

PRACTICE POLICIES

PRESENT AWAKENINGS THERAPY CENTER, PLLC
3166 N Lincoln Ave, Suite 214A, Chicago, IL 60657



This document contains important information about Present Awakenings Therapy Center's policies. My disclosure and your understanding of the items below will help both of us navigate the therapy relationship.

APPOINTMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

If you wish to cancel or reschedule your appointment, I am happy to do so with at least 24 business hours notice (Monday-Friday), so that I have time to offer the session to another client. If you are providing less than 24 hours notice to cancel your appointment (excluding when we both consider it an emergency) a Late Cancellation Fee will be charged directly to you for the full session fee. This fee is charged directly to you; insurance does not cover late cancellation fees. If you are providing less than 24 hours notice to reschedule your appointment within the same week, I will do my best to accommodate you; however, if we are unable to find a time to reschedule to the Late Cancellation Fee will apply.

If you are physically unable to attend your appointment (for example you are too sick to attend either in-person or via telehealth), please contact me by 9 am to be considered for an exemption from the Late Cancellation Fee. If your session was planned for in-person but you need to switch to a telehealth session -- for example due to inclement weather or a last minute change in your schedule -- and are already connected to telehealth services, please let me know at least 30 minutes prior to the start of your appointment, and I will be happy to switch to a telehealth appointment. If we were planning for a telehealth session but you would like to instead have an in-person session, please ask at least 2 hours prior to your scheduled session time to see if I can accommodate you. There is no fee for switching from an in-person session to telehealth session or vice versa.

Unless otherwise discussed, sessions are for a "therapeutic hour" which means they are approximately 53 minutes. If you are using insurance to pay for sessions, we are required to meet for a certain amount of minutes in order to bill your insurance. If you are going to be more than 15 minutes late to the session, please contact me to see if I can accommodate extending the session time or rescheduling your session; if we cannot find time to have a full session, the Late Cancellation Fee will apply. If you have provided no notice and have not shown to your appointment 15 minutes past the scheduled start time, the Late Cancellation Fee will be applied.

TERMINATION

Ending relationships can be difficult. Therefore, it is important to have a termination process in order to achieve some closure. The appropriate length of the termination depends on the length and intensity of the treatment. I may terminate treatment after appropriate discussion with you and a termination process if I determine that the psychotherapy is not being effectively used or if you are in default on payment. I will not terminate the therapeutic relationship without first discussing and exploring the reasons and purpose of terminating. If therapy is terminated for any reason or you request another therapist, I will provide you with a list of qualified therapists to treat you. You may also choose someone on your own or from another referral source.

If you do not show for your appointment for three consecutive weeks or do not attend any appointments in a month -- unless other arrangements have been made in advance -- for legal and ethical reasons, I must consider the professional relationship discontinued. You will be notified of the termination of treatment.

INSURANCE AND FEES

If you are self-paying for sessions, the first 2 sessions are considered the Intake Assessment and are \$175 per session. Sessions following the first 2 sessions are considered therapy sessions and are \$155 per session. I do hold some spots for sliding scale fees for clients who can show financial hardship; if you are interested in these please inquire if there are openings.

Most health insurance plans do have coverage for mental health therapy if services are deemed medically necessary; however, **YOU**, not your insurance company, are ultimately responsible for the payment of services. It is your responsibility to verify your coverage and benefits, including for both in-person and telehealth sessions and ensure you understand any copay, coinsurance, and/or deductibles associated with your plan. To verify your coverage, call the phone number on the back of your insurance card and ask about behavioral

health benefits. Some insurance plans require “pre-authorization” for services; if your plan requires pre-authorization it is your responsibility to inform me that pre-authorization is needed prior to it being needed. Many insurance companies won’t “back date” authorization, so you may be responsible for the session fees if you don’t inform me of necessary pre-authorizations. You are also responsible for checking to see if your insurance plan currently and continues to cover both in-person and telehealth services; some plans may not cover both or may stop covering both in the future.

Generally, your mental health diagnosis as well basic information about you needs to be provided in order for your insurance company to cover your services; some insurance plans also require occasional reviews of your treatment where I will have to disclose information about you and your treatment. If you don’t want this information disclosed, you will need to self-pay for sessions.

It is also your responsibility to inquire with your insurance company if I am considered “in-network” or “out-of-network” with your plan. I am currently in-network with BCBS PPO and Blue Choice PPO plans. However, plans vary by state, and within states and there is a chance that even if you have one of those plans I am not considered in-network within your plan. If you have a BCBS PPO or Blue Choice PPO plan, I am happy to bill your insurance plan directly. If you have other insurance, you will be required to self-pay at the time of sessions; I can then give you a “superbill” (or a specific type of receipt) for you to submit to your insurance company for reimbursement. Each insurance plans’ procedures for submitting superbills for reimbursement are different, and you will have to contact your insurance plan for instructions.

