



This form is in addition to the **Therapy, Policies, Agreement and Consent Form**. Both must be signed to participate in Telemental Health Sessions.

### Overview

❖ You will need access to the certain technological services and tools to engage in Telemental health-based services with Polly Ryan.
❖ Telemental health has both benefits and risks, which you and I will be monitoring as you proceed with your work.
❖ It is possible that receiving services by Telemental health will turn out to be inappropriate for you, and that you and I may have to cease work by Telemental health.
❖ You can stop work by Telemental health at any time without prejudice.
❖ You will need to participate in creating an appropriate space for your Telemental health sessions
❖ You will need to participate in making a plan for managing technology failures, mental health crises, and medical emergencies
❖ I follow security best practices and legal standards to protect your health care information, but you will also need to participate in maintaining your own security and privacy

### What is Telemental Health?

“Telemental health” means, under law, the mode of delivering health care via information and communication technologies, including, but not limited to, telephone and/or internet. Another way to think about it is the provision of mental health services with the provider and recipient of services being in separate locations, and the services being delivered over electronic media.

Services delivered via Telemental health rely on several electronic, often Internet-based, technology tools. These tools can include videoconferencing software, email, text messaging, virtual environments, specialized mobile health (“mHealth”) apps, and others.

**I typically provide Telemental health services using the following tools:**

*Zoom – HIPAA secure video platform via browser or app*



*Hushmail – HIPAA secure encrypted email*

*Practice Better – HIPAA secure Electronic Health Records Platform*

- You will need access to Internet service and technological tools needed to use the above-listed tools to engage in Telemental health work with me.
- If you have any questions or concerns about the above tools, please address them directly to me so you can discuss their risks, benefits, and specific application to your treatment.

### Benefits and Risks of Telemental Health

#### Receiving services via Telemental health allows you to:

Receive services at times or in places where the service may not otherwise be available.

Receive services in a fashion that may be more convenient and less prone to delays than in-person meetings.

Receive services when you are unable to travel to my office. The unique characteristics of Telemental health media may also help some people make improved progress on health goals that may not have been otherwise achievable without Telemental health.

#### Receiving services via Telemental health has the following risks:

Telemental health services can be impacted by technical failures, may introduce risks to your privacy, and may reduce my ability to directly intervene in crises or emergencies. Here is a non-exhaustive list of examples:

Internet connections and cloud services might fail before or during sessions.

Cloud-based service personnel, IT assistants, and malicious actors (“hackers”) may have the ability to access your private information that is transmitted or stored in the process of Telemental health-based service delivery.

I cannot see all of you, your body language, or your non-verbal reactions regarding what we are discussing. Due to technology limitations I may not hear all of what you are saying and may need to ask you to repeat yourself. To reduce the effects of these limitations, I may ask you to describe how you are feeling, thinking, and/or acting in more detail than I would during an in-person session. You may also feel that you need to describe your thoughts, feelings, and actions in more detail that you would during an in-person session.

Interruptions may disrupt services at important moments, and I may be unable to reach you quickly or using the most effective tools. I may also be unable to help you in-person.



There may be additional benefits and risks to Telemental health services that arise from the lack of in-person contact or presence, the distance between you and me at the time of service, and the technological tools used to deliver services. I will assess these potential benefits and risks, sometimes in collaboration with you, as your relationship progresses.

### Assessing Telemental Health's Fit for You

Although it is well validated by research, service delivery via Telemental health is not a good fit for every person. I will continuously assess if working via Telemental health is appropriate for your case. If it is not appropriate, I will help you find in-person providers with whom to continue services.

Please talk to me if you find the Telemental health media so difficult to use that it distracts from the services being provided, if the medium causes trouble focusing on your services, or if there are any other reasons why the Telemental health medium seems to be causing problems in receiving services.

**Raising your questions or concerns will not, by itself, result in termination of services.** Bringing your concerns to me is often a part of the process.

You also have a right to stop receiving services by Telemental health at any time without prejudice. If you would like to continue treatment, every attempt will be made to refer you to someone to work with in person.

### Your Telemental Health Environment

You will be responsible for creating a safe and confidential space during sessions. You should use a space that is free of other people. It should also be difficult or impossible for people outside the space to see or hear your interactions with me during the session. If you are unsure of how to do this, please ask me for assistance.

### Our Communication Plan

At our first session, we will develop a plan for backup communications in case of technology failures and a plan for responding to emergencies and mental health crises. In addition to those plans, these are my policies regarding communications:

The best way to contact me between sessions is call by telephone at 530-587-1978 or via the Practice Better Messenger Feature.

I will respond to your messages within 24 business hours. Please note that I may not respond at all on weekends or holidays. I may also respond sooner than stated in this policy. That does not mean I will always respond that quickly.

Our work is done primarily during our appointed sessions, which will generally occur during regular business hours weekdays. Contact between sessions should be limited to:

Confirming or changing appointment times
Billing questions or issues
Check ins between sessions when it is necessary for your welfare are possible; however, calls longer than 15 minutes are prorated at the session fee.

Please note that all textual messages you exchange with me, e.g. emails and text messages, will become a part of your health record. I may coordinate care with one or more of your other providers. I will use reasonable care to ensure that those communications are secure and that they safeguard your privacy.

### Our Safety and Emergency Plan

As a recipient of Telemental health-based services, you will need to participate in ensuring your safety during mental health crises, medical emergencies, and sessions that you have with your provider. I will confirm your location address with you.

I will require you to designate an emergency contact. You will need to provide permission for me to communicate with this person about your care during emergencies.

I will also develop with you a plan for what to do during mental health crises and emergencies, and a plan for how to keep your space safe during sessions. It is important that you engage with me in the creation of these plans and that you follow them when you need to.

### Your Security and Privacy

Except where otherwise noted, I employ software and hardware tools that adhere to security best practices and applicable legal standards for the purposes of protecting your privacy and ensuring that records of your health care services are not lost or damaged.

I keep and store records for each client electronically, using the following resources:

- PC laptop with use of firewalls, antivirus software, passwords, and disk encryption to protect the computer from unauthorized access and thus to protect the records from unauthorized access.
- Mobile devices with use of passwords, remote tracking, and remote wipe to maintain the security of the device and prevent unauthorized persons from using it to access my records.

As with all things in Telemental health, however, you also have a role to play in maintaining your security. Please use reasonable security protocols to protect the privacy of your own health care information. For example: when communicating with me, use devices and service accounts that are



protected by unique passwords that only you know. Also, use the secure tools that I have supplied for communications.

### Recordings

Please do not record video or audio sessions without my consent. Making recordings can quickly and easily compromise your privacy and should be done so with great care. I **will not** record video or audio sessions.

By signing below, you agree that you have read and understand all the above sections of the Telemental health informed consent. You agree that you also understand the limitations associated with participating in Telemental health counseling session and consent to attend sessions under the terms described in this document.

Client Name Printed \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Client Name Printed \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

Name Printed \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

Name Printed \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Therapist Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_