



Dr. Leah Farrell-Carnahan, PhD
Licensed Clinical Psychologist
Atlanta CBT, LLC
118 East Maple Street
Decatur, Georgia 30030
(404) 710-6605

Psychologist-Patient Services Agreement

Welcome. This document contains important information about Atlanta CBT LLC's professional services and business policies. This document also contains a brief summary of information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), a federal law that provides privacy protections and patient rights with regard to the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Information (PHI). In compliance with HIPAA, you are also being provided with a Notice of Privacy Practices which explains this in much greater detail. It is very important that you read this document carefully, and discuss any questions you have at any time. After reviewing this information, please sign this form, which constitutes an agreement between yourself and Atlanta CBT, LLC and your psychologist. You may revoke this Agreement in writing at any time.

The information on these pages is made available so you will be fully aware of some important matters concerning the psychologist-patient relationship and office policies. Read and sign one and keep another one with you for reference. Read it again in a day or two since there is typically much that occurs during your first visit.

Please note Dr. Farrell-Carnahan prefers to refer to "patients" as "clients", as in her website, but in the eyes of the law, you may be considered her "patient" and that is why the word "patient" is used in this document.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

A therapeutic relationship does not exist between you and a psychologist until after the initial intake evaluation is complete and you have decided, together, to work in a treatment relationship. It is important that you both agree you are a good therapeutic match before establishing this relationship.

Therapy can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life or changing the way you typically behave, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, therapy has also been shown to have many benefits. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to



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specific problems and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience.

Exposure-based cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is an evidence-based approach that aims to gradually help you/your child become more comfortable with situations that currently cause anxiety or other negative emotions. These sessions are likely to elicit a temporary increase in anxiety, but this is actually a key part of the process in order to help ultimately overcome fears. Over the course of exposure therapy, anxiety levels will decrease through habituation. The psychologist will work with you/your child to create a graduated exposure plan that includes a hierarchy from easier to more difficult exposures. The patient will never be forced to engage in an exposure; rather, the pace of therapy will be determined by the patient's readiness to practice each anxiety-provoking situation.

Some exposure activities may have a degree of risk involved (e.g., touching dirty objects and refraining from washing your hands in contamination-based OCD exposures), however, all exposure tasks conducted are deemed to be of minimal risk (i.e., on par with the level of risk that could be encountered in everyday life activities). If an adverse event were to happen during an exposure (e.g., a patient faints at the sight of a picture of someone getting their blood drawn), the psychologist will take appropriate measures to ensure the safety and well-being of the patient, including reaching out for medical care if needed. Exposure sessions sometimes take place off-site at a range of locations (e.g., shops, a restaurant, public transportation, your home). While we will do our best, we cannot guarantee confidentiality in sessions that occur outside the office as we do not have control over other people who may be present. Atlanta CBT, LLC and the psychologist are not responsible for any accident or injury that may occur during an exposure session.

There may be alternative treatments or modes of therapy to consider. We encourage you to become aware of these options and to ask any questions you may have at any time as we work together.



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SESSIONS/MEETINGS

Sessions are usually 55-minutes long scheduled at a time you agree on. The frequency and number of sessions needed is personalized to each patient's clinical needs, availability, and goals. Once a session has been scheduled, if you are unable to attend, you must provide 24 hours advance notice to avoid charges. Otherwise you will be expected to pay the full session fee. If you must cancel your appointment within the 24 hours prior to the session due to an emergency, extreme weather, or if you or your dependent are acutely ill, no charges will be incurred. Please be aware Dr. Farrell-Carnahan may have to cancel within the 24 hour period prior to your appointment due to acute illness or emergency. At this time, Atlanta CBT, LLC does not have an automated reminder system at this time so it is the patients' responsibility to develop a way to remind themselves of their schedule.

Before entering therapy, it is important to understand research suggests that patients who are "engaged" in therapy, meaning they attend and participate in appointments and also do "homework" to practice new skills outside of sessions, are most likely to meet their treatment goals. Throughout therapy, we will work together to increase and or maintain your engagement so you will be likely to maximize your therapy outcomes.

Please be advised that Dr. Farrell-Carnahan will take scheduled vacations. During the summer time, she may take up to 3-4 continuous weeks off. You will be provided with contact information for a local clinician who is covering for urgent needs during this time when she is out of the office. Also, if you experience a mental health emergency during this time, you should follow the protocol for crisis management described below.

After intake and the establishment of a therapeutic relationship, it **may** be possible for treatment delivery to occur via telephone or interactive video-conferencing (i.e., virtual "face-to-face" sessions) in lieu of, or in addition to, "in-person" sessions. Video conferencing (VC) is a real-time interactive audio and visual technology that enables psychologists to provide mental health services remotely. Treatment delivery via VC may be a preferred method due to convenience, distance, or other circumstances. Although VC may be used when the psychologist and client are in different locations, licensure regulations only allow a session to be conducted in the state in which the clinician is licensed and



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the client is located. Dr. Farrell-Carnahan is licensed in Virginia and Georgia, allowing her to see patients via VC in both states. An occasional exception to those general licensure requirements can be made if temporary permission is available from another state. If you are interested in engaging in some or all sessions via VC, your clinician and yourself will assess whether or not it is appropriate to conduct sessions via VC in your case and this decision may change over time based on new information, including your clinical status, administrative issues, and legal issues. Your clinician reserves the right to decide it is no longer appropriate to engage in sessions via VC at any time for any reason. This means you may be required to come for in-person sessions instead or to consider transfer to another clinician in your local area if you are unable to. Further, there is a separate Telehealth Agreement Form to review, discuss, and complete prior to engaging in therapy via VC with a psychologist at Atlanta CBT, LLC.