In addition to individual therapy, your treatment may require additional professional services; self-pay hourly rates prorated to the nearest 15 minutes may apply. These services may include report writing, telephone conversations lasting longer than 15 minutes, attendance at and travel to meetings with other professionals per your request, preparation of records or treatment summaries, and complying with legal proceedings. If these services are required or you would like me to perform these services, we will discuss fees likely to be incurred.

BILLING

If you are self-paying for sessions, the credit card you have on file will be charged the same day or week as your appointment.

If you are using insurance for sessions, in order to reduce over-payments any copays, coinsurance and/or deductibles you are responsible for will be charged to your credit card on file after reimbursement comes back from your insurance company. This will mean that any copays, coinsurance and/or deductibles will be charged approximately 1-3 weeks following your session.

If you have accrued an outstanding balance, you must be paying at least 25% of the balance plus the cost of the session each week to continue sessions. If you are unable to pay at least 25% of the balance, sessions may be suspended until you are able to pay. Outstanding balances that are more than 60 days past due without payment arrangements will be eligible for collection proceedings.

Generally, all client fees are charged to the credit card you have on file. However, if you would like to pay by electronic payment, cash, or check please discuss possible options with me.

EMAIL AND PHONE AVAILABILITY

If you need to contact me in between sessions, please call and leave a voicemail. You are also welcome to email me; however, I cannot ensure the confidentiality of any form of communication through electronic media -- since electronic media can be hacked -- including email. Because most of my time is spent in session with clients to whom I’m providing my undivided attention, I likely will not be able to answer immediately. I try to respond to all messages within one business day. In the event of an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room first; if you would like to contact me or have a support contact me to inform me of the emergency, please do so only after you are safe.

For cancellations or rescheduling, please bring them up in session, email, or call me. You are also welcome to send me emails and/or leave me voicemail messages whenever you like with whatever content is helpful for you -- for example, some clients like to send a message with their in-the-moment thoughts and emotions to a distressing event that they want to talk about in their next session -- with the understanding that I cannot guarantee your privacy in electronic communications. For any messages that include therapeutic content, I will acknowledge receiving them and bring them up in our next session.

I do NOT accept text messages at this time.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Due to the importance of your confidentiality and the importance of minimizing dual relationships, I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc). I also will never solicit testimonials, ratings or reviews of me on websites or other means. If you would like to submit a testimonial, rating or review in a public forum, I encourage you to consider your own confidentiality and how it might impact your treatment before doing so (for example, a relative who you did not want to know you are in therapy sees the review or after posting a positive or negative review it impacts how you feel about me in sessions). I'm always happy to discuss your satisfaction with treatment in sessions.

MINORS

I do not treat anyone under the age of 18 and/or who is currently in high school.

LEGAL AND COURT-RELATED SERVICES

The information disclosed by you, as well as any record created, is subject to confidentiality; generally, I cannot disclose anything related to you or your treatment without your written permission. If I receive a subpoena for records, deposition testimony or testimony in a court of law, I will assert this privilege on your behalf until instructed, in writing, to do otherwise by you or your representative. You should be aware that you might be waiving your confidentiality regarding your entire treatment if you make your mental or emotional state an issue in a legal proceeding. You should address any concerns you might have regarding the confidentiality of your treatment with your attorney.

I will not voluntarily participate in any litigation or custody dispute in which you and another individual, or entity, are parties. I have a policy of not communicating with clients' attorneys and will generally not write or sign letters, reports, declarations, or affidavits to be used in any client's legal matter. I will generally not provide records or testimony unless compelled to do so. Should I be subpoenaed, or ordered by a court of law to appear as a witness in an action involving you, you agree to reimburse me for any time spent for preparation, phone calls, travel, or other time in which I have made myself available for such an appearance at my usual and customary hourly rate for such services of \$175 per hour. Fees for legal and court related services must be paid prior to the scheduled service. Charges for court related services are not covered by insurance.

I do NOT perform evaluations for custody, visitation, or other forensic matters.

SERVICE AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS

If you have an animal allergy, please note that I allow both service and emotional support animals in the practice's space.

Please let me know if you plan to bring your service animal or want to bring your emotional support animal in case any arrangements or adjustments need to be prepared.

I do NOT provide letters or complete paperwork for emotional support animals.

QUESTIONS?

At any time -- including before and during treatment -- you are encouraged and welcome to ask questions and request additional information about any of the above policies.

By signing this form below, you certify that you have read or had this form read to you, understand its contents, have been given the opportunity to ask questions, and that any questions have been answered to your satisfaction. You also agree to your responsibilities as outlined.

BY CLICKING ON THE CHECKBOX BELOW YOU ARE AGREEING THAT YOU HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD AND AGREE TO THE ITEMS CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

[DOCUMENT IS SIGNED ELECTRONICALLY VIA CLIENT PORTAL]