

# Alison Howard and Associates

## Psychological Services

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202-368-3501

## Consent To Treatment

Welcome to Alison Howard and Associates. We are a private practice with licenses to practice in Maryland and the District of Columbia. Dr. Howard is also part of the PsyPact Consortium and is licensed to provide teletherapy in 26 states. Please read the following carefully:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent signature if patient is a minor)  
understand that the psychotherapeutic treatment rendered to me through Alison Howard and Associates and that the policies below have been explained to me in a manner I understand.

### Emergency Policy

While I/we do check messages regularly Monday – Friday, from 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., in case of emergency, you are to call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

### Cancellation Policy

I/we have a 24- hour cancellation policy. In the event of a cancellation less than 24 hours before your appointment, you will be charged for the session if we are unable to reschedule. The first missed appointment will not be charged, however, any subsequent late cancellations will be charged regardless of reason. These missed sessions are not reimbursable by insurance companies.

### Communication Between Sessions

You are encouraged to contact your therapist by phone in between appointments should you wish to talk about personal matters. I/we understand that communicating via email and text allows for a quicker response, and while I/we will respond in kind, there is no guarantee that our conversations are completely confidential over the internet. Please initial here to acknowledge that you understand the limits of confidentiality when communicating via email and text : \_\_\_\_

Additionally, there are times when a text or an email may escape my/our notice. Please call your therapist directly if you do not get a response in a timely manner.

### Payment

We are a fee for service practice, but we do provide assistance with costs if needed. You should discuss this with Dr. Howard upon initial contact, and again with the therapist with whom you are working. Although we have a standard fee structure, our therapists set their own rates with their patients, and are able to offer a sliding scale to people who are not able to use their insurance.

Payment is expected at the time of meeting unless you prefer to pay monthly. You may pay by check, credit card or Zelle. Credit card forms are available through our website ([www.alisonhoward.com](http://www.alisonhoward.com)), and the address for Zelle is [drhoward@alisonhoward.com](mailto:drhoward@alisonhoward.com). If you pay by credit card, you will be charged the 2.7% processing fee set by TherapyNotes. If paying by Zelle, please check your bank's payment limits to ensure that if you are paying a monthly invoice, your bank will allow processing of the full amount. Invoices are given out at the end of each month with a zero balance, and all the codes required by most insurance companies. We are happy to help you recoup monies owed to you by your insurance company in any way that we can. Overdue payments of 90 days will be put into collections. Please note that even with insurance reimbursement, psychotherapy is not covered 100%, and you will incur out of pocket expenses. The treatment we offer is not time-limited, and we recommend that you do a financial assessment to determine how long you can afford to pay for psychotherapy. All fee increases will be discussed with you a month prior to change in fees.

### **Terms of Confidentiality**

Psychotherapy necessarily involves the sharing of sensitive, personal, and private information by patients with their therapists. As a result, information shared with your therapist is kept strictly confidential, and is not disclosed without your written permission. There are, however, a few exceptions to the protection of confidentiality which you should know about prior to beginning therapy.

**Exception #1: Abuse of a Child or Elderly or Disabled Person-** If I have reason to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) is being abused or neglected, we are mandated to report this situation to the appropriate state agency. In the state of Maryland, mandating laws require us to report abuse even if it happened a long time ago if the abuser still lives in Maryland.

If you have reason to believe that an elderly person is being abused or neglected, your therapist is required by law to report the situation to the appropriate state agency.

**Exception #2: Imminent Harm to Self-** If there is reason to believe that you are threatening immediate physical harm to yourself, and if you are unwilling or unable to follow treatment recommendations, your therapist may have to contact a family member or another person who may be able to help to ensure your safety. In extreme cases, we may have to call 911.

**Exception #3: Imminent Harm to Others-** If there is reason to believe that you are actually threatening physical violence against another person, or that you are an actual threat to the safety of another person, action may be taken to ensure that the other person is protected (such as contacting the police, notifying the other person, seeking hospitalization, or a combination of these alternatives). This is a protection of you as well.

***Abuse of a child or threats of harm to self or others are extreme situations. If, however, they do arise in your therapy, it is our policy that whenever possible any action will be discussed with you as fully as possible. If disclosure of confidential information does become necessary, only the minimal information necessary to protect you and/or another person will be shared.***

I agree to, and understand, the conditions stated above.

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Signature

Date