

## **AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT AT THE CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY CENTER**

Overview. This Agreement contains information about the assessment services available from the Clinical Psychology Center (“CPC”), and it briefly discusses our confidentiality policy. Your clinician will review the Agreement with you today and will also give you a copy of a document (Notice of Policies and Practices utilized by the Clinical Psychology Center to Protect the Privacy of Your Health Information, hereinafter referred to as “the Notice”), which explains at some length our policy regarding the privacy of your records. The policy described in the Notice is intended to be consistent with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (“HIPAA”), a federal law that provides privacy protections and client rights with regard to the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Information for the purpose of treatment, payment, and health care operations. While the CPC is not legally obligated to follow HIPAA regulations, we aspire to do so, because we believe this will improve the quality of the care you receive in the CPC. You should go over the Agreement today with your clinician, and after the clinician has answered any questions you may have about it, you will need to sign the Agreement before services can be provided in the CPC. You can take the Notice home with you, and if, after reading it, you have questions about it, you can ask your clinician at another time. However, your signature on this Agreement verifies that we have given you a copy of the Notice.

Although we need to have you sign the Agreement today, you may revoke it at any time in writing. That revocation will be binding on the CPC, except if the CPC has taken action in reliance on it, or if you have not satisfied any financial obligations you have incurred as a result of your assessment and/or treatment in the CPC.

Assessment services in the CPC. The CPC is an outpatient psychological facility staffed by graduate students of the Clinical Psychology Program at the University of Pittsburgh. The CPC provides a variety of treatment services and also provides formal psychological assessments, including the administration of various kinds of psychological tests. During a psychological assessment, your clinician will ask you many questions about your background and about how you have been feeling lately. The clinician will also ask you about symptoms of emotional disturbance and may talk with you about other matters, as well. Further, your clinician will administer some psychological tests to you. The clinician will explain the nature and purpose of each test before administering it. You may find these tests a little tiring or even frustrating, but they may also strike you as rather interesting. In each case there is a body of research that helps to interpret the meaning of your test data. It is very important that you make your best effort to do well on the tests administered to you. Some of the tests provide information about your level of effort. If it appears that you are not trying to do your best, the assessment results may not be accurate, and we will not be able to provide recommendations to help you. You may ask to stop the testing procedure at any time. However, if you do so, it may not be possible to complete your assessment. You should be aware that almost all rooms in the CPC have video monitors that operate constantly during regular business hours. We use these recordings for training purposes only, and they are automatically erased on a routine basis. Video recordings may be reviewed by program faculty and by graduate student clinicians for purposes of training and supervision. Faculty and student clinicians may also discuss your treatment for purposes of training and supervision.

Supervision of services in the CPC. As previously noted, the CPC serves as a training center for doctoral students. However, each psychological assessment is supervised by a licensed psychologist. In the case of your psychological assessment, the psychologist who is providing supervision is called:

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If you are concerned about the services you receive from the CPC, you are encouraged first to discuss your concerns with your clinician. If your concerns are not satisfactorily resolved, you may then wish to contact your clinician's supervisor. Please let your clinician know if you intend to do so. The most efficient way to contact the supervisor is to telephone the main office of the CPC, at 412-624-8822. A staff member will then arrange for your clinician's supervisor to return your call. Alternatively, you may contact your clinician's supervisor at the following Email address: [clinic@pitt.edu](mailto:clinic@pitt.edu).

Fees and scheduling. The fee for your assessment is \_\_\_\_\_. You will need to pay this fee in full before the assessment can begin.

Your appointment time is reserved for you. We expect that you will notify us if you must cancel an appointment or will arrive late. *You will be assessed a \$10.00 charge for any session which you do not cancel at least 24 hours in advance.* Please note that the CPC follows the University's academic calendar and is closed for a total of about ten weeks during annual university breaks. These breaks occur in early January, early March, late April, late August, and at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Emergency coverage is not available during these times, nor is it available at night or on the weekend. If an emergency arises at a time when CPC staff are not available, you should contact the emergency department at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, at 412-624-2000.

