

# OpenDoor Counseling and Assessment Services, PLLC

An Organization of Independent Professionals

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## ***Informed Consent for Services***

***(The Client may have the opportunity to work with a variety of individuals representing OpenDoor Counseling and Assessment Services (“OpenDoor Counseling” or “the provider”) Each of those individuals is bound by this Agreement.)***

**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 written permission except where disclosure is required by law.

**WHEN DISCLOSURE IS REQUIRED OR MAY BE REQUIRED BY LAW:** Some of the circumstances where disclosure is required or may be required by law are: where there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent, or elder abuse or neglect; where a client presents a danger to self, to others, to property, or is gravely disabled; or when a client's family members communicate to OpenDoor Counseling that the client presents a danger to others. Disclosure may also be required pursuant to a legal proceeding by or against you. 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 OpenDoor Counseling. In couple and family therapy, or when different family members are seen individually, even over a period of time, confidentiality and privilege do not apply between the couple or among family members, unless otherwise agreed upon. OpenDoor Counseling will use clinical judgment when revealing such information. OpenDoor Counseling will not release records to any outside party unless authorized to do so by all adult parties who were part of the family therapy, couple therapy or other treatment that involved more than one adult client. **Additional disclosure for clients who have committed sexual offenses might be necessary based upon licensing requirements. If this applies to you or your family member, request information from your provider.**

**EMERGENCY:** If there is an emergency during therapy, or in the future after termination, where OpenDoor Counseling becomes concerned about your personal safety, the possibility of you injuring someone else, or about you receiving proper psychiatric care, s/he will do whatever s/he 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, the person whose name you have provided on the biographical sheet might be contacted.

**HEALTH INSURANCE & CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS:** OpenDoor Counseling does not accept payment from insurance companies and any information provided to them will originate directly from the client.

**CONSULTATION:** OpenDoor Counseling consults regularly with other professionals regarding clients; however, each client's identity remains completely anonymous and confidentiality is fully maintained.

**E-MAILS, CELL PHONES, COMPUTERS, AND FAXES:** It is very important to be aware that computers and unencrypted e-mail, texts, and e-faxes communication can be relatively easily accessed by unauthorized people and hence can compromise the privacy and confidentiality of such communication. E-mails, texts, and e-faxes, in particular, are vulnerable to such unauthorized access due to the fact that servers or communication companies may have unlimited and direct access to all e-mails, texts and e-faxes that go through them. It is always the intent of OpenDoor Counseling to protect data by coding and/or encrypting data emailed or faxed. However, it is always a possibility that e-faxes, texts, and email can be sent erroneously to the wrong address and computers. Unencrypted email or text provides as much privacy as a postcard. You should not communicate any information with your health care provider that you would not want to be included on a postcard that is sent through the Post Office. OpenDoor Counseling's laptops are equipped with a firewall, a virus protection and a password, and it backs up all confidential information from its computer on a regular basis onto an encrypted hard-drive. Also, be aware that phone messages are transcribed and sent to OpenDoor Counseling via unencrypted e-mails. Please notify OpenDoor Counseling if you decide to avoid or limit, in any way, the use of e-mail, texts, cell phones calls, phone messages, or e-faxes. If you communicate confidential or private information via unencrypted e-mail, texts or e-fax or via phone messages, it will be assumed that you have made an informed decision, will view it as your agreement to take the risk that such communication may be intercepted. To the best of its ability OpenDoor Counseling will honor your desire to communicate on such matters. Please do not use texts, e-mail, voice mail, or faxes for emergencies.

**RECORDS AND YOUR RIGHT TO REVIEW THEM:** Both the law and the standards of OpenDoor Counseling's therapists' professions require that they keep treatment records for at least 5 years. Unless otherwise agreed to be necessary, OpenDoor Counseling retains clinical records only as long as is mandated by Texas law. If you have concerns regarding the treatment records, please discuss them with OpenDoor Counseling. As a client, you have the right to review or receive a summary of your records at any time, except in limited legal or emergency circumstances or when OpenDoor Counseling assesses that releasing such information might be harmful in any way. In such a case, OpenDoor Counseling will provide the records to an appropriate and legitimate mental health professional of your choice. Considering all of the above exclusions, if it is still appropriate, and upon your request, OpenDoor Counseling will release information to any agency/person you specify unless OpenDoor Counseling assesses

that releasing such information might be harmful in any way. When more than one client is involved in treatment, such as in cases of couple and family therapy, OpenDoor Counseling will release records only with signed authorizations from all the adults (or all those who legally can authorize such a release) involved in the treatment.

**TELEPHONE & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:** If you need to contact your provider between sessions, please leave a message at 940-565-0939 with the appropriate extension or extension 102 and your call will be returned as soon as possible. The providers at OpenDoor Counseling check messages a few times during the daytime only, unless that individual is out of town. If an emergency situation arises, indicate it clearly in your message and if you need to talk to someone right away call 24 hour Crisis Hotline of Denton County 1(800) 762-1057, or the Police: 911. Please do not use email or faxes for emergencies. The providers at OpenDoor Counseling do not always check emails or faxes daily.