FEES

Fees include in-person session time as well as time spent out of session on preparation, note and report-writing, and coordination of care.

- 55 minute intake/diagnostic evaluation: \$275
- 55 minute therapy session: \$190
- Sessions of all other length will be billed at a prorated rate per minute
- If you become involved in legal proceedings that require my participation you will be expected to pay for professional time, including preparation and transportation costs to court.
- Returned checks will incur a \$25 returned check fee.

If your treatment plan includes coaching calls or messages between sessions (these are other than short administrative conversations) you will be billed at a prorated rate based on the session fee if these communications last longer than 5 minutes.

Dr. Farrell-Carnahan is an out-of-network provider. This means she does not participate directly with any insurance companies. She is not a Medicare or Medicaid provider either. We can provide you with a receipt or master bill upon request. You may choose to submit this to your insurance company which may result in reimbursement.



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BILLING AND PAYMENTS

You are responsible for the fees for your therapy, and are expected to pay for each session at the time of the session unless other arrangements have been made. Atlanta CBT, LLC accepts cash, check, and cards (including credit and health saving account).

In the event that you encounter some unusual financial hardship, such as losing your job, Atlanta CBT, LLC may be willing to negotiate a payment plan so you can continue receiving therapy during the difficult time. If your balance due becomes very large, or if no payments are made for several months, we have the option of resorting to legal means to obtain payment if we cannot work out a payment plan. This could mean involvement of a collection agency or small claims court, and the cost of this collection effort would be passed on to you. Such efforts typically require disclosure of some otherwise confidential information, but we will limit this to the minimum information necessary.

CONTACT

You may telephone Dr. Farrell-Carnahan at (804) 767-0856 or send an email to atlantacbt@gmail.com (remember that email may not be a confidential form of communication and you are therefore advised not to include personal information in an email to this address.). You may instead sign up for a free account with VSee (www.vsee.com) for encrypted and HIPAA-compliant text messaging for use to coordinate scheduling and limited between-session coaching for CBT homework only. There may also be a patient portal available to you via the electronic medical record Dr. Farrell-Carnahan uses. Please ask her about this. Due to Dr. Farrell-Carnahan's work schedule, she is often not immediately available to receive calls and texts. Her phone will be answered by confidential voice mail. She will make every effort to return your call or text on the same day you make it, with the exception of nighttime, weekends, and holidays. Calls or texts made at nighttime or on weekends and holidays may be returned the next business day unless prior arrangements have been made.



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URGENT NEEDS AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Atlanta CBT, LLC and Dr. Farrell-Carnahan do not provide formal emergency services, yet Dr. Farrell-Carnahan wishes to be available to you as much as is reasonably possible. If you cannot reach her urgently, you may choose to contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline if you are in crisis and have thoughts of hurting yourself and she is not available. Free counselors are available 24/7, 365 days per year on that line. The number is 1-800-273-TALK. For Georgia residents, there is another option available as well called the Georgia Crisis & Access Line. The number is 1-800-715-4225. **If you are ever in a psychological emergency, please call 911 and/or contact the nearest emergency room for crisis treatment.**

SOCIAL MEDIA

Atlanta CBT, LLC maintains a Facebook page for purposes of providing education about mental health and evidence-based treatment. It is your right to determine the level of disclosure you are comfortable with but Atlanta CBT, LLC will take all precautions not to disclose your status as a patient or previous patient on your behalf. This may include deleting any comments you or your immediate family members make on posts. If you choose to “like” or “follow the page” or “like” a post, please consider any confidentiality or disclosure risk you may encounter. The law and ethical code prohibit psychologists from being “friends” with you on personal social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, so please do not send connection requests.

OTHER LIMITS ON CONFIDENTIALITY

The law protects the privacy of all communications between a patient and a psychologist. In most situations, Dr. Farrell-Carnahan can only release information about your treatment to others if you sign a written authorization form that meets certain legal requirements imposed by HIPAA and/or state law. I will take every precaution and measure to ensure the privacy of your confidential information.

There are some situations in which a psychologist is legally and or ethically obligated to take some action which will likely involve revealing information to an



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outside party, possibly without your consent. These situations are unusual, and are limited to cases in which harm is likely, including:

- Cases in which a psychologist is ordered by a judge to release records
- Cases in which a psychologist has reason to believe a child under 18 may be abused or neglected
- Cases in which a psychologist has reason to believe an older adult may be abused or neglected
- Cases in which you have made a specific threat of violence against another, or if a psychologist believes that you present a clear, imminent risk of serious physical harm to another or yourself

If such a situation arises, Dr. Farrell-Carnahan will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action or releasing any information about you, and I will limit disclosure of information to only what is necessary. Confidentiality issues can be complicated, so if you have any questions about them, please feel free to ask them now or in the future as needed.

In addition, to protect your privacy, if Dr. Farrell-Carnahan happens to run into you in a public setting, she will not acknowledge you. This will give you the option of remaining anonymous. If you speak first, she'll be happy to say 'hello.'

PATIENT RIGHTS

HIPAA provides you with a number of rights, which briefly include the right to amend the information in your record, to limit what information is disclosed and to whom, to request restrictions as to how you are contacted, and to receive an Accounting of Disclosures, or a list of all information that has been released about you. You also can file a complaint about our policies and procedures regarding your records with the federal Department of Health and Human Services.



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Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document, and agree to abide by its terms during our professional relationship and consent to treatment with Leah Farrell-Carnahan, Ph.D., L.C.P., member of Atlanta CBT, LLC.

_____ Full printed name of client

_____ Full printed name of parent/guardian if client is a minor

_____ Signature of client (or parent/guardian)

_____/_____/_____ Date