

Laura M. West, LAPC, LAMFT
Bright Futures Counseling Services Inc.
3534 Old Milton Parkway
Alpharetta, GA 30005
678.624.0310 Ext. 19
Fax: 678.624.0258

**PATIENT'S RIGHTS:
CONFIDENTIALITY, PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATION, and DUTY TO
WARN OR PROTECT**

Federal and State of Georgia laws assure that everything a client tells his or her counselor is to remain confidential and is considered privileged communication. Thus all information a counselor has regarding the client can ONLY be released with the signed, written consent of the client (or, in the case of a minor, the client's parent or legal guardian). Thus, confidentiality and privileged communication are your rights, guaranteed under State and Federal laws.

There are, however, two exceptions in which the mental health professional's social responsibility is given precedence over your rights:

- (1) If a patient intends to harm himself or herself, or another individual, the mental health professional has the responsibility and duty to protect the client, or warn the person to whom harm is intended. Such action by the mental health professional may require that confidentiality be broken. Of course, breaching confidentiality would be the last resort, occurring only after all reasonable efforts to resolve the situation had failed, and would be limited to the necessary information required to ensure safety.
- (2) State of Georgia law also requires that mental health professionals report all incidents of an type of suspected child or elderly abuse to appropriate agencies.

I have read the above and understand my rights and the mental health professional's social responsibility.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

