



Georgia Pines G.A.P. Team

A School Based Mental Health Program

706-521-4GAP (4427)

LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

It is the responsibility of Georgia Pines Community Service Board to provide you with the limits of confidentiality that pertain to you and your treatment while receiving services through this agency. We have a duty to protect the confidentiality of medical information concerning you in addition to protecting the rights and welfare of others. The following are ways that Georgia Pines Community Service Board complies with federal and state laws, standards and guidelines, as well as other governing entities.

As stated in C.F.R. 42, Part 2, all information regarding clinical care at Georgia Pines, regardless if it is written or verbal, is considered confidential and cannot be disclosed without written consent (or the handwritten consent of the legal guardian) unless provided in the regulations. While it is the policy of Georgia Pines not to release any information without a signed release, I understand there are exceptions to this policy, as noted below:

1. Duty to Warn and Protect: When an intention or a plan to harm another person is disclosed, there is a duty to warn the intended victim and report this information to legal authorities. In cases in which an individual discloses or implies a plan for suicide, the health care professional is required to notify legal authorities and make reasonable attempts to notify the family.

2. Abuse of Children/Vulnerable Adults: If there is any indication that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused, has been recently abused, or is in danger of being abused, there is a duty to relay this information to the appropriate social service and/or legal authorities.

3. Prenatal Exposure to Controlled Substances: Health care professionals are required to report admitted prenatal exposure to controlled substances that are potentially harmful.

4. In the Event of an Individual's Death: The spouse or parents of a deceased person have a right to access a child's/spouse's records.

5. Professional Misconduct: Misconduct by a health care professional must be reported by other health care professionals. In cases in which a professional or legal disciplinary meeting is being held to determine and/or respond to such misconduct, related records may be released in order to substantiate disciplinary concerns.

6. Court Orders: Health care professionals are required to release records when a court order has been issued.

OTHER PROVISIONS

- **Insurance companies/third-party payers** are given information regarding services, including type of services, dates/times of services, diagnosis, treatment plan, description of impairment, progress of therapy, case notes, and summaries.
- **Other professionals** may be consulted in an effort to provide the best possible care. In such cases, only general clinical information is discussed. Individual's name and other identifying information are not disclosed.
- **Outside sources**, in rare occasions, will be employed to (and held accountable for) type dictated clinical notes.
- When couples, groups, or families receive services, separate files are kept for each individual for information deemed to be confidential in nature. This includes (a) testing results, (b) information given to the clinical staff in the absence of the others, (c) information received from other sources about the consumer, (d) individual clinical information (e.g., diagnosis, treatment plans, etc.) (e) Information that has been requested to be separate. The material disclosed in conjoint family or couples sessions, in which each party discloses such information in each other's presence, is kept in each file in the form of case notes.
- When *Georgia Pines* staff must call for purposes such as appointment cancellations, reminders, or to exchange information, efforts are made to preserve confidentiality. (e.g, you might request that when we call your home, we use our first name only, instead of the name of the clinic). If this information is not provided to us, we will adhere to the following:
 - We will ask to speak to the individual (or guardian) without identifying the name of that clinic.
 - If the person answering the phone asks for more identifying information, we will say that it is a personal call. We will not identify the clinic (to protect confidentiality).
 - If we reach an answering machine or voicemail, we will follow the same guidelines.