

**Notice of Privacy Practices and Client Rights**  
**Family Counseling Service of Aurora**                      **70 S. River Street**                      **Aurora, IL 60506**

As a client of Family Counseling Service of Aurora, you are entitled to the rights outlined in the Mental Health and Development Disabilities Confidentiality Act. Client rights include but are not limited to, the following:

- You are entitled to have your rights explained to you using a language or method of communication you understand upon commencement of services.
- You may have a guardian with whom we must cooperate or you may be restricted legally through the court or by probation.
- You have the right to be free from abuse and neglect.
- You have the right to have an individualized treatment plan that will be developed with you, and the right to periodically review your treatment plan with your therapist.
- You have the right to be free from physical restraint, unless it is being used as a therapeutic measure with children to prevent them from causing physical harm to themselves or others; seclusion is not permitted.
- You have the right not to be denied mental health services because of age, sex, race, religious belief, ethnic origin, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or criminal record that is unrelated to any possible present dangerousness.
- You have the right not to have services denied, suspended, reduced or terminated for exercising your rights.
- If you believe you are not being treated fairly, you have the right to present grievances or to appeal adverse decisions related to your services. You have the right to make such grievances or appeals to the highest level possible in the agency. If you are a ward of the state, you have the right to contact the Guardianship and Advocacy Commission, Equip for Equality, Inc. and DCFS or DHS. You have the right to be offered staff assistance in contacting these organizations.

Family Counseling Service is required by state and federal law to maintain the privacy of your mental health information. Family Counseling Service is also required to provide you with this notice about our privacy practices. This notice takes effect April 14, 2003 and will remain in effect until it is revised or updated. Family Counseling Service reserves the right to change our privacy practices at any time, provided such changes are permitted under law. When changes are made to this notice the updated document will be available to you upon request.

Family Counseling Service reasonably ensures that the protected health information (PHI) it requests, uses and discloses for any purpose is the minimum amount of information needed for that purpose. Family Counseling Service makes reasonable efforts to verify the identity of those using or receiving PHI.

Under federal law Family Counseling Service is permitted to use PHI without your specific permission for three types of routine purposes: treatment, payment, and health care operations.

Treatment could include consulting with other providers at Family Counseling Service or referring you to another health care provider such as a physician or therapist. The type of information disclosed could include: history, diagnoses and recommendations for services.

Payment means we may use your PHI to obtain payment for the services provided to you.

Health care operations refer to activities such as quality improvement, conducting training programs, or accreditation activities.

**Uses of disclosures that may be made without your consent:**

Family Counseling Service has to follow state laws about special requests for information. We have a responsibility to warn others if you threaten to hurt them. We have to report any suspected child or elder abuse or neglect to the appropriate state authorities. In an emergency, we may communicate information to others if you are at risk of harming yourself or someone else.

We may disclose your information in response to a court order or administrative order, or other lawful process, under certain circumstances.

We may disclose your information when required to do so by federal, state or other applicable law.

**More stringent protection for your health information:**

In certain cases, Illinois law provides more stringent privacy protection of your health information than this Privacy Notice recites.

**No other use or disclosure without your written authorization:**

Family Counseling Service will not make any other uses or disclosures of your PHI without your written permission. Illinois State law requires a specific written authorization to release mental health information.