evaluation policies, procedures, and confidentiality more clearly since HIPAA does not usually apply to forensic assessments.

### **Consultation**

Dr. Scott consults regularly with other professionals regarding her clients; however, the client's name or other identifying information is never mentioned. The client's identity remains completely anonymous, and confidentiality is fully maintained.

### **Telephone and Emergency procedures**

If you need to contact Dr. Scott between sessions, please leave a message on her voicemail (859) 576-0411 and your call will be returned as soon as possible. If you agree to such communications, you may also choose to contact Dr. Scott at her email address of [drjennscott@aol.com](mailto:drjennscott@aol.com) or by text message at 859-576-0411 with your request for contact. Dr. Scott checks her messages a few times a day and evening unless she is out of town. Dr. Scott checks the messages less frequently on weekends and holidays. If an emergency situation arises, please indicate it clearly in your message. If you need to talk to someone right away and Dr. Scott has not returned your emergency message within 30 minutes to an hour, you can go to your local emergency room, call the 24-hour crisis line (800) SUICIDE (784-2433), the Police (911), or the 24-hour psychiatric emergency number, (800) 928-2000, or [www.suicidehotlines.com](http://www.suicidehotlines.com).

### **Payments and Insurance Reimbursement**

Clients are expected to pay their insurance co-pay amount, or if self-pay the standard fee of \$125.00 per 50-minute psychotherapy session, or \$100.00 per 60-minute testing session on the day of each session unless other arrangements have been made and agreed upon. Scoring, interpretation, and report-writing time are also additional charges involved in the testing process and charged at the same hourly rate. Insurance companies certify a number of psychological testing hours which include time for test administration, scoring, interpretation and report-writing; therefore if the hours submitted to your insurance company exceed the face to face hours spent testing, this is the reason for those charges. Individuals who do not have insurance coverage or choose to pay out of pocket will be provided with an estimate of the additional charges prior to beginning the assessment. Dr. Scott will communicate with you about any substantial changes in the estimate prior to continuing with the assessment if and when they arise.

For all services including therapy, telephone conversations that exceed 15 minutes (aside from scheduling or first contact), site visits, report writing and preparation, completion of forms for other agencies, consultation with other professionals, release of information, review of records, longer sessions, travel time, and so forth, will be charged at the same rates above, unless indicated and agreed otherwise. Please notify Dr. Scott if any problem arises during the course of therapy or the

testing process regarding your ability to make timely payments. Clients who carry insurance should remember that professional services are rendered and charged to the clients and not to the insurance companies. Dr. Scott is legally obligated to charge you for co-pay, coinsurance, and deductible amounts since it is considered insurance fraud if she does not. As an in-network provider of an insurance company, Dr. Scott is also contracted to accept the rates set by your insurance company and will not bill you for the differences between her standard fees and her contracted fees. (Contracted fees are sometimes identified as discounted fees or allowable charges by your insurance plan) Therefore, any balances that remain following receipt of insurance payments are determined by your specific insurance plan and commonly identified as “member responsibility” or “non-covered charges.” Insurance plans send Explanations Of Benefits (EOB’s) to both Dr. Scott and the covered member which specifically explain the charges, payments, and reasons for any non-payment. It is your responsibility to review your EOB’s, and to contact your insurance company for resolution, in case an error was made by your insurance company when processing the claim for service payment(s). Dr. Scott will only charge you for and attempt to collect balances in accordance with her contract with your insurance company if she is a network provider. If Dr. Scott is not a network provider with your insurance company, she does not have agreements to accept their contracted rates and can legally bill you for the difference in their rates and her standard rates. While Dr. Scott is a network provider with the majority of insurance plans in this region, it is advisable to double check with your insurance company prior to beginning therapy or assessments in order to avoid any unexpected charges or confusion about fee responsibilities.

Unless agreed upon differently, Dr. Scott will file and submit claims to your insurance company, or with advance notice at your request, will provide a receipt that you may file on your own with your insurance company for reimbursement if you so choose. As was indicated in the section “Health Insurance and Confidentiality of Records,” you must be aware that submitting a mental health invoice for reimbursement carries a certain amount of risk.

Additionally, not all issues/conditions/problems that are the focus of psychotherapy or psychological testing are reimbursed by insurance companies. It is your responsibility to verify the specifics of your coverage. This is especially important with psychological testing or mental/behavioral health benefits in general as many insurance companies have different deductibles, co-pays, co-insurance amounts and policies for these services. Dr. Scott is not aware of your specific benefits and highly encourages you to check with your insurance company about your coverage prior to beginning an evaluation or course of therapy.

