

## Communications Policy

### Preference for Confidential Communications:

As per the Notice of Privacy Practice, you have the right to request that this office communicates with you about your health information in a certain way or at a certain location. For example you can request to be contacted by mail or at work. Please indicate where you would like to be contacted:

I prefer to be contacted by:     Phone         Email         Texting     Mail  
    Applications         Online platform (e.g. Our Family Wizard)

I prefer to be called and/or texted at the following number: \_\_\_\_\_

I         DO  DO NOT    want messages to be left at this number.

Please only call at these times: \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer emails to be sent to: \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer texts to be sent to: \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer mail to be sent to: \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to use the application \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to use the online platform: \_\_\_\_\_ with the username: \_\_\_\_\_

Other instructions:

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### Email, Texting, Online Platforms, and Applications

Your protected health information must be kept private and secure according to federal and state laws and professional ethics codes. Email, texting, online platforms, and applications are convenient ways to communicate for treatment purposes (such as discussing your current symptoms or concerns) and administrative purposes (such as appointment scheduling and billing). Reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of communications via email, texting, online platforms, and applications will be taken.

**However, it is impossible to guarantee the security and confidentiality of communication via email, texting, online platforms, and applications.** Should confidential information be improperly disclosed, through no fault of this office, this office will not be liable for such disclosures.

Potential risks of communicating by email or text may include:

- Misdelivery of emails or texts to an incorrectly typed address or number.
- Email and online accounts and phones can be hacked.
- Email is easier to falsify than handwritten or signed documents.
- Backup copies of email, texts, and online platform or application data may exist even after the sender or the recipient has deleted his/her copy.

- Employers and on-line services have a right to archive and inspect emails, texts, online communications and application data transmitted through their systems.
- Information sent via emails, texts, online platforms, and applications can be intercepted, altered, forwarded, or used without authorization or detection.
- Emails, online platforms, and applications can be used to introduce viruses into computer systems.
- Emails, texts, and online platform and application data can be used as evidence in court.

All emails and texts to or from patients concerning diagnosis or treatment will be filed as part of the patient record. Since the information will be considered part of the record, other individuals authorized to access the record, such as staff and billing personnel, will also have access to those emails. Note that all email is retained in the record of the system sending the email. Emails and texts may be forwarded internally to workforce members as necessary for diagnosis and treatment.

**COMMUNICATION VIA EMAIL, TEXT, ONLINE PLATFORM, OR APPLICATION SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES.**

You have the option of choosing whether to communicate with this office via email, texting, online platforms and/or applications and what information you wish to communicate. **You do not have to consent to communication via email, texting, online platforms, or applications** and communication can be handled in person or via phone call or mail. You may revoke any permission at any time by writing the office.

By consenting to communicate through email, text, online platform or application, you also agree to the following responsibilities:

- If you send a communication that requires or invites a response, and one is not given within a reasonable time frame, it is your responsibility to notify the office that the communication was not received. You cannot assume that because it was not returned that it was received.
- It is your responsibility to schedule appointments.
- To the extent possible you should NOT use email, texting, online platforms, or applications to make disclosures about sensitive medical information such as: mental health treatment, drug, alcohol or substance abuse, information related to AIDS and HIV, and genetic information.
- It is your responsibility to inform the office of any changes to your communication preferences including changes in mailing address, phone number, email address, or online account usernames.

**Email:** I  DO  DO NOT consent to use **email** for  
 Administrative Purposes and/or  Treatment purposes.  
 Other Conditions for **emailing**: \_\_\_\_\_

**Texting:** I  DO  DO NOT consent to use **texting** for  
 Administrative Purposes and/or  Treatment purposes.  
 Other Conditions for **texting**: \_\_\_\_\_

**Online Platforms:** I  DO  DO NOT consent to use **online platforms** for  
 Administrative Purposes and/or  Treatment purposes.

Other Conditions for **online platforms**:\_\_\_\_\_

### **Social Media**

Requests to connect from current or former clients on social networking sites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, Google+ or other sites or apps, will not be accepted. Adding clients as friends on these sites and/or communicating via such sites is likely to compromise privacy and confidentiality. Please do not communicate with your ICFE therapist via any social networking sites.

The ICFE has a professional Facebook page at [www.Facebook.com/pages/Institute-for-Couple-and-Family-Enhancement](http://www.Facebook.com/pages/Institute-for-Couple-and-Family-Enhancement). This account used to share general information related to mental health, parenting, romantic relationships, and couple or family therapy. If you choose to “like” our Facebook page we assume that you are making an informed decision about how this may compromise your confidentiality. The fan list on the ICFE Facebook page is public information and easily accessed by anyone on the internet. The vast majority of our followers are not clients; however, there is a small risk that you could be identified as a client simply based on your decision to follow our page.

### **Blog**

The ICFE maintains a professional blog about couple and family issues at \_\_\_\_\_.  
Clients are welcome to read the blog, comment and sign up for email notifications. However, similar to social media, please be cautious that in leaving any comments on my blog you may compromise your confidentiality. Any comments that divulge personal information will be edited at the discretion of the blog author.

### **Business Review Sites**

I have listings on Google Place and Yelp, both of which include options for users to rate their providers and add reviews. These listings are not requests for testimonials, ratings, or endorsement from you as my client. You have a right to express yourself on any site you wish. But due to confidentiality laws, I cannot respond to any review on any site whether it is positive or negative. And like my blog and other online communications, there are privacy risks.

I recognize that technology is ever-evolving and that electronic communications cannot be fully protected from unauthorized interception. Understanding the risks of electronic communication via email or texting, I have indicated my preferences and consent for communications.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client/Patient Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Personal Representative Signature (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to Client/Patient

\_\_\_\_\_  
Minor Signature (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date