

Privacy/Confidentiality and Office Practices

Artemis Counselling is committed to providing a high standard of ethical care and to protecting the privacy of clients' personal information. We are required to comply with the regulations set out by the Social Work Profession as well as relevant government legislation [Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, 2004 (PIPEDA), the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA)] and the Child and Family Service Act, 2017 (CFSA), as may be applicable. Accordingly, you must review and agree to abide by this Confidentiality Policy as a condition of your contract with Artemis Counselling.

You acknowledge that in the course of your work for Artemis Counselling you will come into possession of, or become aware of, confidential information related to the work of Artemis Counselling and its clients, including clients' personal information.

Nature of Confidential Information related to Artemis Counselling:

The following classes of information related to our business is confidential:

- Personal information of Marta, her employees or contractors.
- Certain contracts or contractual terms.
- Business information, including but not limited to information related to our finances, banking, marketing, security, passwords and processes.

Nature of Personal or Confidential Client Information Collected:

The following classes of information related to our clients is confidential:

- The names of clients and their family members.
- Demographic and contact information are required to maintain a working file.
- We also collect information about our work with clients such as notes detailed enough to reflect the scope of the work and my actions, any correspondence sent or received, any consents or other documents you have signed, and copies of papers you have given me.
- Information necessary for billing and scheduling purposes, including banking or credit card information.
- Medical information, including symptoms and diagnoses.

Other Confidential Information:

Other information not listed above may be confidential. If you are unsure about whether a certain document or piece or class of information is confidential, please discuss your concerns with Marta prior to any disclosure to any person or organization.

Storage and Use of Information:

- Other practitioners do not access a client's file or information unless the client has provided consent for them to become involved in your care or have initiated care yourself.
- Artemis Counselling employees and contractors must store any confidential information securely, whether on a computer system that is password protected or in secure physical file (such as in a locked filing cabinet). Any passwords for devices used to store client information must be of a reasonable strength and cannot be shared with any person other than authorized Artemis Counselling personnel or contractors. Electronic devices which contain confidential information must be locked when not in use and must be programmed to lock automatically when not in use.

Circumstances Surrounding Information Disclosure:

- There may be times when we ask a client if we may speak with others about them and their situation or when they may ask this of us. On these occasions, we will look at the benefits and consequences of speaking to others about your situation. We would then ask for *their informed, written consent* for us to share their information.
- There may be times when we consult on our work with a Therapist Supervisor or Social Work colleague(s) for the purposes of reflection and therapeutic skill development. Any consultation surrounding client cases would be done without revealing any identifying information about our clients.

There are exceptional situations where we must share information about a client without their consent:

Working with client under the age of 17

When working with clients/children aged 17 and younger professionals have an obligation under section 125 of the CFSA, to report to the Children's Aid Society (CAS) if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is in need of protection.

A child may be in need of protection if the child or any reported child has suffered physical harm, sexual molestation, sexual exploitation, emotional harm, inadequate care or has been abandoned or been subject to a pattern of neglect.

As laid out in Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers harms include but are not limited to: physical harm, sexual harm, emotional harm, unavailability of parent and (for children younger than 12) acts that are criminal in nature.

Other Circumstances:

1) Risk to Yourself or Others

If you have a concern about any risk that a client may cause harm to themselves or harm to another person then we must act to ensure their safety or the safety of others in accordance with your professional obligations.

2) Sexual Abuse or Harm of any Healthcare Professional

If I have any information about a sexual assault/abuse about any healthcare professional, I must report it to their governing professional college.

3) Documentation Subpoenaed by Law

If I am required by law to release information such as receiving a subpoena to court.

Telephone and Online Communication:

For scheduling and general inquiries, clients are to be encouraged to please contact us at info@artemiscounselling.com or use the Jane App platform.

We do not recommend the use of texting in protecting the privacy of your personal matters.

Employees and contractors may use email to communicate with clients about administrative matters or resources, but email should not be used to discuss clients' personal matters.

To protect client privacy, do not add clients as a contact or communicate with clients on any social media platform. Clients may choose to follow you or Artemis Counselling on public social media forums but should understand that this is a potential privacy risk.

In the event of a Breach:

If you know or suspect that any confidential information of Artemis Counselling or its clients has been lost, stolen or accessed by an unauthorized person you must bring this to Marta's immediate attention.