



### **3. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY 6.27.2024**

#### **Electronic Communication Policy**

##### Protecting Your Privacy, Confidentiality at Risk

To maintain clarity regarding our use of electronic modes of communication during your treatment, AKA (Albert Knapp & Associates) has prepared this policy. Many of these commonly used modes of communication put your privacy at risk and can be inconsistent with the law and ethics of the profession. This policy has been prepared to ensure the security and confidentiality of your treatment and is consistent with our ethics code and the law.

##### Email Communications:

AKA uses email communication for administrative purposes. We will not discuss clinical matters via email. Email communication should be limited to appointment changes, billing questions and related matters. If you have clinical questions, call the office, and schedule an appointment with your clinician. Face-to-face communication are much more secure modes of communication.

##### Client Portal:

AKA uses a secure messaging portal for clinical communication, billing, and scheduling. You are responsible for checking the client portal routinely (we recommend at least once daily), especially when you receive a notification that there is a portal message. This is where you can view upcoming appointments and see the billing statement, where you can view your balance and/or make payment.

##### Text (SMS) Messages:

Text (SMS) messages are not secure, and it is an impersonal mode of communication. The clinical staff at AKA will not initiate a text message conversation and the clinical staff will not respond to text messages from clients. The only exception to this rule is regarding in the moment or same day scheduling, or an emergency. However, AKA does use text (SMS) message options for scheduling related matters for active clients, and those clients will be provided with the text (SMS) contact number. Clients will be given the opportunity in our practice management system to opt in or out for text (SMS) messaging.

**SMS Disclaimer:** By signing this form, you agree to AKA's Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. You consent to receive phone calls and SMS messages from AKA to provide updates and information regarding your business with AKA. Message frequency may vary. Message & data rates may apply. reply STOP to opt-out of further messaging. Reply HELP for more information see our Privacy Policy.

##### Social Media:

We do not communicate with or contact clients through their personal social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.). If an AKA clinician realizes that he/she has accidentally established an online social media relationship with a client, the clinician will immediately terminate the online relationship. No one at AKA will respond to comments, or friend requests from clients on social media, and will block your attempts at an online, social media relationship. These types of casual social contacts can create a significant security risk for you and potentially jeopardize your confidentiality.

AKA does maintain social media sites designed to assist us in sharing resources with the public at large. Clients

can follow AKA on professional social media sites, but you are discouraged from disclosing your status as a present or past client. When you do follow us on social media you are disclosing a relationship with AKA. This can potentially put your confidentiality at risk.

**Websites:**

AKA maintains a professional website. The website is for professional use to provide information to others about us. Clients are welcome to visit the site to learn more about us and the services we offer.

**Internet Searches:**

AKA clinicians will not engage in internet searches to gather information about our clients. We do expect that some people may want to gather information about us in this manner. The internet contains an extraordinary amount of information. Some is true and some is not. If you encounter information about us, and/or, about your clinician, please discuss it with the Practice Manager. It is important to process such findings in such a way that any information or misinformation does not impact your treatment.

**Online Review Sites:**

AKA cannot engage with comments on an online review site without risking your confidentiality. We would be acting unethically if we responded to comments on an online review site. The information posted on a review site could be inaccurate and misleading. If you encounter reviews about AKA, please share it with your clinician so that it can be discussed and processed in such a way that your treatment is not adversely impacted. We respectfully ask that you never review us online. Any review is harmful to you as it jeopardizes your privacy. A negative review can hurt our reputation, jeopardize our ability to do our work, and may require us to transfer the client to another organization. We welcome your feedback, and any comments you want to share with us in person, on the telephone, or via email will be used to better our services.

I have read, understood, and agree with the policies set forth in this form.

**Client Full Name:**

Client Name (if 18 years and older) or the name of Parent/Legal Guardian or Conservator.: