

PSYCHOTHERAPY, ADDICTION, TRAUMA RECOVERY
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NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

This notice describes how psychological and medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully.

I. Uses and Disclosures for Treatment, Payment and Health Care Operations

Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT may use or disclose your protected health information (PHI), for treatment, payment, and health care operations purposes with your consent. To help clarify these terms, here are some definitions:

- “PHI” refers to information in your health record that could identify you.
- “Treatment, Payment and Health Care Operations”
 - Treatment is when Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT provides, coordinates or manages your health care and other services related to your health care. An example of treatment would be when a member of our team consults with another health care provider, such as your family physician or another mental health provider.
 - Payment is when we obtain reimbursement for your healthcare. Examples of payment are when we disclose your PHI to your health insurer to obtain reimbursement for your healthcare or to determine eligibility or coverage.
 - Health Care Operations are activities that relate to the performance and operation of our practice. Examples of healthcare operations are quality assessment and improvement activities, business-related matters such as audits and administrative services, and case management and case coordination.
- “Use” applies only to activities within our offices, such as sharing, applying, utilizing, examining and analyzing information that identifies you.
- “Disclosure” applies to activities outside our offices, such as releasing, transferring, or providing access to information about you to other parties.

II. Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization

Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT may use or disclose PHI for purposes outside of treatment, payment, and health care operations when your appropriate authorization is obtained. An “authorization” is written permission above and beyond the general consent that permits only specific disclosures. In those instances when we are asked for information for purposes outside of treatment, payment, and health care operations, we will obtain an authorization from you before releasing this information. We will also need to obtain an authorization before releasing your psychotherapy notes. “Psychotherapy notes” are notes that we have made about our conversations during a private, group, joint, or family counseling session, which we have kept separate from the rest of your medical record. These notes are given a greater degree of protection than PHI.

You may revoke all such authorizations (of PHI or psychotherapy notes) at any time, provided each revocation is in writing. You may not revoke an authorization to the extent that (1) Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT has relied on that authorization; or (2) if the authorization was obtained as a condition of obtaining insurance coverage, and the law provides the insurer the right to contest the claim under the policy.

III. Uses and Disclosures with Neither Consent nor Authorization

Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT may use or disclose PHI without your consent or authorization in the following circumstances:

- **Child Abuse:** If, in our professional capacity, a child comes before our team which we have reasonable cause to suspect is an abused or maltreated child, or we have reasonable cause to suspect a child is abused or maltreated where the parent, guardian, custodian or other person legally responsible for such child comes before us in our professional or official capacity and states from personal knowledge facts, conditions or circumstances which, if correct, would render the child an abused or maltreated child, Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT must report such abuse or maltreatment to statewide central register or child abuse and maltreatment, or the local child protective services agency.
- **Health Oversight:** If there is an inquiry or complaint about our team's professional conduct to the Pennsylvania State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors, Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT must furnish to the Pennsylvania Commissioner of Professional and Occupational Affairs, your confidential mental health records relevant to this inquiry.
- **Judicial or Administrative Proceedings:** If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information about the professional services that we have provided you and/or the records thereof, such information is privileged under state law, and Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT must not release this information without your written authorization, or a court order. This privilege does not apply when you are being evaluated for a third party or where the evaluation is court ordered. We must inform you in advance if this is the case.
- **Serious Threat to Health or Safety:** We may disclose your confidential information to protect you or others from a serious threat of harm by you.
- **Worker's Compensation:** If you file a worker's compensation claim, and Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT is treating you for the issues involved with that complaint, then we must furnish to the chairman of the Worker's Compensation Board records which contain information regarding your psychological condition and treatment.

IV. Patient's Rights and Licensed Clinical Social Worker's Duties

Patient's Rights:

Right to Request Restriction – You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information about you. However, Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT is not required to agree to a restriction you request.

Right to Receive Confidential Communications by Alternative Means and at Alternative Locations – You have the right to request and receive confidential communications of PHI by alternative means and at alternative locations. (For example, you may not want a family

member to know you are receiving services from Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT. Upon your request, we will send your bills to another address.)

Right to Inspect and Copy – You have the right to inspect or obtain a copy (or both) of PHI and psychotherapy notes in our mental health and billing records used to make decisions about you for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. We may deny your access to PHI under certain circumstances, but in some cases, you may have this decision reviewed. On your request, we will discuss with you the details of the request and denial process.

Right to Amend – You have the right to request an amendment of PHI for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. We may deny your request. On your request, we will discuss with you the details of the amendment process.

Right to an Accounting – You generally have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of PHI for which you have neither provided consent nor authorization (as described in Section II of this Notice). On your request, your therapist or another team member will discuss with you the details of the accounting process.

Right to a Paper Copy – You have the right to obtain a paper copy of the notice from Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT upon request, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically.

Licensed Clinical Social Worker's Rights:

- Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT is required by law to maintain the privacy of PHI and to provide you with a notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to PHI.
- Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT reserves the right to change the privacy policies and practices described in this notice. Unless we notify you of such changes, however, we are required to abide by the terms currently in effect.
- If we revise our policies and procedures, we will provide you with a revision notice.

V. Questions and Complaints

If you have questions about this notice, disagree with a decision we make about access to your records, or have other concerns about your privacy rights, please let us know.

If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with Mark Falango. You may also send a written complaint to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We can provide you with the appropriate address upon request.

You have specific rights under the Privacy Rule. Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT will not retaliate against you for exercising your right to file a complaint.

VI. Restrictions and Changes to Privacy Policy

Mark Falango, LCSW, CSAT reserves the right to change the terms of this notice and to make the new notice provisions effective for all PHI that we maintain. We will provide you with a revised notice by notifying you.