

**INFORMED CONSENT FOR
TELEPSYCHOLOGY SERVICES WITH JESSICA LONG, PSYD**

Client Name: _____ **Client Date of Birth:** _____

Parent Name (if applicable): _____

This Informed Consent for Telepsychology contains important information focusing on doing psychotherapy using the Internet (or phone in case of technical difficulty). Please read this carefully, and let me know if you have any questions. *When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.*

Benefits and Risks of Telepsychology

Telepsychology refers to providing psychotherapy services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. One of the benefits of telepsychology is that the client and clinician can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be helpful in ensuring continuity of care if the client or clinician moves to a different location, takes an extended vacation, or is otherwise unable to continue to meet in person. *Currently, due to state-mandated COVID-19 precautions, it is a preferred method of psychotherapy for many.* It is also more convenient and takes less time. Telepsychology, however, requires technical competence on both our parts to be helpful. Although there are benefits of telepsychology, there are some differences between in-person psychotherapy and telepsychology, as well as some risks. For example:

- Risks to confidentiality. Because telepsychology sessions take place outside of the therapist's private office, there is potential for other people to overhear sessions if you are not in a private place during the session. On my end I will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. ***But it is important for you to make sure you find a private place for our session where you will not be interrupted.*** It is also important for you to protect the privacy of our session on your cell phone or other device. You should participate in therapy only while in a room or area where other people are not present and cannot overhear the conversation.
- Issues related to technology. There are many ways that technology issues might impact telepsychology. For example, technology may stop working during a session, other people might be able to get access to our private conversation, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.
- Crisis management and intervention. Usually, I will not engage in telepsychology with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring high levels of support and intervention. Before engaging in telepsychology, we will develop an emergency response plan to address potential crisis situations that may arise during the course of our telepsychology work.
- Efficacy. Most research shows that telepsychology is about as effective as in-person psychotherapy. However, some therapists believe that something is lost by not being in the same room. For example, there is debate about a therapist's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

Electronic Communications

We will decide together which kind of telepsychology service to use. At this time, my preferred method is Doxy.me, a cloud-based, HIPAA-compliant teletherapy provider. You may have to have certain computer or cell phone systems to use telepsychology services. You are solely responsible for any cost to you to obtain any necessary equipment, accessories, or software to take part in telepsychology.

For communication between sessions, I only use email communication and text messaging with your permission and only for administrative purposes unless we have made another agreement. This means that email exchanges and text messages with my office should be limited to administrative matters. This includes things like setting and changing appointments, billing matters, and other related issues. ***For email communication, I have an encrypted format we can utilize if you wish to communicate regarding any clinical information; please inform my administrative staff or me if this is needed.*** You should be aware that I cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any information communicated by email or text. Please note that I do not regularly check my email or texts, nor do I respond immediately, so these methods **should not** be used if there is an emergency.

Treatment is most effective when clinical discussions occur at your regularly scheduled sessions. But if an urgent issue arises, you should feel free to attempt to reach me by phone. I will try to return your call within 24 hours except on weekends and holidays. If you are unable to reach me and feel that you cannot wait for me to return your call, contact your family physician, visit the nearest emergency room, or contact our local Crisis Response at (509) 783-0500. If I will be unavailable for an extended time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact in my absence if necessary.

Confidentiality

I have a legal and ethical responsibility to make my best efforts to protect all communications that are a part of our telepsychology. However, the nature of electronic communications technologies is such that I cannot guarantee that our communications will be kept confidential or that other people may not gain access to our communications. I will try to use updated encryption methods, firewalls, and back-up systems to help keep your information private, but there is a risk that our electronic communications may be compromised, unsecured, or accessed by others. You should also take reasonable steps to ensure the security of our communications (for example, only using secure networks for telepsychology sessions and having passwords to protect the device you use for telepsychology).

The extent of confidentiality and the exceptions to confidentiality that I outlined in my Informed Consent still apply in telepsychology. These policies can be found in the Office Policies form that you signed the initial intake. This form is available on my website and is posted in my office. Please feel free to request a copy from our office. Please let me know if you have any questions about exceptions to confidentiality.

Appropriateness of Telepsychology

I will let you know if I decide that telepsychology is no longer the most appropriate form of treatment for you. We will discuss options of engaging in in-person counseling or referrals to another professional in your location who can provide appropriate services.

Emergencies and Technology

Assessing and evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting telepsychology than in traditional in-person therapy. To address some of these difficulties, we will create an emergency plan before engaging in telepsychology services. I will ask you to identify an emergency

contact person who is near your location (see below) and who I will contact in the event of a crisis or emergency to assist in addressing the situation. ***In signing below, you are providing authorization in allowing me to contact your emergency contact person as needed during such a crisis or emergency.***

If the session is interrupted for any reason, such as the technological connection fails, and you are having an emergency, do not call me back; instead, call 911, the local crisis response at (509) 783-0500, or go to your nearest emergency room. Call me back at (509) 737-9009 after you have called or obtained emergency services.

If the session is interrupted and you are not having an emergency, disconnect from the session and I will wait two (2) minutes and then re-contact you via the telepsychology platform on which we agreed to conduct therapy. If you do not receive a call back within two (2) minutes, then call me on the phone number I provided you, (509) 737-9009. We will then decide how best to proceed.

If there is a technological failure and we are unable to resume the connection, you will only be charged the prorated amount of actual session time.

Fees

The same fee rates will apply for telepsychology as apply for in-person psychotherapy. However, insurance or other managed care providers may not cover sessions that are conducted via telecommunication. If your insurance, HMO, third-party payor, or other managed care provider does not cover electronic psychotherapy sessions, you will be solely responsible for the entire fee of the session. Please contact your insurance company prior to our engaging in telepsychology sessions in order to determine whether these sessions will be covered.

Records

The telepsychology sessions ***shall not be recorded in any way*** unless agreed to in writing by mutual consent. I will maintain a record of our session in the same way I maintain records of in-person sessions in accordance with my policies.

Important Bullet Points

- My preferred method of teletherapy is through Doxy.me. This website provides HIPAA-compliant services. We will identify an alternative if needed.
- No one is to record our session, unless we have both agreed to this and determined it is in your best interest.
- It is important for you to have a quiet, private space that is free from distractions during our session.
- It is important to use a secure internet connection rather than a public/free Wi-Fi.
- You will need access to a webcam on your computer or a smart phone during our session.
- As your psychologist, I may determine that due to certain circumstances, telepsychology is no longer appropriate and that we resume sessions in-person.
- We need a back-up plan and safety plan that includes at least one emergency contact.

Informed Consent for Telepsychology Services

This agreement is intended as a supplement to the general informed consent that we agreed to at the outset of our clinical work together and does not amend any of the terms of that agreement. Your signature below indicates agreement with its terms and conditions.

For Adult Clients: In case of emergency, I authorize my clinician, Jessica Long, to contact the following individuals by phone.

Emergency Contact Name

Phone Number

Emergency Contact Name

Phone Number

For Clients Under 18:

I understand that in case of emergency, my clinician, Jessica Long, will contact my parent.

As the parent, I understand that I need to be available by phone in case of emergency during the scheduled session. I can be contacted at the following numbers:

Parent Name

Phone Number

Parent Name

Phone Number

For all Clients: If technical difficulties interrupt our video session via doxy.me, I can be reached at the following phone number:

My Preferred Phone Number

Client Signature (if 13 years old or above)

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature (for all minors)

Date

Jessica Long, PsyD

Date