

Debbie Benschling
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MSW ❖ LCSW ❖ MSWAC ❖ ACSW ❖ CCH

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Privacy Considerations

Privacy protection is important and required of me by a variety of Federal and State regulations and my codes of ethics. I have a duty to uphold your confidentiality. The purpose of this document is to assist you in making informed and thoughtful decisions regarding electronic payment, email and text communication with me. My policies set parameters to limit the risk and you have choices within those policies. Information to assist in educating you on the risks involved in electronic services (email & text communications, and card payments) and to help you determine if those risks are acceptable to you as related to our communications, service payment and your privacy that at times may involve sensitive information.

Regarding Email Risk

1. Technical experts often describe email as being like a postcard, in that all hands it passes through can view it. Are you familiar with the risks of emails being viewed by various engineers, administrators, and bad actors as it passes through the Internet?
2. Think about where you read and write emails, and what devices you do that on. Think about who can see you reading and writing emails in these places, and who can access the devices you use to read and write emails. Would there be any negative consequences to any of those people reading or glancing at emails exchanged with your therapist? Are there certain kinds of email contents that you would feel safe letting these people see and other kinds of contents you would not feel safe letting them see? Let me know the answers to these questions if you wish to use email with me.
3. Think about which email address(es) you might use with your therapist. Who has access to each address? If you use a work email address, know that your employer may legally view all the emails you send /receive with that address. Be aware that engineers and administrators at your email service provider may be able to view your emails.
4. How quickly do you normally receive replies from others via email? Do you expect replies more quickly than your therapist's stated response time? Can you see any negative consequences occurring if your therapist does not or cannot reply to an email as quickly as others in your life typically do?

My email service passes through a chain of companies: *My website hosting providers are Hostgator and JustHost. Emails are forwarded to my Gmail account. Replies are from my Gmail account and go back through my hosting providers. I access my Gmail account on several devices (iPhone, iPad, iMac, and MacBook air) that are synced via iCloud. My phone service is from Sprint. I have Internet connection service through Sprint and Comcast.*

Regarding Texting Risk

1. Text messages are often sent using the Internet, even though they are usually a part of one's phone service. Are you familiar with the risks of texts being viewed by various engineers, administrators, and bad actors as it passes through the Internet?
2. Are you aware that text messages wait on phone company computers until they are retrieved, and may remain there indefinitely? Can you imagine any negative consequences if engineers, administrators, or law enforcement personnel viewed these stored texts from or to your therapist?
3. Think about where you read and write text messages, and what devices you do that on. Think about who can see you reading and writing texts in these places, and who can access the devices you use to read and write texts. Would there be any negative consequences to any of those people reading or glancing at texts exchanged with your therapist? Are there certain kinds of text contents that you would feel safe letting these people see and other kinds of contents you would not feel safe letting them see? Let me know the answers to these questions if you wish to use text with me.

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4. How quickly do you normally receive replies from others via text? Do you expect replies more quickly than your therapist's stated response time? Can you see any negative consequences occurring if your therapist does not or cannot reply to a text as quickly as others in your life typically do?

The following device(s) and phone service(s) are used to send and receive text messages: Sprint is the carrier who provides my phone service. *An iPhone 5S (office phone) iPhone6 for emergencies are the primary devices used for texting. Text messages are synced via iCloud with an iPad. My Internet connection is through Sprint and Comcast.*

ELECTRONIC PAYMENT COMMUNICATIONS DISCLOSURE

If you wish, you may pay fees electronically by credit, debit or any card used for electronic payment. My card processing service is Square Up and the above email service provides receipts.

Please Be Aware of the Following:

I have a duty to uphold your confidentiality, and thus wish to make sure that your use of the above payment service is done as securely and privately as possible.

After using any of the above services to pay your fees, that service may send you receipts for payment by email or text message. These receipts will include the business name, and are likely to indicate that you have paid for a therapy session or clinical service.

It is possible the receipt may be sent automatically, without first asking if you wish to receive the receipt. I am unable to control this in many cases, and may not be able to control the email address or phone number your receipt is sent to.

Regarding electronic payment risks

- At which email address or phone numbers have I received these kinds of receipts before?
- Are any of those addresses or phone numbers provided by my employer or school? If so, the employer or school will most likely be able to view the receipts that are sent to you.
- Are there any other parties with access to these addresses or phone numbers that should not be seeing these receipts? Would there be any danger if such a person discovered them?
- Is your email or text message service secure or normal (unsecured)?
- Payments made by credit or debit card will appear on your card statement as being made to Mind Empowered Sport Performance or Counselingoption and may not include Debbie Benschling LCSW. Please consider who might have access to your statements before making electronic payments by credit or debit card.

Health Savings Accounts and Flexible Spending Accounts

If you are using a Health Savings Account (HSA), Flexible Spending Account (FSA) or Insurance Company issued payment card the above risks apply. Please be aware that even if your payment goes through and is authorized at the time your card is run, there is a possibility that your payment could later be denied. In the event of this happening, you are responsible for ensuring that full payment is made by other means.

The following device(s) and service(s) are used to process electronic payments: Sprint is the carrier who provides my Internet services. *An iPad is the primary device used to process card payments. An iPhone 5S (office phone) may be used as back up. iPhone6 for emergencies are the primary device used for texting. Text messages are synced via iCloud with an iPad.*