

Privacy & Confidentiality Policy

Bloom Psychotherapy (Heather Raytch Professional Social Work Corporation)

Purpose

This policy explains how Bloom Psychotherapy collects, uses, stores, discloses, and protects your personal information. Bloom Psychotherapy is committed to protecting your privacy and complies with Ontario's Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA), as well as the standards of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW) and the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO).

Information We Collect

We collect only the information necessary to provide safe and effective psychotherapy services. This may include: contact and identifying information, health and social history, therapy notes and treatment information, billing and payment details, and communications with your therapist.

How We Use Information

We use your information to assess your needs and provide treatment, document therapy progress, process billing and payments, communicate with you about your care, and meet professional and legal obligations.

Consent

Consent is obtained when you begin services and continues throughout your care. You may withdraw or limit consent at any time, except where disclosure is required by law or College standards. Consent may be written, verbal, or implied for routine uses related to treatment.

Storage, Retention, and Disposal

Records are stored securely, whether electronic (via Jane App, a secure Canadian platform) or paper (locked storage). Records are retained for 7 years after the last date of service. For minors, records are retained for 7 years past the date the client turns 18. After the retention period, records are securely destroyed (shredded or permanently deleted). Each therapist is responsible for case-noting and storing records in compliance with the PHIPA guidelines and their associated college standards.

Independent Contractors and Professional Responsibility

All therapists at Bloom Psychotherapy are independent contractors. Each therapist is registered with their professional College (either the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers or the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario) and is responsible for maintaining their own professional records in compliance with College standards.

At the same time, Bloom Psychotherapy has established clinic-wide policies and standards, including the use of confidentiality protocols, and privacy safeguards, that all therapists must follow while working with us. Bloom Psychotherapy has provided access to secure record storage (Jane App) for all providers. Providers may choose to utilize paper records and are required to follow all protocols outlined by their College. Bloom Psychotherapy advises any client with inquiries about the storage method of their notes to be directed to their therapist for a full outline of their practices.

While individual therapists may have slightly different approaches to documentation or communication, all practices are required to meet both regulatory requirements and Bloom Psychotherapy's standards for privacy, confidentiality, and professionalism.

Disclosure of Information

We will not release your information without your consent, except as required by law or College standards, including: risk of serious harm to self or others, suspected abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable person, court orders or other legal requirements, and when required by our regulatory bodies (OCSWSSW or CRPO).

Confidentiality & Security

Therapists and administrative staff follow strict confidentiality policies. Electronic information is stored on secure platforms (Jane App, encrypted systems). Telehealth sessions are conducted using secure video platforms, but no online system is 100% risk-free. Clients are responsible for choosing a private setting when attending online therapy.

Privacy Breaches

In the unlikely event of a privacy breach (unauthorized access, loss, or disclosure of client information): 1. We will immediately assess the situation. 2. We will notify any affected clients at the first reasonable opportunity. 3. We will notify the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW) and/or the College of Registered Psychotherapists of

Ontario (CRPO) for further guidance. 4. If appropriate, we will also report to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. 5. We will take corrective steps to reduce harm and prevent recurrence.

Client Rights

You have the right to request access to your records, request corrections if records are inaccurate or incomplete, ask about who has accessed your information, and withdraw consent to certain uses or disclosures (with limits). Requests for access or correction must be made in writing. We will respond within a reasonable timeframe.

Questions & Complaints

If you have questions about your privacy or how your information is managed, please contact: Bloom Psychotherapy, Heather Ratych, Phone: 647-946-2229 (9–5 ET), Email: info@bloompsychotherapy.ca.

If concerns are not resolved, you may also contact: the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW), the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO), or the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario.