

Limitations To Confidentiality

There are some situations in which a therapist is legally obligated to breach confidentiality. These situations may include:

1. If a therapist knows or has reason to suspect a minor child, elder, or dependent adult is being neglected or abused, the law requires that a report is filed immediately with the appropriate government agency, usually the county Child Protective Services or Adult Protective Services. Once such a report is filed, your therapist may be required to provide additional information.
2. If your therapist suspects that you present a serious and specific threat of physical harm or violence to yourself or another person, it may be required to disclose information necessary to keep you safe or others safe. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting your family or others who can help provide protection, contacting the police, or seeking your hospitalization.
3. When a judge issues a COURT ORDER to release a client file.

While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing you about potential problems, it is important to discuss any questions or concerns that you may have now or in the future with your therapist. Should you wish information to be released to any person(s) or agencies, you will be required to sign a CONSENT TO RELEASE INFORMATION form.