

# Records Management Policy for Therapy Private Practice

## Jackson Ilyas Therapy Solutions Private Practice

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2023

**Last Review Date:** January 10, 2025

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## 1. Introduction

At **Jackson Ilyas Therapy Solutions Private Practice**, we are committed to maintaining high standards of professional practice and safeguarding the confidentiality, accuracy, and security of client records. This **Records Management Policy** outlines the procedures and practices for creating, storing, maintaining, and disposing of client records in accordance with legal, ethical, and professional guidelines. The goal is to ensure that client records are managed responsibly and consistently, while respecting client privacy and compliance with relevant laws.

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## 2. Types of Client Records

Client records may include the following types of documentation:

- **Intake Forms:** Information collected at the beginning of therapy, including personal history, medical and psychological background, and reason for seeking therapy.
  - **Assessment and Diagnosis Records:** Any clinical assessments, diagnoses, and treatment planning information.
  - **Therapy Session Notes:** Documentation of each therapy session, including progress notes, observations, interventions used, and any updates to the treatment plan.
  - **Correspondence:** Any communication with other healthcare providers or relevant parties, if applicable.
  - **Informed Consent Documents:** Signed forms that outline the client's understanding of therapy, including consent for treatment, confidentiality, and any limits to confidentiality.
  - **Billing and Payment Records:** Documentation of payments made, insurance claims, and financial agreements.
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## 3. Legal and Ethical Requirements for Record Keeping

Client records must comply with the following legal and ethical guidelines:

- **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA):** All records will comply with HIPAA regulations regarding the confidentiality, storage, and handling of protected health information (PHI).

- **State Laws and Regulations:** Records will be kept in accordance with state laws, including those related to the retention, transfer, and destruction of therapy records.
  - **NASW Code of Ethics:** As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), the therapist follows the ethical guidelines established by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), including maintaining client confidentiality and safeguarding records.
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## 4. Record Creation and Documentation

### 4.1 Accuracy and Completeness

- All client records will be accurate, comprehensive, and kept up-to-date. This includes all intake forms, assessments, progress notes, and treatment plans.
- Session notes will be written within 48 hours of the therapy session to ensure that they accurately reflect the client's concerns, progress, and treatment goals.

### 4.2 Professional Language

- The therapist will use professional, respectful, and objective language in all client records. Information should be factual, avoiding subjective opinions or language that could be misinterpreted.

### 4.3 Consent for Record Keeping

- Clients will be informed at the start of therapy about the type of information that will be recorded and how it will be used.
  - **Informed Consent:** Clients will sign consent forms that outline their rights regarding their records, including who has access to them, how long they are kept, and how they may be used in the future.
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## 5. Record Storage and Security

### 5.1 Secure Storage

- All client records will be stored in a secure manner to protect confidentiality. Paper records will be kept in locked cabinets, and electronic records will be stored in password-protected, encrypted systems.

### 5.2 Access to Records

- Access to client records will be restricted to the therapist and authorized individuals (such as administrative staff, if applicable) who are involved in the provision of care or administrative support.

- Client records will only be shared with external parties (e.g., other healthcare providers, insurance companies) upon receipt of written consent from the client, except in cases where disclosure is required by law (e.g., to prevent harm, mandatory reporting).

### **5.3 Record Retention**

- Client records will be retained for a minimum of **7 years** after the last session for adults, or until the client reaches the age of majority plus 7 years for minors, in accordance with legal and ethical guidelines.
- Records may be retained for a longer period at the therapist's discretion or in compliance with state regulations.

### **5.4 Electronic Records**

- For clients with electronic records, the practice will ensure that any digital files are stored in secure, encrypted cloud services or servers that comply with HIPAA and other regulatory requirements.
  - All passwords and access controls will be updated regularly to maintain the integrity and security of the records.
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## **6. Client Access to Records**

### **6.1 Right to Access**

- Clients have the right to request access to their records, subject to certain legal restrictions (e.g., if disclosure of a record would cause harm to the client or others).
- Clients wishing to review their records must submit a written request, and the therapist will provide access within a reasonable timeframe (typically within 30 days).
- If the therapist determines that releasing certain information might harm the client or another individual, they may withhold specific records, explaining the reasons to the client.

### **6.2 Corrections to Records**

- If a client identifies any inaccuracies or omissions in their records, they have the right to request corrections. The therapist will review the request and amend the records if necessary. If the therapist disagrees with the requested correction, the client may request that their disagreement be noted in the records.
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## **7. Confidentiality of Records**

### **7.1 Confidentiality Obligations**

- All client records are confidential and will be protected from unauthorized access. The therapist will adhere to confidentiality rules set forth by HIPAA, state law, and ethical guidelines in the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Records will only be disclosed to third parties with the client's written consent, except in cases where disclosure is required by law (e.g., to report suspected abuse or in response to a subpoena).

## 7.2 Confidentiality in Case of Death or Disability

- In the event of the therapist's death or disability, arrangements will be made to ensure that client records are securely transferred or handled according to the wishes of the therapist (e.g., through a designated representative or estate).
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## 8. Record Destruction

### 8.1 Secure Destruction

- Once the retention period for client records has expired, the records will be securely destroyed to protect client confidentiality. Paper records will be shredded, and electronic records will be deleted in a manner that ensures they cannot be reconstructed or retrieved.

### 8.2 Documentation of Destruction

- The therapist will document the destruction of any client records, including the name of the client and the date the records were destroyed, to maintain accurate and transparent practice management.
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## 9. Training and Compliance

- All staff members who handle client records, including administrative personnel, will receive training on maintaining the confidentiality, accuracy, and security of records.
  - Regular audits will be conducted to ensure that the practice is in compliance with the **Records Management Policy** and relevant legal and ethical standards.
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## 10. Acknowledgment of Records Management Policy

By signing below, the client acknowledges that they have read and understood the **Records Management Policy** of **Jackson I Lyas Therapy Solutions Private Practice**. The client agrees to the management of their records in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this policy.

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**Client's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Client's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Therapist's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Therapist's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Conclusion**

The **Records Management Policy** ensures that **Jackson Ilyas Therapy Solutions Private Practice** upholds the highest standards in maintaining the confidentiality, security, and ethical management of client records. This policy reflects a commitment to protecting client privacy while ensuring compliance with legal and professional standards.