



4405 East West Highway, Suite 502  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
(240)479-4894  
**Date:**

**Client Name:**

### **Email Policy Contract**

Therapy and Mindfulness Practices, LLC has policies on how to use email to enhance communication while maintaining your privacy. This document is a place for you to acknowledge your consent to its use. Your decision to utilize email is strictly voluntary. You may rescind your consent at any time. Emails will be accessed by Therapy and Mindfulness Staff or a covering therapist (if your therapist is away from the office). Typically, you may expect a response within 24 - 72 business hours.

#### **When may I use email to communicate with my therapist?**

- Appointment requests
- Other matters not requiring an immediate response

#### **When should I NOT use email to communicate with my therapist?**

- In an emergency
- If you are experiencing any desire to harm yourself or others
- If you are experiencing a severe medication reaction
- If you need an immediate response

#### **What are the risks of using email?**

Risks of communicating via email include but are not limited to:

- Email may be seen by unintended viewers if addressed incorrectly.
- Hackers may intercept and redistribute emails.
- A person posing as you could access your information.
- Computer viruses.
- There is a risk that either party may not receive emails in a timely matter as spam filters may catch messages.
- Emails are discoverable in litigation and may be used as evidence in court.
- Emails can be circulated and stored by unintended recipients.
- Statements made via email may be misunderstood, thus creating miscommunication or negatively affecting treatment.
- There may be an unanticipated time delay between messages being sent and received.

#### **What happens to my messages?**

- Emails may be printed out or securely archived and maintained as a permanent part of your medical record.
- If you agree to email, my therapist, or a staff member of Therapy and Mindfulness Practices, LLC may choose to reply by email to a voicemail.
- Messages may be seen by staff for filing, troubleshooting technical issues with the email, or



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carrying out requests (e.g., appointment scheduling) when my therapist is away from the office.

**What are my obligations?**

- I must let my therapist or a staff member of Therapy and Mindfulness Practices, LLC know immediately if my email address changes.
- I will not use email to talk about my child (if my child is the patient), and if I do mention my child in an email, I will notify my child and make that email available to them.
- If I do not receive a response from my therapist or a staff member of Therapy and Mindfulness Practices, LLC, within 72-business hours, I will contact by telephone if a reply is needed.
- I am responsible for the content that I put in the emails.
- I will advise my therapist in writing should I decide that I would prefer not to continue communicating via email.
- I understand that I may use email as a supplement to my appointments with my therapist and not as a substitute for them.

**What steps have Therapy and Mindfulness Practices, LLC taken to protect the privacy of my email communications?**

- We have implemented the ability to send encrypted email messages, though not all emails will be encrypted.
- Computers are password protected.
- We have educated staff on the appropriate use and protection of email.
- We do not allow others (apart from Therapy and Mindfulness, LLC contractors and staff) to access client messages.
- We will verify email addresses before sending messages.

**What steps can I take to protect my privacy?**

- Do not use your work computer to communicate with your therapist as your employer has a right to inspect emails sent through the company's system.
- Do not use a shared email account to transmit messages.
- Log out of your email account if you will be away from your computer.
- Carefully check the address before hitting "send" to ensure that you are sending your message to the intended receiver.
- Avoid writing or reading emails on a mobile device in a public place.
- Avoid accessing email on a public Wi-Fi hotspot.
- Make sure that your email is signed with your first and last name and include your telephone number (if you would like us to call you).



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**CONSENT TO EMAIL USE**

By signing below, I consent to the use of email communication between myself and Therapy and Mindfulness Practices, LLC. I recognize that there are risks to its use, and despite the staff's best efforts, we cannot guarantee confidentiality. I understand and accept those risks and the policies for email use outlined in the form. I further agree to follow these policies and agree that should I fail to do so, my therapist may cease to allow me to use email to communicate with her. I also understand that I may withdraw my consent to communicate via email at any time by notifying the Therapy and Mindfulness LLC staff in writing.

Please list preferred email addresses below:

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Client Name	Signature	Date
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Guardian Name	Signature	Date
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Guardian Name	Signature	Date
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Staff Witness Name	Signature	Date
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