Joy Psychiatry

Christine Joy, M.D.
11118 Wurzbach Road #302, San Antonio, TX 78230
Phone: (210) 460-2869 • Fax: (800) 699-4245

Notice of Privacy Practices

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

Joy Psychiatry, PLLC ("we," "us," or "the Practice") is committed to protecting the privacy of your health information. Mental health information is among the most personal information you share, and both federal law (the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or "HIPAA") and Texas law protect it. This notice explains how we may use and share your health information, your rights, and our responsibilities. It applies to all records of your care created or kept by the Practice.

Our Responsibilities

- We are required by law to maintain the privacy and security of your protected health information and to give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices.
- We will let you know promptly if a breach occurs that may have compromised the privacy or security of your information.
- We must follow the practices described in this notice while it is in effect, and we will not use or share your information other than as described here unless you tell us we can in writing. You may change your mind at any time by letting us know in writing.
- Where Texas law is more protective of your privacy than HIPAA, including the Texas laws governing mental health records (Texas Health & Safety Code chapters 181 and 611), we follow the more protective law.

How We May Use and Share Your Information

We typically use or share your health information in the following ways. Not every use or disclosure in a category is listed, but all of the ways we are permitted to use and share information fall within one of these categories.

Treatment

We use your information to provide your care and may share it with other professionals who are treating you. *Example:* Dr. Joy may send a consultation summary to your primary care physician, or speak with a pharmacist about a prescription.

Payment

We use your information to bill and collect payment for our services. Joy Psychiatry, PLLC is a self-pay practice and does not bill insurance on your behalf. If you ask, we will give you a statement (superbill) you can submit to your own insurer.

Health care operations

We use your information to run the Practice and improve your care. *Examples:* scheduling, quality review, record keeping, and working with our accountants, attorneys, and technology vendors. Vendors that handle health information for us ("business associates") must sign a written agreement to protect it.

Appointment reminders and communications

We may contact you by phone, text message, email, or our secure patient portal to remind you of appointments, respond to your requests, or share information about your care. You may ask us to use a different method or address (see "Your Rights" below).

Electronic disclosure

Your health information may be stored and shared electronically, including through our electronic health record and e-prescribing systems, when used for the purposes described in this notice. Texas law requires us to tell you this.

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Other Ways We May Share Your Information Without Your Authorization

We are allowed or required to share your information in the following situations, only when the conditions of the law are met and, for mental health information, only as permitted by Texas law:

- **As required by law**, including to report suspected abuse or neglect of a child, an elderly person, or a person with a disability to the appropriate authorities.
- **To prevent a serious threat to health or safety**, such as when Dr. Joy determines there is a probability of imminent physical injury to you or others, or of immediate mental or emotional injury to you.
- **For public health and safety**, such as reporting adverse reactions to medications or preventing disease.
- **For health oversight**, such as audits, investigations, and licensing activities by agencies like the Texas Medical Board.
- **For lawsuits and legal actions**, in response to a court order or as otherwise permitted by Texas law. Texas law gives mental health records special protection in legal proceedings, and in most cases your consent or a court order is required.
- **For law enforcement**, only as permitted by law, such as in response to a court order.
- **To medical examiners and funeral directors**, as needed to carry out their duties.
- **For specialized government functions**, such as military, national security, and protective services, as permitted by law.
- **For workers' compensation**, as permitted by Texas workers' compensation law.
- **To the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**, when it asks to see that we are complying with federal privacy law.

Family members and others involved in your care

With your agreement, we may share information with a family member, friend, or other person you identify who is involved in your care. If you are not present or cannot agree, such as in an emergency, we may share limited information if we believe it is in your best interest. You may tell us at any time not to share information with specific people.

Uses That Require Your Written Authorization

We will not use or share your information for the following purposes unless you give us written permission:

- **Psychotherapy notes.** Dr. Joy's separately kept personal notes from therapy sessions will not be shared, except in the limited situations permitted by law.
- **Marketing.** We do not use your information for marketing, and would not do so without your written permission.
- **Sale of information.** We never sell your health information.
- **Any other use or disclosure** not described in this notice.

You may revoke an authorization at any time by writing to us, except to the extent we have already acted on it. We do not engage in fundraising.

