



Kate Turner Counseling, Inc.

Spring, Texas 77373

[Kt@katedturner.com](mailto:Kt@katedturner.com)

[www.katedturner.com](http://www.katedturner.com)

## CLIENT SERVICE AGREEMENT

Welcome to Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. This agreement contains important information about our professional services and business policies. It also contains summary information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), a federal law that provides privacy protections and client rights with regard to the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Insurance (PHI) used for the purpose of treatment, payment, and health care operations. Although these documents are long and sometimes complex, it is very important that you read them carefully. We can discuss any questions you have about the procedures. When you sign this document, it will also represent an argument between us. You may revoke this agreement in writing at any time. That revocation will be binding on Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. unless we have taken action in reliance on this agreement or if you have not satisfied any financial obligations you have incurred.

## COUNSELING SERVICES

Your first appointment (or more, in some cases) will involve an assessment of your needs. By the end of the assessment Kate Turner will be able to offer you some first impressions of what your work may include and recommendations for getting help. One of the recommendations may be psychotherapy. If so, Kate Turner may or may not be able to provide you with psychotherapy, depending on your overall needs. If psychotherapy or any other recommendations suggested by your counselor include things Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. cannot provide, you will be given suggestions of where you might receive those services. Wherever you choose to obtain treatment, you should evaluate the information from your initial assessment along with your own opinions of what sort of treatment you are willing to do and whether you feel comfortable working with Kate Turner.

Therapy involves a large commitment of time, energy, and often money, so you should be very careful about the therapist you select. If you have questions about the procedures used or conclusions made by Kate Turner, please discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, your counselor will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion. Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the particular problems you are experiencing, the therapeutic methods used by your counselor, and the personalities of the counselor and client. There are many different methods counselors may use to deal with the problems that you hope to address. Psychotherapy is not like a medical doctor visit. Instead, it calls for a very active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things that are discussed both during your sessions and on your own.



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Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, shame, frustration, loneliness and helplessness. The changes you make in therapy may also affect your relationships in unexpected ways. Psychotherapy has also been shown to have many benefits. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience.

## **MEETINGS**

The initial assessment will last from one to two sessions. During this time, you and Kate Turner can both decide if she is the best person to provide the services you need in order to meet your treatment goals. If psychotherapy is begun, it is typical to schedule one meeting per week at a time you each agree on. Once an appointment is scheduled, you will be expected to attend unless you provide advance notice of cancellation. If you need to cancel an appointment, it is your responsibility to contact us to cancel.

## **PROFESSIONAL FEES**

Fees will be collected when services are rendered. The fee per 50-minute counseling session is \$150 and will be adjusted accordingly when 50 minutes is exceeded. In addition to therapy services fees may include creating reports; creating copies of records on request; and consulting with other professionals at the client's request. There will be an additional \$35 fee assessed for any returned check. Two or more clients is \$165 per session. If counseling is with a large family group, fee will be determined by size.

## **CHANGES AND CANCELLATIONS**

We understand that there are unforeseeable circumstances like sick children or bad weather. Your appointment is important though, and Kate Turner is happy to contact you for a phone session or a session via our HIPPA-compliant virtual therapy system so you don't need to leave your sick child or worry about bad weather. As long as you are in a confidential location, we can help you keep your regularly scheduled appointment. If you still must change or cancel your counseling appointment, please know:

- Cancellations must be made within 24 hours of session time.



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- We cannot accommodate cancellations made via email as we do not monitor email on a regular basis.
- We cannot accommodate cancellation made after hours or on holidays. If you have an appointment on a Monday or the first day following a holiday, you must make your change or cancellation the last business day before your appointment.
- Cancellations with less than 24 hours' notice will result in a \$110 fee that will be collected at your next appointment, or, if payment information is on file, it will be debited from your credit card.
- After two no-shows/late cancellations, a pre-paid retainer will be required before scheduling any future appointments.
- Clients who have pre-paid agree to have the entire fee deduction from their pre-payments in cases of other no-shows and late changes/cancellations.

## COURT TESTIMONY

- Court testimony costs begin at \$400 per hour with a minimum charge of three hours. A retainer of \$1200 is due *one week prior* to the court date. Travel is billed at .55/mile. Failure to provide the specific fee as described constitutes a release from the requested court appearance.
- It is required that a minimum of 36 hours notice be given if the testimony is not required, otherwise the entire retainer is forfeited. If proper notice is given, the retainer will be refunded.
- Additional services related to court preparation including all correspondence with attorneys or other service providers via phone, email, or letter, documentation review and/or documentation preparation are also billed at \$400 per hour, rounded to the nearest 15-minute increment.

You (not your insurance company) are responsible for full payment of fees. It is very important that you find out exactly what mental health services your insurance policy covers. You must pay your bill first, then contact your insurance company regarding reimbursement.