Limits of confidentiality. All assessment sessions and any written, audio, or video records of the same are strictly confidential. Information obtained during assessment will not be disclosed to any outside persons or agencies without your written consent, except where required by law. No information is released to family members or other health practitioners without your written consent. Certain kinds of information may be released to your employer without your consent *only* if you are receiving workers' compensation payments for a condition being evaluated at the CPC. Further, in certain circumstances current students at the University of Pittsburgh may have decreased confidentiality protections, as described in the next section. Detailed information about our confidentiality policy can be found in the Notice, of which you have been given a copy. In most situations, the CPC will only release information about your assessment to others if you sign a written Authorization form that conforms with the requirements of HIPAA. A copy of the Authorization form follows the last page of this Agreement. If you wish, you may fill out this form today, or you can do so at another time, unless you don't want the results of your assessment to be released to anyone.

There are several situations in which release of information requires only that you provide written, advance consent. Your signature on this Agreement provides consent for those activities, as follows:

- The CPC may use or disclose your protected health care information for treatment, payment, and health care operations.

- More particularly, your clinician will discuss assessment findings with the psychologist supervisor and may review your videotape with the supervisor. Other faculty and student clinicians may also discuss your assessment for purposes of training and supervision.
- Further, CPC staff occasionally find it helpful to consult other health and mental health professionals about a case. During a consultation, CPC personnel will make every effort to avoid revealing your identity. The other professionals are also legally bound to keep this information confidential. If you don't object, your clinician will not let you know if such a consultation has occurred.
- You should be aware that there are a number of clinicians working in the CPC, and there are some administrative staff. In almost all cases, at least some of your protected information must be shared with these individuals for both clinical and administrative purposes, such as scheduling, billing, and quality assurance. All of the students and professional staff are bound by the same rules of confidentiality. All nonprofessional staff members have been given training about protecting your privacy and have agreed not to release any information outside the CPC without the permission of a professional staff member.
- If clients seriously threaten to harm themselves, CPC staff may be obligated to seek hospitalization for these clients or to contact family members or others who can provide protection.

Additionally, there are several other extremely rare circumstances in which information may be disclosed to others without your authorization. These include situations involving child abuse and neglect, the abuse of older adults, very serious threats to the health or safety of others, certain legal proceedings, and the like. If you wish, CPC staff will review these exceptions with you in more detail. Please note that given the goals of this clinic and training status of therapists, your graduate student therapist will not provide testimony as part of legal proceedings, including child custody proceedings.

Limitations on confidentiality for students at the University of Pittsburgh. If you are currently a student at the University of Pittsburgh, you should be aware that under certain circumstances you may have fewer confidentiality protections than other clients, consistent with requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). If the CPC records of a current Pitt student are used for purposes other than treatment, from that time on the decreased confidentiality protections of FERPA will apply. Under FERPA, university officials are sometimes permitted to inspect students' records, and a student's CPC records may even be inspected by family members, such as parents. *However, FERPA does not apply to CPC records that are used only for purposes of treatment.* Therefore, current students at the University of Pittsburgh will not be asked to participate in research projects within the CPC. Further, you are urged not to inspect your own records, nor should you release your records to anyone not directly involved in your treatment, since this would make those records subject to decreased confidentiality protections under FERPA. If CPC staff become aware that your records have been converted under FERPA, we will inform you.

Client rights. Consistent with HIPAA regulations, the CPC provides you with a number of rights with regard to your Clinical Record and disclosures of protected health information. These rights include requesting that the CPC amend your record; requesting restrictions on what information from your Clinical Record is disclosed to others; requesting an accounting of most disclosures of protected health information that you have neither consented to nor authorized; determining the location to which protected information disclosures are sent; having any complaints you make about CPC policies

recorded in your records; and the right to a paper copy of this Agreement, the attached Notice, and the CPC privacy policies and procedures. CPC staff will be happy to discuss any of these rights with you.

Minors and parents. Clients who are under the age of 18 and not emancipated, together with their parents, should be aware that the law generally allows parents to examine their children’s assessment records, unless a specific agreement has been negotiated to the contrary.

Consent. I have read this Agreement and have been given the opportunity to ask questions about any of the information contained in it. I have no further questions about the Agreement at present, and I agree to abide by its terms. I have also been given a copy of the HIPAA Notice, described above. I authorize the CPC to provide psychological assessment services to me, as described previously. I specifically agree to permit the CPC to record my sessions, under the policies stated above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Print client's full name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Witness*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of client or personal representative*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*