

**Paradigm Psychological Center
Esther Marron, Psy.D.
Licensed Psychologist PSY 21818
Office Policies & General Information
Agreement for Psychotherapy Services**

Welcome to my private practice. This document contains important information about my professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully and jot down any questions you might have so that we can discuss them at our next meeting. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In general, the privacy of all communications between a patient and a psychologist is protected by law, and Dr. Esther Marron can only release information about the work to others with your written permission. But there are a few exceptions.

In most legal proceedings, you have the right to prevent Dr. Esther Marron from providing any information about your treatment. In some proceedings involving child custody and those in which your emotional condition is an important issue, a judge may order Dr. Esther Marron's testimony if she determines that the issues demand it.

*****There are some situations in which Dr. Esther Marron is legally obligated to take action to protect others from harm, even if she has to reveal some information about a patient's treatment. For example, if Dr. Esther Marron believes that a child, elderly person, or disabled person is being abused, she must file a report with the appropriate state agency.**

*****If Dr. Esther Marron believes that a patient is threatening serious bodily harm to another, she is required to take protective actions. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for the patient. If the patient threatens to harm himself/herself, she may be obligated to seek hospitalization for him/her or to contact family members or others who can help provide protection.**

Dr. Esther Marron may occasionally find it helpful to consult other professionals about a case. During a consultation, she makes every effort to avoid revealing any identifying information about her patient(s). The consultant is also legally bound to keep the information confidential.

LITIGATION LIMITATION

Due to the nature of the therapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters which may be of a confidential nature, it is agreed that should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to, divorce and custody disputes, injuries, lawsuits, etc...), neither you (the patient's) nor your attorney's, nor anyone else acting

on your behalf will call on Dr. Esther Marron to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the psychotherapy records be requested.

I have reviewed and understand Dr. Esther Marron’s Limits of Confidentiality & Litigation

Signature of Client(s)

I, _____, the undersigned, hereby attest that I have voluntarily entered into treatment, or give my consent for the minor or person under my legal guardianship mentioned above, at Dr. Esther Marron, Paradigm Psychological Center, A Professional Corporation, hereby referred as Dr. Esther Marron’s private practice. Further, I consent to have treatment provided by a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, counselor, or intern in collaboration with his/her supervisor. The rights, risks and benefits associated with the treatment have been explained to me. I understand that the therapy may be discontinued at any time by either party. Dr. Esther Marron encourages that this decision be discussed with the treating psychotherapist. This will help facilitate a more appropriate plan for discharge.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the psychologist and patient, and the particular problems you bring forward. There are many different methods I may use to deal with the problems that you hope to address. Psychotherapy is not like a medical doctor visit. Instead, it calls for a very active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both during our sessions and at home.

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have benefits for people who go through it. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience.

Our first session will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some first impressions of what our work will include and a treatment plan to follow, if you decide to continue with therapy. You should evaluate this information along with your own opinions of whether you feel comfortable working with me. Therapy involves a large commitment of time, money, and energy, so you should be very careful about the therapist you select. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, I will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

SESSIONS

Dr. Esther Marron normally conducts an evaluation that will be conducted in the first session. During this time, she and the patient can both decide if she is the best person to provide the services you need in order to meet your treatment goals. If psychotherapy is begun, she will usually schedule one 50-minute session (one appointment hour of 50 minutes duration) per week at a time she and the patient agree on, although some sessions may be longer or more frequent. Once an appointment hour is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide **24 hours advance notice of cancellation**.

CONTACT VIA TELEPHONE & FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

I am often not immediately available by telephone when I am with a patient. When I am unavailable, my telephone is answered by my voice mail that I monitor frequently. I will make every effort to return your call as soon as possible, unless I am out of town. If you are difficult to reach, please inform me of some times when you will be available. In emergencies, please indicate it clearly in your message then call 911, contact your family physician or go to the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychologist on call.

PAYMENTS & INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT

Therapy: Dr. Marron is committed to providing effective services at a reasonable cost. She believes that it is important for her clients to have a clear understanding of fees and the payment process. To help you understand the costs and choose your appropriate level of care, the following guidelines are offered:

- Payment is due at the conclusion of every therapy session.
- Telephone conversations, report writing and reading, release of information, reading records, longer sessions, etc will be charged accordingly, unless indicated and agreed otherwise.
- You will be held responsible for the costs associated with returned checks, denied credit card payments, and collection fees.
- Cancellation or rescheduling requires a 24-hour notice. Failure to notify will result in a full-fee charge.
- Dr. Marron accepts payment by credit card, check or cash.

Assessments: Dr. Marron typically asks that half of the fee be paid on the first day of testing and that the balance be paid upon receipt of the written report at the feedback session. If you are unsure about whether or not your child needs an evaluation, Dr. Marron will be happy to provide you with a brief complimentary phone consultation. For families experiencing financial hardship, options for convenient payment plans can be discussed.

Insurance: If patients are utilizing insurance to pay for their treatment, they are responsible for any applicable deductibles and co-payments at the time of service. By signing this contract, you agree that if you have not obtained any necessary authorizations from your insurance, or are not eligible at the time services are rendered, you are responsible for payment even if the determination is made after the services are rendered. Patients who carry insurance should remember that professional services are rendered and charged to the patient and not to the

insurance company.

***If your account has not been paid for more than 60 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, Dr. Esther Marron has the option of using legal means to secure the payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court. If such legal action is necessary, its costs will be included in the claim. In most collection situations, the only information Dr. Marron releases regarding a patient's treatment is his/her name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due.

MEDIATION & ARBITRATION

By signing this office policy contract, you are agreeing that all disputes arising out of or in relation to this agreement to provide psychotherapy services shall first be referred to mediation, before, and as a pre-condition of, the initiation of arbitration. The mediator shall be a neutral third party chosen by agreement of Dr. Esther Marron and patient(s). The cost of such mediation, if any, shall be split equally, unless otherwise agreed. In the event that mediation is unsuccessful, any unresolved controversy related to this agreement should be submitted to and settled by binding arbitration in Los Angeles County, CA in accordance with the rules of the American Arbitration Association which is in effect at the time the demand for arbitration is filed. Lawsuits are something that no one anticipates and everyone hopes to avoid. The method of resolving disputes by arbitration is one of the fairest systems for both patients and psychotherapists. Arbitration agreements between health care providers and their patients have long been recognized and approved by the California courts. You may still call witnesses and present evidence. Each party selects an arbitrator (party arbitrators), who then select a third, neutral arbitrator. These three arbitrators hear the case. This agreement generally helps to limit the legal costs for both patients and psychotherapists. Further, both parties are spared some of the rigors of trial and the publicity that may accompany judicial proceedings. My goal, of course, is to provide medical care in such a way as to avoid any such dispute. I know that most problems begin with communication. Therefore, if you have any questions about your care, please ask. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event that your account is overdue (unpaid) and there is no agreement on a payment plan, Dr. Esther Marron can use legal means (collection agency, court, etc.) to obtain payment. The prevailing party in arbitration or collection proceeding shall be entitled to recover a reasonable sum as and for attorney's fees. In the case of arbitration, the arbitrator will determine that sum.

I have read the above Agreement and Office Policies and General Information carefully; I understand them and agree to comply with them:

Patient's signature

Print Name

Date

Patient's signature

Print Name

Date