

Stephanie Nilsen, PhD
Policies and Billing Information

Welcome! Please read through this information about my professional services and practice policies and be sure to ask me any questions you may have.

Fees and Payments: My fee for a standard session is \$200.00. Other professional services are also billed at the hourly rate of \$200.00 prorated if I work for periods of less than one hour. Such services include report writing, phone calls over 10 minutes, preparation of records or treatment summaries, legal communications, court appearances, and letters on your behalf if needed. Payment for sessions is due at the time of service unless we make other arrangements ahead of time. I accept cash, personal checks, or credit cards. If any special circumstances occur that affect your ability to pay, we can discuss a payment plan.

Cancellations and Missed Appointments: If you need to cancel an appointment please let me know by 5 pm the day before your appointment so that I can make the time available to others. If you miss a scheduled appointment or cancel after 5 pm the day before, you will be charged a late cancellation fee of \$100. Please be aware that health insurance policies do not provide reimbursement for missed sessions.

Contacting Me: If you need to reach me outside of our regular sessions please leave me a message on my secure voice mail. In most cases I will return your call on the same day, with the exception of weekends and holidays. If you have an emergency, please call my office. If you are unable to reach me in an emergency and can't wait for me to return your call, contact your family physician, go to the nearest emergency room, or call 911. If I am unavailable for an extended time (vacation, illness, etc.), I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact in an emergency. If you are being seen concurrently by a psychiatrist or another therapist, that person should be considered back-up in an emergency.

You may contact me via email for routine matters such as scheduling but please be aware that electronic communications are not encrypted and your confidentiality can not be guaranteed. If you choose to communicate confidential information via email or text, an informed decision will be assumed, and viewed as your agreement to take the risk that these messages may be intercepted.

Confidentiality: The law protects the privacy of communications between a patient and a psychologist. In most situations, I can only release information about your treatment to others if you sign a written authorization form. There are some situations, however, where I am legally required or permitted to disclose information without either your consent or authorization:

- If I believe that a client presents an imminent danger to the health and safety of himself or others, I may be required to disclose information in order to take protective actions such as contacting family members, initiating hospitalization, warning a potential victim, and/or calling the police or appropriate authorities.
- If I have cause to suspect that a child or disabled adult is being abused or neglected, the law requires that I file a report with the County Director of Social Services.
- If you are involved in legal proceedings and a court issues an order for information concerning the professional services that I provided.
- If a government agency is requesting the information for health oversight activities, I may be required to provide it for them.
- If a client files a complaint or lawsuit against me, I may disclose relevant information regarding that patient in order to defend myself.

- If a client files a worker's compensation claim, and my services are being compensated through workers compensation benefits, I must, upon appropriate request, provide a copy of the client's record to the client's employer or the North Carolina Industrial Commission.

Sometimes I find it helpful to consult with other health professionals that provide care to you. In those situations, I will ask you for written, advance consent and I will disclose only the minimum amount of information necessary. Please feel free to bring up any questions or concerns that you may have about confidentiality now or in the future.

Health Insurance: Your health insurance may provide coverage for mental health treatment. It is important that you find out the details of your mental health coverage by contacting your insurance carrier via the toll free number on the back of your insurance card or their website. Find out if you have an annual deductible for mental health and how much of it you have already met, applicable co-pays and co-insurance, how many sessions you are allowed, and obtain pre-approval for sessions if required. I am happy to help you with this process if needed. Please be aware that you will be responsible for payment should your insurance refuse to pay for any services rendered.

Your signature below indicates that you understand and accept the policies described above:

Your signature

Date