



INFORMED CONSENT

About psychotherapy services

Psychotherapy is a working cooperative relationship between you and your therapist. Each member of this cooperative relationship has certain responsibilities. Your therapist will contribute their knowledge, expertise, and clinical skills. You, as the client, are responsible for bringing a collaborative attitude and a commitment to the therapeutic process. While there are no guarantees regarding the outcome of the treatment, your commitment may increase the likelihood of a satisfactory experience.

Individual appointments are scheduled for 55 minutes via telehealth, unless otherwise discussed and agreed upon by the therapist and client. Specific modalities and interventions are discussed directly with you, the client, but are at the therapist's discretion based on their professional clinical opinion.

As a client in psychotherapy, you have certain rights and responsibilities that are important for you to understand. There are also legal limitations to those rights that you should be aware of. I, as your therapist, have corresponding responsibilities to you. These rights and responsibilities are described in the following sections.

Please note that psychotherapy is not an emergency service. If you are experiencing suicidal or homicidal thoughts, are in crisis, or need immediate help, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.

Benefits and risks of psychotherapy

Psychotherapy has both benefits and risks. Risks may include experiencing uncomfortable feelings, such as sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness, because the process of psychotherapy often requires discussing unpleasant aspects of your life. However, psychotherapy has been shown to have benefits for individuals who undertake it. Therapy often leads to a significant reduction in feelings of distress, increased satisfaction in interpersonal relationships, greater personal awareness and insight, increased skills for managing stress, and resolutions to specific problems.

Note that there are no guarantees about what will happen. Psychotherapy requires a great deal of effort on your part. To be most successful, you will need to work on the things we discuss outside of sessions.



Telehealth Sessions/AI Use

I currently only offer psychotherapy virtually (via a secure online video-calling platform). The main benefit of telehealth psychotherapy is that the limitations imposed by geographical distance and travel times are greatly reduced or eliminated. Some of the downsides to virtual psychotherapy include that some information is lost when conducting therapy via video conferencing services (e.g. body language); internet connection problems or low internet speeds may cause interruptions in the session or result in reduced audio or video quality; and additional precautions may need to be taken to ensure privacy and confidentiality (e.g. making sure nobody around you can hear what you're discussing during the session). As a general rule, I do not conduct psychotherapy sessions over the phone.

I can provide all identified modalities via virtual platforms. I will inform you, the client, of any needed items/equipment to ensure effective implementation (e.g., corded headphones for EMDR). If there are any barriers to obtaining any necessary equipment, please alert me as soon as possible so we can explore alternative options.

Many of the telehealth platforms I use offer AI-assist tools for notetaking. These are completely elective on your end and are only used to help me, the therapist, with developing a summary of the session for the progress note. No audio recordings of the sessions are retained by me or the platforms. I, as the therapist, complete a clinical review of all AI-generated summaries and make appropriate updates, corrections, and redactions.

Please review and sign the Telehealth Agreement and/or AI Note Assist Agreements.

The first few sessions

The first few sessions typically involve a comprehensive evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some initial impressions of what our work might include. At that point, we will discuss your treatment goals and create an initial treatment plan. You should evaluate this information and make your own assessment about whether you feel comfortable working with me. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, I will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

Appointments and Cancellations

Appointments are scheduled directly with your therapist at a day and time agreed upon by both parties. A recurring day and time may be available if discussed but cannot always be guaranteed. Payments for each appointment can be made through the identified platform using a debit card or



an ACH transfer. All appointments are 55 minutes, unless otherwise discussed and agreed upon. Additional fees may be incurred for longer sessions.

My current rates for self-pay and no-show/late cancellations are as follows, unless otherwise discussed and agreed upon in writing:

Individual Therapy

- Intake: \$155
- Follow-up/Ongoing: \$125

You may cancel appointments in advance free of charge, provided you give me at least 24 hours' notice. Appointments cancelled within 24 hours of the session start time will be marked as "late cancelled," and you, the client, will be responsible for the full session fee (see above for fees). Appointments cancelled prior to the 24-hour mark will incur no charge. Therapists reserve the right to terminate the therapeutic relationship if clients frequently cancel or no-show appointments.

For appointment no-shows, you will be charged the full session fee (see above for expected fees, unless an alternate fee has been agreed on in writing). To cancel, please contact your therapist directly by text or phone at 727-354-8020 for a timely cancellation.

If you utilize insurance, insurance companies will not cover the cost of late cancellations or no-show fees, and you, the client, will be responsible for all accrued cancellation/no-show fees. If your card is declined for session fees or late cancellation/no-show fees, I reserve the right to postpone or discontinue continued services until all outstanding balances are paid. Balances not paid in a timely manner may result in termination and/or further collection actions.

While rare, if I must cancel the session for any reason, I will provide as much notice as possible, and no fee will be incurred by you, the client. I will do my best to assist you with rescheduling it promptly.

Professional Records

I am required to keep appropriate records of the psychological services that I provide. I keep brief records noting that you were here, your reasons for seeking therapy, the goals and progress we set for treatment, your diagnosis, topics we discussed, your medical, social, and treatment history, records I receive from other providers, copies of records I send to others, and your billing records. Except in unusual circumstances that involve danger to yourself, you have the right to a copy of your file. Because these are professional records, they may be misinterpreted



and/or upsetting to untrained readers. For this reason, I recommend that you initially review them with me or have them forwarded to another mental health professional to discuss the contents. If I refuse your request for access to your records, you have a right to have my decision reviewed by another mental health professional, which I will discuss with you upon your request. You also have the right to request that a copy of your file be made available to any other health care provider at your written request. Records are required by law to be retained for a minimum of 10 years following the last contact (13 years for minor clients). Records may be retained via individual Electronic Health Records or platform-associated Electronic Health Records. Further information may be found in the Notice of Privacy Practices.