Substance use disorder treatment records

If we receive records from a federally assisted substance use disorder treatment program that are protected by 42 C.F.R. Part 2, those records, and testimony about their contents, will not be used or disclosed in any civil, criminal, administrative, or legislative proceeding against you unless you give written consent or a court issues an order accompanied by a subpoena or similar legal process, after notice and an opportunity to be heard as required by law. We will not use such records for fundraising.

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Personal Information We Collect, Use, and Share

In addition to the health information described above, we collect limited personal information to schedule appointments, communicate with you, and operate the Practice, including through our website, joypsychiatrysa.com. This section explains what we collect, how we use it, and who we share it with.

What personal information we collect

- **Contact and identifying information:** name, date of birth, mobile phone number, email address, and mailing address.
- **Appointment and intake information:** scheduling details and the intake, consent, and other forms you complete through our patient portal or secure intake tools.
- **Payment information:** information you provide to pay for our services.
- **Text messaging information:** your mobile number, your consent to receive text messages, records of messages sent and received, and opt-in and opt-out requests.
- **Website information:** IP address, browser and device type, and pages visited, collected through standard server logs and cookies.

How we use personal information

- To schedule, confirm, and remind you of appointments
- To send intake forms, consent forms, and other practice paperwork
- To process payments and provide statements and superbills
- To respond to your questions and communicate with you about your care and account
- To operate and secure our website and systems
- To comply with legal, regulatory, and professional obligations

Who we share personal information with

- **Service providers** that help us operate the Practice, such as our electronic health record and patient portal, scheduling and intake tools, phone and text messaging provider, payment processor, and website host. They may use your information only to perform services for us, and those that handle health information must sign a business associate agreement.
- **Others described in this notice,** such as other health care providers involved in your care, or as required by law, and only under the conditions described above.

We do not sell, rent, or trade personal information, and we do not share it with third parties for their marketing purposes.

Text Messaging (SMS)

SMS consent is not shared with third parties for marketing purposes. We will not sell, rent, or share your mobile phone number or text messaging opt-in data and consent with any third party or affiliate for marketing or promotional purposes. Mobile information is shared only with the service provider that delivers our text messages on our behalf.

If you opt in, we may send appointment reminders, scheduling updates, form requests, and billing notices. Message frequency varies. Message and data rates may apply. Reply **STOP** to opt out at any time or **HELP** for help. Consent to receive text messages is not a condition of receiving care.

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Your Rights

You have the following rights regarding your health information. To use any of them, contact our Privacy Officer using the information at the end of this notice.

Get a copy of your records. You may ask to see or get a paper or electronic copy of your medical and billing records. We will provide a copy, or a summary if you agree, generally within 15 business days of your written request, and may charge a reasonable, cost-based fee. We may deny access in limited circumstances, such as when Dr. Joy determines access would be harmful to your physical, mental, or emotional health; if so, we will explain why in writing and how you may have the decision reviewed.

Ask us to correct your records. If you believe information in your record is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us in writing to correct it. We may say "no," but we will tell you why in writing within 60 days.

Request confidential communications. You may ask us to contact you in a specific way (for example, only on your cell phone) or at a different address. We will agree to all reasonable requests.

Ask us to limit what we use or share. You may ask us not to use or share certain information for treatment, payment, or operations. We are not required to agree, and we may say "no" if it would affect your care. If you pay for a service in full out of pocket, you may ask us not to share information about it with your health insurer, and we will agree unless the law requires us to share it.

Get a list of those with whom we have shared information. You may ask for a list (accounting) of the times we have shared your information in the six years before your request, who we shared it with, and why. The list will not include disclosures for treatment, payment, and operations, or those you authorized. We provide one list a year free and may charge a reasonable fee for additional lists within 12 months.

Get a copy of this notice. You may ask for a paper copy of this notice at any time, even if you agreed to receive it electronically.

Choose someone to act for you. If you have given someone medical power of attorney, or if someone is your legal guardian, that person can exercise your rights and make choices about your health information. We will confirm the person has this authority before we act.

File a complaint if you believe your rights are violated. You may file a complaint with our Privacy Officer, or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights by mail at 200 Independence Avenue S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201, by phone at 1-877-696-6775, or online at www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Changes to This Notice

We may change the terms of this notice, and the changes will apply to all information we have about you. The new notice will be available on request, in our office, and on our website.

Contact Us

Privacy Officer: Christine Joy, M.D.
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