### **Psychological Testing Process Overview**

The psychological testing/evaluation process is a lengthy process that generally takes 4 to 6 weeks to complete depending on the fit between your schedule and Dr. Scott’s availability and caseload. The first session, whether an adult or child is being evaluated, is made up of completing essential self-report questionnaires and meeting with Dr. Scott for the clinical interview. During the clinical

interview, Dr. Scott will ask you about your reasons for seeking the evaluation, specific concerns and problems you have been experiencing, the history of these concerns, and a background history. Testing sessions are best scheduled for 2-hour blocks of time if possible. The **average adult** seeking an AD/HD or Learning Disability evaluation requires **three 2-hour testing blocks for a total of 6 hours** face to face; which includes the first session described above, cognitive and achievement testing. There are times when the evaluation may only require 4 or 5 hours but not commonly. The **average child requires three to four 1 or 1.5-hour testing blocks** *in addition* to the first session which is usually conducted with only the child's parent and highly depends on age. Some children may be able to tolerate 1.5 to 2-hour testing blocks depending on their age and particularly their ability to stay focused and sustain effort and performance throughout the testing process. Adults and children are always offered and encouraged to take short breaks throughout, to increase the chances of receiving their best performance. Pushing through or rushing the testing process is not recommended for any individual as the results from these types of performances are not useful. Dr. Scott prefers to conduct testing sessions with all ages for a maximum amount of 2-hours since this is about as long as any individual can sustain an adequate level of performance and effort on the testing measures.

Every so often an individual may require an additional testing session that is supplemental to the standard battery of tests set up for your evaluation. This supplemental session is necessary when the results from the standard battery are not pronounced and specific areas of cognitive or achievement functioning need extra attention to determine the nature and extent of your difficulties and to devise the best treatment plan, learning strategies or recommendations. On average, an extra hour of testing is sufficient to explore the areas that require further attention. Dr. Scott will discuss any supplemental testing she believes will help with the assessment and will only make this recommendation if it is necessary and helpful. Be assured that Dr. Scott will only make a diagnosis when she has enough evidence and is confident about that evidence since psychological diagnoses can have long-term impact on your life, attitude and behaviors. Also, some assessments may not result in a diagnosis, however you will still receive specific information about your strengths, areas of weakness, learning strategies, and recommendations. Please be patient with the testing process so you can get the insight you need to help identify specific needs and strategies, and to guide your future endeavors.

### **Psychological Testing Results & Reports**

Upon completion of the testing process, a feedback/results session will be scheduled. Pending time constraints and scheduling, feedback sessions are usually scheduled within a week of the final testing session and last an average of 1 hour. Feedback sessions include a description and explanation of any diagnostic findings, important patterns of behavior observed, discussion of specific test scores, specific recommendations relevant to the findings, and time to ask questions. Dr. Scott will also explain any processes relevant to recommendations that may involve referrals to other providers or agencies, i.e. how to obtain a medication consultation or academic

accommodations. Psychoeducational handouts and/or a list of online, local, and educational materials are commonly provided at the feedback session or sent with a copy of the final report.

Parents of minor children often choose to attend the feedback session without their child, since they will be receiving diagnostic information and recommendations that are difficult for younger children to understand. An additional follow-up session with your child is always available from Dr. Scott, and usually decided on at the discretion of the parents. The purpose of this session is to help present and explain the testing results to your child in an appropriate manner for their developmental age and may occur at any time following the original feedback session. Some parents find that children display signs of confusion only after they begin interventions or treatment related to the results and decide to bring their child back to Dr. Scott so the results or specific recommendations can be explained.

At your request and completion of a medical records request, a copy of the full psychological testing report will be made available to you and for any providers you have a signed release of information on file. The full report averages 16 pages and takes considerable time to prepare, at least 4 hours, and is usually available 30 business days after the feedback session; pending periodic interruptions and constraints to Dr. Scott's time and workload. However, within 14 business days of your feedback/results session, Dr. Scott will prepare a summary of your results that includes test dates, diagnostic information, summary of results, and tests scores. This summary is commonly acceptable to healthcare professionals who provide medication consultations and academic accommodations reviews. In fact, some medical providers will be satisfied with the summary and may not require a copy of the full length report. Nonetheless, a full length report will become part of your medical records file and available according to state guidelines (presently 10 years). **\*\*If you have any imminent deadlines *prior to the 14 days* following your feedback session, please alert Dr. Scott to your specific deadline and she will put forth her best efforts to meet your deadlines within a reasonable timeframe for her to complete the summary (preferably 3 to 5 business days).\*\*** Based on many factors out of her control, Dr. Scott may not be able to accommodate all of your deadlines, so please consider your time frames at the beginning of the testing process and make arrangements with other providers accordingly.

Additionally, please note that the full length psychological report will not be released if you have any outstanding payments due on your account until these obligations are fulfilled. According to the APA ethics code, records that are requested can only **NOT** be held if they are "needed for a client's/patient's emergency treatment." Emergency situations differ from non-emergency situations in that non-emergency situations include requests out of convenience or preference, and not those with serious dire consequences. All clients enter the assessment process with needs for the evaluation that are of great importance, such as identification of academic or behavioral plans, medication consultations, updated evaluations, requests for standardized testing accommodations, and academic accommodations; however these situations are generally not life-threatening

circumstances. Dr. Scott will make every effort to manage your requests in a timely manner and provide you with the documentation you need to meet your assessment goals and needs. Please discuss your goals and needs with Dr. Scott so alternative arrangements can be made if your summary or full-length report is not available at the time you need them. In many circumstances, a brief letter or phone call to the provider you are working with may suffice while the report is being prepared.