Confidentiality

As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the state of Florida, I am bound by Florida Statute 491.0147. I am also licensed in South Carolina and bound by SC Code § 19-11-95 (2024). In accordance with these statutes/codes, information obtained in therapy sessions will NOT be disclosed to any person(s) or agencies without your written permission, with limited exceptions listed below. For minors under the age of 18, your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may have access to your records and may authorize release to other parties. You may also reference the Notice of Privacy Practices.

Your counselor has an ethical and legal obligation to break confidentiality under the following circumstances:

1. If there is a reason to believe there is an occurrence of child, elder, or dependent adult abuse or neglect.
2. If there is reason to believe that you have serious intent to harm yourself, someone else, or property by a violent act you may commit.
3. If you disclose that you knowingly develop, duplicate, print, download, stream, or access through any electronic or digital media or exchanges, a film, photograph, or video in which a child is engaged in an act of obscene sexual conduct.
4. If you introduce your emotional condition into a legal proceeding.
5. If there is a court order for the release of your records.

Upon signing this agreement, you authorize Suriel Therapy Co. and its employees to discuss information about your case in confidence, without revealing your identity, with other mental health professionals for the purpose of consultation and providing you with the best possible



service. If you would like to request that your case not be discussed in consultations at any point, please submit, in writing, this request to your therapist for proper documentation. All requests will be respected and handled appropriately. For questions or concerns about this matter, please contact your therapist directly.

Contact Information and Communication

If you need to contact me, I can be reached by phone/text message at 727-354-8020 or by email at admin@surieltherapyco.com. You may also contact me via secure message through the appropriate platform. If I am not immediately available, I will do my best to get back to you within 24 business hours. I am not available to provide crisis support. In such cases, I recommend contacting a crisis support service (National Crisis Hotline: 988) or going to your nearest hospital emergency room.

Note that communications sent via text, email, or other web-based services are not as secure as communications conveyed in session or via phone. As such, I do not recommend sending me extensive personal information via email or text message, as the security and confidentiality of such information cannot be guaranteed.

As a general rule, I do not form or maintain relationships with clients or former clients outside of the professional relationship involved in the provision of psychotherapy services. This includes social media, where I will not solicit or accept personal contact. I do have a social media presence, both personally and professionally. In the event of incidental contact outside of therapy (e.g., if we ran into each other in a public place or you come across my social media profiles), I would leave it up to you to decide whether you'd like to initiate contact, to respect your privacy and confidentiality. Please note, any contact will maintain professional boundaries. I will not disclose details of our professional relationship or information discussed in your sessions via social media or any other methods.

Client Bill of Rights

In addition to your right to confidentiality, you have the right to end your counseling at any time, for whatever reason, and without any obligation, with the exception of payment of fees for services already provided. You have the right to question any aspect of your treatment with your therapist.

As a client of Suriel Therapy Co., you have the right to expect ethical, respectful, and professional mental health care. Your rights include, but are not limited to, the following:



1. **The Right to Respect & Dignity:** You have the right to be treated with respect, compassion, and professionalism, free from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability status, age, or background.
2. **The Right to Confidentiality:** You have the right to confidentiality as outlined by state and federal law (HIPAA). Information shared in therapy will not be disclosed without your written consent, except in legally required circumstances (e.g., risk of harm to self or others, abuse reporting, court order).
3. **The Right to Informed Consent:** You have the right to:
 - a. Understand the therapy process
 - b. Ask questions about treatment methods, risks, and benefits
 - c. Be informed of your therapist's credentials, licensure, and scope of practice
 - d. Receive clear information about fees, policies, and billing practices
4. **The Right to Participate in Your Treatment:** You have the right to:
 - a. Collaborate in treatment planning
 - b. Express concerns or preferences regarding your care
 - c. Decline or discontinue therapy at any time
 - d. Request referrals or additional resources when appropriate
 - e. Request copies of your records (see Notice of Privacy Practices for more information).
5. **The Right to Transparent Fees:** You have the right to:
 - a. Receive a **Good Faith Estimate** for self-pay services
 - b. Be informed of session fees, cancellation policies, and payment expectations in advance
 - c. Ask questions about billing or charges without fear of retaliation
6. **The Right to Privacy in Telehealth:** You have the right to:
 - a. Secure, HIPAA-compliant telehealth services
 - b. Privacy during sessions on your end, to the extent possible



- c. Clear information about telehealth risks and limitations
- 7. The Right to Ethical & Competent Care:** You have the right to services provided within ethical guidelines and professional standards. If your needs fall outside the therapist's scope of practice, you have the right to appropriate referrals.
- 8. The Right to Voice Concerns:** If you are unhappy with what is happening in therapy, I hope you will talk with me so that I can respond to your concerns. You have the right to:
- a. Express dissatisfaction or concerns about services
 - b. Ask for clarification or changes in treatment
 - c. File a complaint without fear of retaliation

Concerns may be directed to:

Suriel Therapy Co. – admin@surieltherapyco.com

For Florida clients, you also have the right to contact the Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling if you believe ethical standards have been violated.

For South Carolina clients, you also have the right to contact the South Carolina Board of Social Work Examiners if you believe ethical standards have been violated.

- 9. The Right to Emergency Resources:** You have the right to know that Suriel Therapy Co. does **not** provide emergency or crisis services. If you are experiencing a mental health emergency, you may call **988** or go to the nearest emergency room.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand this information outlined in this Informed Consent, have received a copy of this consent form, and give permission to us to provide counseling services, and that this contract is binding for all future sessions you may have with this entity.