

Southeast Health Group

LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY

What is said in a treatment, intake or assessment session is considered confidential. Verbal information and written records about a client cannot be shared with other people without the written consent of the client or the client's legal guardian except in the following conditions:

Duty to Warn and Protect

When a client says they plan to harm another person, Southeast Mental Health Services is required to warn the threatened person and report the threat to law enforcement. If a client states or implies they are suicidal, Southeast Mental Health Services is required to take necessary and appropriate action to assure the client's safety.

Abuse of Children and Vulnerable Adults

If a client states or suggests that he or she has abused or is in danger of abusing a child (or vulnerable adult) Southeast Mental Health Services is required to report this information to the appropriate Department of Human Services and/or legal authorities.

Prenatal Exposure to Controlled Substances

Southeast Mental Health Services is required to report admitted prenatal exposure to controlled substances that are potentially harmful.

In the Event of a Client's Death

In the event of a client's death, the individual's records may only be disclosed to the individual's "personal representative." A personal representative is defined as an executor, administrator, or other person who has authority to act on behalf of the deceased individual or the individual's estate. A deceased client's records may be disclosed to funeral directors as needed, and to coroners or medical examiners to identify the deceased person, determine the cause of death and perform other functions authorized by law.

Professional Misconduct

Professional 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 held regarding the health care professional's actions, related records may be released in order to substantiate disciplinary concerns.

Court Orders

Health care professionals are required to release records of clients when ordered to do so by a court of law.

Minors/Guardianship

Parents or legal guardians of non-emancipated, minor children have the right to access the child's records.

Other Provisions

When fees for services are not paid in a timely manner, collection agencies may be utilized in collecting unpaid debts. The specific content of the services (e.g., diagnosis, treatment plan, case notes, testing) is not disclosed. If a debt remains unpaid, it may be reported to credit agencies and the client's credit report may state the amount owed, time frame, and the name of the agency.

Insurance companies and other third-party payers are given information that they request regarding services to clients, unless restricted through the client's formal request as allowed in the HIPAA/HITECH Act of 2010. Information which may be requested includes type of services, dates/times of services, diagnosis, treatment plan, description of impairment, progress of therapy, case notes, and summaries.

Information about clients may be disclosed in consultations with other professionals in order to provide the best possible treatment and coordination of care.

Additional information about disclosures is described in the Notice of Privacy Practices.