## CONTACTING US

You can contact our main email: [kt@katedturner.com](mailto:kt@katedturner.com) 24 hours a day/7 days a week, please include your phone number on your initial email. Emails are typically returned within 24 hours during the business week, or 48 hours for emails sent on the weekend. If you do not get an email



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response, please check your junk folder before reaching out again. You may have your counselor's cell phone number in order to coordinate administrative tasks (defined as appointment arrival, appointment time, and directions). Email, and text messaging are **not** secure mediums in terms of privacy and confidentiality so our policy regarding, electronic communication, and cell phone use includes the following:

- We do not provide therapy/ counseling via email or text messaging.
- Text messaging and email will be used for administrative tasks only (as defined above).
- Kate Turner counseling, Inc., may not acknowledge or return emails or text messages that are not administrative. This includes emergency texts and emails. (see below)
- If Kate Turner leaves for an extended period of time you will be given the information for another licensed therapist with whom you may schedule if you need an appointment during your therapist's absence.

## EMERGENCIES

- **Please note:** if you are experiencing a potential life-threatening situation, please contact your local 911 police department, fire department, or go to your local hospital emergency room.
- Please, do not contact your therapist's cell phone – this is not monitored regularly.
- Please, do not contact your therapist's email – email is not monitored regularly.

## FACEBOOK AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media, including but not limited to Facebook and Twitter, may be used by Kate Turner Counseling, Inc., this practice as tools for marketing services and disseminating information. Social media of any kind are **not** secure in terms of privacy and confidentiality so our policy regarding the use of social media includes the following:

- We do not provide therapy via social media.
- Therapist will not acknowledge or respond to client emergencies delivered via social media.
- If you have an emergency do not contact your therapist via social media. Is there to go to the emergency room nearest you or call 911.
- You may use social media to reveal your own identity as a client of Kate Turner Counseling, Inc.
- However, you may not reveal the identity of another client. Doing so would be a breach of confidentiality and Kate Turner Counseling, Inc.



- Would take all available steps to protect the revealed client's rights, including blocking the offending client from accessing our social media, contacting legal authorities, and referring the offending client to another practice.

## LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY

The law protects the privacy of all communications between a client and a counselor. In most situations, Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. can only release information about your treatment to others if you sign a written authorization form that meets certain legal requirements imposed by chapter 181 of the Texas Health and Safety Code (HB 300) & HIPAA. There are other situations that require only that you provide written, advance consent which is provided by signing this document. Your signature on this agreement provides consent for the following activities:

1. Although you will probably meet with only one counselor (Kate Turner), you are receiving services from the office of Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. Consequently, you will have a file in our office to which some unlicensed staff will have necessary access.
2. Kate Turner will, from time to time consult with unlicensed staff which in most cases, we need to share protected information within Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. For both clinical and administrative purposes, such as scheduling, record management, and quality assurance. All of the staff are bound by the same rules of confidentiality.
3. In providing, coordinating, or managing your treatment and other services related to your counseling care, Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. sometimes interacts with other professionals concerning your well-being. An example of this would be when we consult with another health care provider, such as a physician. We acquire a release of information to keep on file if such coordination is necessary.
4. If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information concerning your diagnosis and treatment, Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. Cannot provide any information A) your (or your legal representative's) written authorization, or B) a court order/subpoena. If you are involved in contemplating litigation, you should consult with your attorney to determine whether a court would be likely to order Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. To disclose information.
5. If a client files a complaint or lawsuit against Kate Turner Counseling, Inc., we may disclose relevant information regarding that client in order to defend ourselves.
6. If we have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may have been subjected to abuse or neglect or observe a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, the law requires that Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. file a report with the Texas Department of Child Protective Services. Once such a report is filed, we may be required to provide additional information.
7. If we have reasonable cause to suspect that an elderly or disabled adult, presents a likelihood of suffering serious physical harm and is in need of protective services, the law



requires that Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. file a report with the Texas Department of Elder Protective Services. Once such a report is filed, we may be required to provide additional information.

8. If we believe that it is necessary to disclose information to protect against a risk of serious harm being inflicted by you upon yourself, another person, or to the community, Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. May be required to take protective action. Depending on the situation, these actions may include initiating hospitalization and/or contacting the police. If such a situation arises, your counselor will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action and we will limit our disclosure to what is necessary.
9. If you disclose past sexual abuse **by a mental health provider**, we are obligated to report this to the proper authorities and licensing entities.

While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing you about potential problems, it is important that we discuss any questions or concerns that you may have now or in the future. The laws governing confidentiality can be quite complex, and we are not attorneys. In situations where specific advice is required, formal legal advice may be needed.