**PAYMENTS:** Clients are expected to pay, at the time service is rendered, the standard fees of:

**Counseling Fees:**

Individual Sessions	<b>\$160</b>
Group Sessions	<b>\$ 75</b>

**Assessment Fees: Request Fees**

Abel:	Psychosexual:	<b>\$1800</b>	Drug/Alcohol:
Mental Health:	Risk Assessment		Court Safety Plan: <b>\$500.00</b>

**Juvenile Supervisor Training**            **\$130** per person

**Adult Chaperone Training**            **\$250** per person

**Special programs**                            Discuss with your provider

**Sliding scale rates will be considered based upon Client's ability to pay. In order to qualify for a special rate, Client will be required to provide verifiable proof of income (i.e. yearly tax filing, pay stubs, etc.).**

Telephone conversations, site visits, writing and reading of reports, consultation with other professionals, release of information, reading records, longer sessions, travel time, etc. will be charged at the same agreed upon rate. Please notify OpenDoor Counseling if any problems arise during the course of therapy 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. Unless agreed upon differently, OpenDoor Counseling will provide you with a copy of your receipt on a monthly basis, which you can then submit to your insurance company for reimbursement, if you so choose. As was indicated in the section, *Health Insurance & Confidentiality of Records*, you must be aware that submitting a mental health invoice for reimbursement carries a certain amount of risk. Not all issues/conditions/problems

that are dealt with in psychotherapy are reimbursed by insurance companies. It is your responsibility to verify the specifics of your coverage. If your account is overdue (unpaid) and there is no written agreement on a payment plan, OpenDoor Counseling can use legal or other means (courts, collection agencies, etc.) to obtain payment.

**MEDIATION & ARBITRATION:** All disputes arising out of, or in relation to, this agreement to provide psychotherapy services shall first be referred to mediation, before, and as a pre-condition of, the initiation of arbitration. The mediator shall be a neutral third party chosen by agreement of OpenDoor Counseling and the client(s). The cost of such mediation, if any, shall be split equally, unless otherwise agreed upon. In the event that mediation is unsuccessful, any unresolved controversy related to this agreement should be submitted to and settled by binding arbitration in Denton County, Texas in accordance with the rules of the American Arbitration Association which are in effect at the time the demand for arbitration is filed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event that your account is overdue (unpaid) and there is no agreement on a payment plan, OpenDoor Counseling can use legal means (court, collection agency, etc.) to obtain payment. The prevailing party in arbitration or collection proceedings shall be entitled to recover a reasonable sum as and for attorney's fees. In the case of arbitration, the arbitrator will determine that sum.

**THE PROCESS OF THERAPY/EVALUATION AND SCOPE OF PRACTICE:** 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. OpenDoor Counseling 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 you experiencing considerable discomfort or strong feelings of anger, sadness, worry, fear, etc., or experiencing anxiety, depression, insomnia, etc. OpenDoor Counseling may challenge some of your assumptions or perceptions or propose different ways of looking at, thinking about, or handling situations, which 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, OpenDoor Counseling 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, but are not limited to, behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, cognitive,

psychodynamic, existential, system/family, developmental (adult, child, family), humanistic or psycho-educational. OpenDoor Counseling **provides neither custody evaluation recommendation** nor medication or prescription recommendation nor legal advice, as these activities do not fall within his/her scope of practice.

**TREATMENT PLANS:** Within a reasonable period of time after the initiation of treatment, OpenDoor Counseling will discuss with you his/her working understanding of the problem, treatment plan, therapeutic objectives, and his/her 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, the possible risks, OpenDoor Counseling '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.

**TERMINATION:** As set forth above, after the first couple of meetings, OpenDoor Counseling will assess if it can be of benefit to you. OpenDoor Counseling does not work with clients who, in their opinion, they cannot help. In such a case, if appropriate, you will be given referrals that you can contact or recommended that you contact to the original referral source if applicable. If at any point during psychotherapy OpenDoor Counseling either assesses that they are not effective in helping you reach the therapeutic goals or perceived you as non-compliant or non-responsive, and if you are available and/or it is possible and appropriate to do, they will discuss with you the termination of treatment and conduct pre-termination counseling. In such a case, if appropriate and/or necessary, they would give you a couple of referrals that may be of help to you. If you request it and authorize it in writing, OpenDoor Counseling 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 and it is allowed by the original referral source, OpenDoor Counseling will give you a couple of referrals that you may want to contact, and if your written consent is provided will provide that referral with essential information. You have the right to terminate therapy and communication at any time. If you choose to do so, upon your request and if appropriate and possible, OpenDoor Counseling will provide you with names of other qualified professionals whose services you might prefer

If you have been charged with a crime or are on probation for a crime and therapy is recommended or required, termination might result in adverse consequences. It is important you understand those consequences prior to making a decision that could affect your freedom.

**DUAL RELATIONSHIPS:** OpenDoor Counseling will strive to avoid dual relationships and, in doing so, will not respond to requests to connect through social or business media, use your business or attend your or your family members' functions. Please understand this is for the purpose of being able to continue to provide objective treatment to you and not a reflection of a lack of personal regard for you.

**SOCIAL NETWORKING AND INTERNET SEARCHES:** At times, the provider may conduct a web search on clients before the beginning of therapy or during therapy. If you have concerns or questions regarding this practice, please discuss them with the provider. We do not accept friend requests from current or former clients on social networking sites, such as Facebook. We believe that adding clients as friends on these sites and/or communicating via such sites is likely to compromise their privacy and confidentiality. For this same reason, we request that clients not communicate with us via any interactive or social networking web sites.

**CANCELLATION:** Since the scheduling of an appointment involves the reservation of time specifically for you, a minimum of 24 hours (1 day) notice is required for re-scheduling or canceling an appointment. Unless we reach a different agreement, the full fee will be charged for sessions missed without such notification. Most insurance companies or contract providers do not reimburse for missed sessions.

I have read Informed Consent for Services carefully. I understand this document and agree to comply with it:

**Client's Name (print)** \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's Name (print)** \_\_\_\_\_

(Required if Client is a minor)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Provider's Name (print)** \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_