

Dr. Sharese Martin, PhD, LPC

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# **PRACTICE POLICIES**

## Appointments and Cancellations

Appointments are scheduled in advance, at a cadence we agree on, based on your goals, treatment needs, and our mutual availability. I use Headway to handle my billing. If Headway accepts your insurance, payments for each appointment will be made through Headway by debit or credit card or ACH transfer. We may discuss other billing options if Headway does not accept your insurance.

You may cancel appointments in advance without charge if I receive at least 24 hours advance notice (not counting weekends or holidays). However, you may be charged an \$85.00 missed appointment fee for appointment no-shows or last-minute cancellations. Please contact me directly regarding my latest policy on the cancellation cutoff period and fees.

#### Availability and After-Hours Emergencies

I check for voicemail messages during normal business hours. Messages left outside of normal hours of operation will be picked up the next business day. Holiday and peak seasons may affect my availability to return calls quickly. If you are experiencing suicidal or homicidal thoughts, are in crisis, or need immediate help, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.

#### Contacting Me

I am often not immediately available by telephone/text. I do not answer my phone/text when I am with clients or otherwise unavailable. You may leave a message/text on my confidential voicemail at these times, and I will return your call once I've reviewed your chart. However, it may take a day or two for non-urgent matters.

I will make every attempt to inform you in advance of planned absences and provide you with the name and phone number of the mental health professional covering my practice. If I need to cancel an appointment at the last minute, I will reach out as soon as possible and reschedule or have a staff member contact you.

#### **Discharge Process**

There are several reasons why we may eventually end our professional relationship. You may decide you would prefer to work with a different provider. I may conclude that you would be better served working with someone else.

Regardless of the case, I will first discuss with you the reasons for discharging, and if you request, provide you with a list of other qualified providers. I will also extend the discharge process length if necessary, based on your treatment needs, including continuing to provide transitional support for a time-limited period after you have been notified of the end of our treatment relationship.

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Ongoing failure to pay for treatment, attend sessions, or communicate with me respectfully and timely can also result in discharge from my practice. In these instances, to ensure you have continued access to care, I will make every reasonable effort to contact you and provide referrals to a new provider before considering our relationship ended.

### Social Media, Google Reviews & Technology

Risks & Benefits—Social media and technology use have risks, benefits, limitations, and boundaries. While I take precautions to avoid disclosing confidential information through public social media, I acknowledge the inherent limits of confidentiality when using technology. Likewise, I caution you to be aware of authorized and/or unauthorized access to information disclosed using technology in counseling.

Virtual Professional Presence--When I wish to maintain a professional and personal presence on social media, I create separate professional and personal web pages and profiles to clearly distinguish between the two kinds of virtual presence. My license in the state of Texas requires that I follow the Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association (2014). This Code considers "virtual relationships" equivalent to face-to-face relationships and generally discourages multiple relationships with clients.

This policy includes (but is not limited to) the following social networking platforms on which I might have a personal presence: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Linked-In, GroupMe. Therefore, my practice policy shall be to not knowingly accept a "friend" request (or similar virtual relationship that uses another term) on any social networking platform from current clients or in any case in which I believe that blurring of counselor-client relationship may be adversely affected. Also, unless you give me consent to view your social media information, I respect the privacy of your social media presence.

Google Reviews—I value any feedback regarding my services. However, I acknowledge the limitations of maintaining confidentiality when posting Google Reviews. To maintain your confidentiality, feel free to email, call, complete my session surveys, or submit your private feedback via my website. If you choose to submit a Google Review, please know that your name or email address may be displayed when you post a Google Review.