



The Clinical Relationship and Policy

The clinicians at Forest Clinical Services are licensed by the NYS Office of Professions Board of Mental Health Professionals, and practice in accordance with the professional and ethical guidelines of that Board and appropriate national professional organizations, such as the National Association of Social Workers National Association, American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and The American Mental Health Counselors Association.

The confidential relationship and communications between a licensed mental health professional in the State of New York and his/her clients are privileged, and communication will not be disclosed except for the following provisions:

- 1) As professionals we are required to report to state authorities any instances of reported, observed, and/or suspected abuse of children, the elderly, or handicapped adults;
- 2) Under provisions of law, therapists have a duty to "warn of, or take reasonable precautions to provide protection from a client's violent behavior when the client has communicated a serious threat of physical violence against a clearly identified or reasonably identifiable victim or victims, or a serious threat of substantial damage to real property."

This also applies to incidents of possible harm to self. If such efforts are made, the mental health professional is not liable for any legal action for having broken the privacy or confidentiality of the therapist-client relationship;

- 3) If the individual receiving treatment is under eighteen years of age, treatment must be authorized by a parent or guardian. It is our preference to undertake treatment with the consent of both parties.

If we determine that it is appropriate or necessary to proceed with therapy with only one parent providing consent, the non-signing parent still has a legal right to a copy of the minor's record if requested, unless his/her parental rights have been terminated or there is a Court Order prohibiting him/her from receiving records.

- 4) Lastly, we agree never to respond to a subpoena or formal request intended for use in any court-related dispute, for any reason, unless issued by a judge. This would include any expectation that the therapist(s) might act as a witness for or against a client; or if a couple, for or against either person receiving services through Forest Clinical Services.

**FOREST CLINICAL SERVICES
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