## COUNSELING VIA TECHNOLOGY

Online methods of providing counseling services are evolving all the time. At Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. we will utilize those means ethically and therapeutically. Technology-assisted distance counseling for individuals, couples, and groups involves the use of the telephone or the computer to enable counselors and clients to communicate at a distance when circumstances make this approach necessary or convenient.

Tele-counseling involves synchronous distance interaction among counselors and clients using one-to-one or conferencing features of the telephone to communicate. Video-based individual internet counseling involves synchronous distance interaction between counselor and client using what is seen and heard via video to communicate.

In order to utilize technology for therapy, you must (*adapted from the NBCC code of ethics for technology-based counseling*):

1. Be an established client with intake paperwork, payment information, and an emergency contact/face sheet on file with Kate Turner Counseling, Inc.
2. Be within the state of Texas, unless
  - a. You are a resident of Texas but you are temporarily located outside of the state.
  - b. You are a client newly relocated outside of Texas and you experience an emergency. In this case your therapist will provide triage and referrals to a local counselor in your state.
  - c. You are located on a US military base.





3. Have a release of information for an emergency contact for the location from which you will be calling.
4. Assume responsibility for securing a location to speak with the therapist that is confidential.
5. Understand when communicating via technology, confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed. By engaging in counseling via technology you acknowledge that risk and hold Kate Turner Counseling Inc. Harmless.
6. Agree to an alternate form of communication in case technology fails during the counseling session. If technology fails less than 30 minutes into a counseling session and communication cannot be reestablished, you can reschedule at no charge for the remainder of the missed session. If technology fails over 40 minutes into the session and technology cannot be reestablished, you will be charged for the entire session.

Also:

1. Remember when visual cues (video) are unavailable, misunderstanding can occur.
2. Your technology-based sessions are not recorded or preserved in any way by Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. Kate Turner will take notes (as directed by law).

## **TERMINATION, DEATH, OR INCAPACITY OF A THERAPIST/TERMINATION CLOSURE OF PRACTICE**

In the Event of your therapist's death, or incapacity, all records created by Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. will be secured and archived with Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. on an encrypted electric server. In the event of the closure of Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. or the death or incapacitation of its owner, records created by Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. will be secured and archived on an encrypted electronic server until the contents of the corporation are probated.

## **PROFESSIONAL RECORDS**

The laws and standards of our profession require that Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. keep Protected Health Information about you in your Clinical Record. Your Clinical Record includes information about your reasons for seeking therapy, a description of the ways in which your problem impacts on your life, your diagnosis, the goals that we set for treatment, your progress towards these goals, your medical and social history, your treatment history, any past treatment records that I receive from other providers, reports of any professional consultations, and any reports that have been sent to anyone. Except in the unusual circumstance where disclosure is reasonably likely to endanger you and/or others or when another individual (other than another healthcare provider) is referenced and we believe disclosing that information puts the other person at risk of substantial harm, you may examine and/or receive a copy of your Clinical Record, if you request it in writing. Because these are professional records, they can be



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misinterpreted by and/or be upsetting to untrained readers. For this reason, Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. recommends that you initially review them in your counselor's presence, or have them forwarded to another mental health professional so you can discuss the contents. In most circumstances, Kate Turner Counseling, Inc. Is allowed to charge a copying fee of \$75 (and for certain other expenses).

## **CLIENT RIGHTS REGARDING PRIVACY AND HIPAA**

Kate Turner CSC, LPC is an out of network provider and will provide you with paperwork you may submit for insurance reimbursement. We will not file that paperwork for you. You should be aware that in the process of filing for a third-party payment, your contract with your health insurance company may require your counselor to provide additional clinical information such as treatment plans or summaries, a diagnosis, or copies of your entire Clinical Record. This information will become part of the insurance company files. Though all insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential, counselors have no control over what the insurance companies do with it once it is in their hands. In such situations, your counselor will make every effort to release only the minimum information about you that is necessary for the purpose requested. If you will be filing with your insurance company for reimbursement of fees, please indicate your consent for us to release your PHI by signing on the last page. For a copy of HIPAA policies, please go to [www.hhs.gov/hipaa](http://www.hhs.gov/hipaa)

## **MINORS & PARENTS**

Clients under 18 years of age and their parents should be aware that the law may or may not allow parents to examine their child's treatment records. Because privacy in psychotherapy is often crucial to successful progress, particularly with teenagers, it is sometimes our policy to request an agreement from parents that they consent to give up their access to their child's records. If they agree, during treatment, your counselor will provide them (if requested) only with general information about the progress of your treatment, and your attendance at schedule sessions. If requested, your counselor could also provide parents with a summary of your treatment when it is complete. Any other communication to your parents will require your authorization, unless we feel that you are in danger or are a danger to someone else, in which case, we will notify the parents of the concern. Before giving parents any information, Kate Turner will discuss the matter with you, if possible, and do her best to handle any objections you may have.