### **Completion of Forms to Document Testing Results**

Requests for forms to be completed by Dr. Scott following the testing process, such as for standardized testing agencies or professional board licensure exams, are becoming an increasingly common request. As of February 1, 2010, Dr. Scott will begin charging \$25 for completion of each request. Dr. Scott requires a minimum of 10 business days to complete your request. Form completion requests may be made via mail, email or fax and should include the specific forms to be completed, the return address to which completed forms should be returned, and payment in full. Please indicate if a copy of your psychological testing report is required with the completed forms. Copies of records after receipt of the first copy following your initial evaluation are charged at \$0.50 per page.

### **The Therapy Process**

Participation in therapy can result in a number of benefits to you, including improving interpersonal relationships and resolution of the specific concerns that led you to seek therapy. Working toward these benefits, however, requires effort on your part. Psychotherapy requires your very active involvement, honesty, and openness in order to change your thoughts, feelings, and/or behavior. Dr. Scott will ask for your feedback and views on your therapy, its progress, and other aspects of the therapy and will expect you to respond openly and honestly. Sometimes more than one approach can be helpful in dealing with a certain situation. During evaluation or therapy, remembering or talking about unpleasant events, feelings, or thoughts can result in your experiencing considerable discomfort or strong feelings of anger, sadness, worry, fear, and so forth, or experiencing anxiety, depression, insomnia, and so forth. Dr. Scott may challenge some of your assumptions or perceptions or propose different ways of looking at, thinking about, or handling situations that can cause you to feel very upset, angry, depressed, challenged, or disappointed. Attempting to resolve issues that brought you to therapy in the first place, such as personal or interpersonal relationships, may result in changes that were not originally intended. Psychotherapy may result in decisions about changing behaviors, employment, substance use, schooling, housing, or relationships. Sometimes a decision that is positive for one family member is viewed quite negatively by another family member. Change will sometimes be easy and swift, but more often it will be slow and even frustrating. There is no guarantee that psychotherapy will yield positive or intended results. During the course of therapy, Dr. Scott is likely to draw on various psychological approaches according, in part, to the problem that is being treated and his/her assessment of what will best benefit you. These

approaches include biopsychosocial, behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, system/family, relational, developmental (adult, child, family), or psychoeducational.

### **Discussion of treatment plan**

Within a reasonable period of time after the initiation of treatment, Dr. Scott will discuss with you (client) his/her working understanding of the problem, treatment plan, therapeutic objectives, and view of the possible outcomes of treatment. If you have any unanswered questions about any of the procedures used in the course of your therapy, their possible risks, Dr. Scott's expertise in employing them, or about the treatment plan, please ask and you will be answered fully. You also have the right to ask about other treatments for your condition and their risks and benefits. If you could benefit from any treatment that Dr. Scott does not provide, she has an ethical obligation to assist you in obtaining those treatments and will provide you with referrals.

### **Termination**

As set forth above, after the first couple of meetings, Dr. Scott will assess if she can be of benefit to you. Dr. Scott does not accept clients who, in her opinion, she cannot help. In such a case, she will give you a number of referrals that you can contact. If at any point during psychotherapy, Dr. Scott assesses that she is not effective in helping you reach the therapeutic goals, she is obliged to discuss it with you and, if appropriate, to terminate treatment. In such a case, she would give you a number of referrals that may be of help to you. If you request it and authorize it in writing, Dr. Scott will talk to the psychotherapist of your choice in order to help with the transition. If at any time you want another professional's opinion or wish to consult with another therapist, Dr. Scott will assist you in finding someone qualified, and, if she has your written consent, she will provide her or him with a summary of your treatment. You have the right to terminate therapy at any time. If you choose to do so, Dr. Scott will offer to provide you with names of other qualified professionals whose services you might prefer.

### **Dual relationships**

Not all dual relationships are unethical or avoidable. Therapy never involves sexual or any other dual relationship that impairs Dr. Scott's objectivity, clinical judgment, or therapeutic effectiveness or can be exploitative in nature. Dr. Scott will assess carefully before entering into nonsexual and nonexploitative dual relationships with clients. Lexington, KY is a small town and many clients know each other and Dr. Scott from the community. Consequently, you may bump into someone you know in the waiting room or into Dr. Scott out in the community. Dr. Scott will never acknowledge working therapeutically with anyone without her written permission. Many clients choose Dr. Scott as their therapist because they know her, or of her from a referral source, before they enter into therapy with her and/or are aware of her stance on the topic. Nevertheless, Dr. Scott will discuss with you, her client(s), the often-existing complexities, potential benefits, and difficulties that may be involved in such relationships. Dual or multiple relationships can enhance therapeutic effectiveness but can also detract from it and often it is impossible to know that ahead of time. It is your, the client's, responsibility to communicate to Dr. Scott if the dual relationship becomes uncomfortable for you in

