



## MASC Ltd. Confidentiality Policy

At MASC Ltd., we are committed to maintaining the confidentiality of all client information. All personnel within our offices are bound by strict confidentiality protocols and cannot disclose any client information without proper authorization.

Confidentiality is particularly sensitive when relatives or third parties inquire about a client, even for seemingly minor details such as appointment times. In these cases, our staff cannot confirm or deny knowledge of the individual or disclose any information. If a family member or other third party needs to discuss billing matters, a **Release of Information (ROI) form** must be signed, specifying the details of the information to be shared. Exceptions apply only in cases where a parent or legal guardian is responsible for a minor under the age of 18.

### Release of Information & Record Retention

A signed Release of Information (ROI) form is required for all record requests. Client information will be securely stored for the duration of therapeutic care and retained until the client completes their care and any outstanding balances are settled.

MASC Ltd. retains client records in accordance with Bermuda legal requirements. Clients may review our **PIPA Policy** for further details.

### Confidentiality in Therapy

For therapy to be effective, clients often need to disclose sensitive personal information. All MASC Ltd. therapists and staff are ethically and legally bound to keep this information strictly confidential. Written and verbal communications between clients and therapists are considered privileged and protected.

In most situations, information about a client's treatment will only be released with their written consent via a signed ROI form. However, by signing the Service Agreement, you acknowledge that there are instances where certain limited information may be shared under professional or legal obligations, as outlined below:



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## **1. Consultations with Mental Health Professionals**

- Therapists may consult with colleagues for professional guidance.
- During these discussions, every effort will be made to avoid revealing the client's identity.
- Clients will not be notified of these consultations unless deemed essential for treatment.
- Therapists also work with administrative staff for scheduling, billing, and quality of client care. These professionals are bound by the same confidentiality standards.

## **2. Internal Consultation**

- MASC Ltd. therapists consult with each other on therapeutic matters.
- While full confidentiality within our practice cannot always be guaranteed, only the minimum necessary information will be shared for effective treatment and crisis management.
- If you know someone within our practice in a non-professional capacity, please inform us immediately so that we can take steps to maintain your privacy.

### **Confidentiality in Therapy of Minors**

- In the context of therapy involving minor clients, it is important to balance the parents' or legal guardians' right to information about treatment with the need for the minor to have a secure environment in which to express themselves. To facilitate effective therapy, minors must be assured of confidentiality.
- It is our policy to share information regarding treatment only with the minor's explicit consent, except in situations where the minor's safety is at immediate risk. Parents and guardians are encouraged to engage with the therapist about their child's progress; however, any information shared will be guided by the minor's comfort level and clinical appropriateness.
- Consent for treatment from both parents or guardians (when applicable) is required for therapy to commence. Please note that once the minor reaches the age of 18, control over their treatment and access to their treatment records will be returned to them.

Your understanding and commitment to this confidentiality agreement are crucial for fostering a safe therapeutic environment for your child.

## **Electronic Communication**

- Electronic communication methods such as email, WhatsApp, social media messaging, and other digital platforms are not secure and are not the preferred means of communication for therapeutic matters. There is a risk that confidentiality may be compromised when using these methods. While telephone contact is an option, it is also not entirely secure. If you choose to communicate with your therapist through any of these electronic methods, you acknowledge and accept that MASC Ltd. cannot guarantee the confidentiality of these communications. For sensitive or therapeutic discussions, in-person sessions are strongly recommended.

## **Exceptions to Confidentiality**

While confidentiality is strictly upheld, there are specific legal and ethical circumstances where it may be breached:

### **1. Harm to Self or Others**

- If a client expresses serious intent to harm themselves or another person, the therapist is obligated to take necessary steps to ensure safety. This may include hospitalization or notifying relevant individuals or authorities.
- If a credible threat is made toward another person, the intended victim and law enforcement may be notified.

### **2. Suspected Abuse or Neglect**

- Therapists are legally required to report suspected abuse or neglect of a minor, elderly individual, or dependent adult to the appropriate authorities.

### **3. Legal Obligations & Court Orders**

- Therapists are legally bound to protect client confidentiality in court proceedings.
- However, if ordered by a judge, therapists may be required to testify or disclose information (e.g., in contested custody cases).
- If a client files a lawsuit or complaint against a therapist, the therapist may disclose relevant information in their defence.

In all cases where confidentiality may be breached, therapists will make every effort to discuss the situation with the client before taking action and will limit disclosure to only what is legally and ethically required.

If you have any concerns about confidentiality, please discuss them with your therapist. Your privacy and trust are our priority.