

Informed Consent SAMPLE Statements

(Remember to ensure this document aligns with your state and local guidelines and that it honors the ethical standards of your professional affiliations. Feel free to adapt any part of this into your counseling documents.)

The goal of an Informed Consent is to prepare the client as much as possible for what they might experience in your office, and to help them be prepared for how to address difficult situations outside of your office.

Statement of Credentials

Thank you for selecting me to meet your counseling needs. It is a privilege to serve you and I will do all I can to help with whatever need you have and to provide the highest quality of service. Please be aware that while I do have a Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy, the services I provide are Biblical Counseling only. I am not licensed as a professional counselor, and I do not provide Professional Counseling Services or psychiatry services (medicine prescriptions). In order to better serve you the following information is being provided. Please examine it carefully. I will be happy to answer any questions regarding items for which you need additional clarification.

Contact Outside of Session

Contact Outside of Counseling: The Counselor will make reasonable efforts to be available for additional sessions or emails on an as needed basis outside of scheduled session time, however, **this is not always available.**

The following rules apply for texting:

- You may text the Counselor at your discretion.
- You recognize and understand that the Counselor cannot guarantee your confidentiality when texting.
- You may not receive an immediate response to your text. The Counselor may not receive your text for several hours or days (in the case of weekends or time off) and will only respond to your text as time allows.
- You agree not to text any threats of harming yourself or others to the Counselor. If you are feeling suicidal or homicidal you agree to call 911, a pastor, or a friend for assistance. You may call the Counselor and leave a voice message, however, messages left may not be checked right away.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality for Counselor: I am dedicated to preserving the confidentiality and privacy of all my clients. However, some state and federal laws require that I disclose information in certain situations. **Please review the following situations in which I must breach confidentiality:**

- If I suspect child, elderly or disabled person is being abused or neglected I am required to report that information to a state agency.
- When a client brings charges against the counselor or agency.
- When a court orders the counselor's testimony of your records.
- I may sometimes talk with another professional about your case in order to get an objective point of view. In those instances your confidentiality will be maintained as no identifying information will be revealed, only the circumstances of your

- situation. Any professional with whom I consult will also be required by professional ethics to maintain your confidentiality. The exception will be that when I am out of town I may release your information to another counselor who will serve on call should an emergency arise. In this case a little confidential information will be released as is necessary.
- When I believe a client is a danger to themselves or others (suicidal or homicidal).

The laws and ethics of confidentiality are complicated. If you have special or unusual concerns, an attorney is recommended for legal advice.

Confidentiality for Client: You may occasionally see someone you know coming from or going into the counseling office. While the counselor may be having a session or a professional meeting with the individual, the individual's presence in the office should be kept confidential in case it is a session. Please do not ask the individual why they were at the counselor's office. You may feel free to share with them why you were there if you choose, but do not expect them to reciprocate. You may also choose to not acknowledge seeing each other at the office.

Subpoenas: If your records are requested through subpoena, I will remit a summary of your case.

Limitation of Liability

Limitation of Liability: The Client is responsible for his/her own decisions, actions, and results. The Client agrees to hold Seek First and the Counselor free from all liability for any action, advice, consultation, and results, or adverse situations resulting directly or indirectly from communication with the Counselor. Furthermore, Seek First Ministries, Inc., and the Counselor, shall not be liable for any damages, loss, cost or expenses, including incidental or consequential damages, of the Client. The Client's sole remedy against Seek First Ministries, Inc., and the Counselor shall be the replacement cost of Counseling services.

Right to Refer

Referrals: If you could benefit from a treatment I cannot provide, I will recommend an alternative option for you. You have a right to ask about such other treatments, their risks, and benefits.

Other topics to consider including in your contract:

Appointments: Include a brief description of the length of your standard appointment as well as your cancellation policy.

Financial Issues: Establish fee here (leave a blank if you use a sliding scale and fill in the rate at the initial session). State whether or not you take insurance and any details needed for filing an insurance claim. Describe the process a client should use if they are unable to pay for a session.

Counseling Approach: Briefly describe your counseling approach (CBT, EMDR, listening prayer, etc.) as well as what a client might expect during session ("when working through past trauma, symptoms may increase before they get better" or other statements to prepare the client for the hard work that is ahead) You can also mention the holistic approach you want to take with your clients here. Example: I may refer you for additional services such as prayer ministry, psychiatry services, or other counseling approaches that would benefit you in your healing journey.