

Victoria Valdez M.MFT

Practice Policy

This practice exists for the purpose of reaching out to meet the needs of those who are experiencing serious life issues. Specific areas of counseling focus may be related to anything of serious life nature. This policy statement exists in order to answer questions that are frequently asked by clients regarding fees, confidentiality, services, and others.

Counselor Information

Victoria Valdez

Phone Number: 931-674-1205

Email: Victoriavaldezmmft@gmail.com

Ethics

This agency adheres to the professional standards of the ACA, AAMFT, and the AACC. Clients may obtain a copy of these ethical guidelines from the following locations: <http://www.aacc.net>

Fee Policy

My fee for service is \$120.00 per 50-minute clinical hour to include pre-marital, family and children and adolescents. Per request, I offer a sliding scale fee that ranges from \$80.00 per session to \$120.00. This sliding scale is based on gross annual household income. Application requirements are a tax return presented at the first appointment to verify household income. Followed by a financial agreement as part of the intake process to determine your sliding scale fee. I do not accept insurance.

A session is typically based on a 50-minute hour. However, when working with families, sessions may require or exceed 50 minutes. If the session reaches an extra 25 minutes the session will be charged half price. If the session reaches an extra full 50 minutes then full price for the second hour will be charged at the rate documented on the financial agreement.

Cancellation Policy

Cancellations must be made at a minimum of 24 hours in advance. Without the requested notice you will be responsible for half of the session fee, this will be considered a no-show.

Parent, family and child intake sessions are conducted by an 80-minute intake session at the rate of \$150.00. When working with children and adolescents, I will spend the first 10 minutes of the session with the parent to collect a payment, schedule the next appointment, and touch base about the progress of therapy. If you would like to discuss a concern regarding your child, please schedule an appointment with me outside of your child's appointment time.

Dual relationships

As a matter of policy, if the counselor and client see each other in a public setting, the counselor will not acknowledge the client unless the client does so first. The client is solely responsible for all public interactions with the counselor and others in all public settings.

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Colleague Consultation and Supervision

In order to provide quality care, counselors often consult with other counseling professionals. When this occurs, every effort will be made to protect the identity of the client.

As a pre-licensed professional seeking Tennessee state licensure, I am required to spend a minimum of two years of post-graduate clinical experience and continued supervision. Post-graduate clinician experience is similar to a doctor graduates residency program. Thus, in order to ensure quality care as a pre-licensed professional, I will be consulting in supervision with a licensed professional AAMFT approved supervisor. When this occurs, every effort will be made to protect the identity of the client.

Confidentiality

Professional ethics and Tennessee State law indicate that confidential information is controlled by the client. This means that as a general rule, information shared in sessions with a counselor will be held in confidence. However, there are limits to confidentiality. They are as follows:

1. Confidentiality is waived when a client is a danger to self or others.
2. Confidentiality is waived when a client is engaging in or is aware of abuse or neglect of minors, elderly, and developmentally delayed adults. Tennessee law requires that child abuse in any form be reported to the Department of Human Services or other authorities such as Juvenile Judge.
3. Confidentiality is waived if a lawsuit is brought against the counselor.
4. Confidentiality is waived when requested information is court-ordered and signed by a judge
5. Confidential information must be accessible to any Supervisor named on page one of this form.
6. Confidentiality is limited if the counselor must engage collection agencies for the purpose of receiving payment for services rendered.
7. Confidentiality is limited for purposes of professional consult between counselor and other practicing therapists.

If you are referred by a physician or other health care professional, it is a professional courtesy to maintain contact as necessary, with that referral source. That may be done unless you request otherwise.

In cases where family members are being seen by multiple therapists for individual therapy, it is understood and agreed upon that counselors will share necessary and pertinent information. This information will only be shared when it is necessary for individual and family health. This practice policy is put in place to ensure that you and your family are getting the highest level of quality care and ensure that we as an agency are following the Family system Model.

When working with minors I will not share the content of sessions with parents/guardians, unless the content must be shared for safety reasons or if my therapist judgment warrants sharing content for the welfare and health of the minor. I will discuss progress and treatment plan in general terms with parents/guardians. Parents are encouraged to be a very active part of

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the therapeutic process; be prepared to be in session with your child at times and to have homework assignments for your family.

Benefits and Risks of Counseling

Benefits: While there are no guarantees, this process should assist the client in emotional and mental growth, and general improvement of life challenges. While it is possible to improve personal issues without assistance, research has shown that individuals who participate in professional counseling sessions tend to improve more dramatically and for the long-term.

Risks: Participation in therapy sessions may include the following risks: increased relational challenges, increased self-awareness that may be difficult or upsetting, or the general state of your life and condition may decline in quality before it begins to improve. Risks related to most mainstream therapeutic methodologies are deemed minimal but may include an initial increase in anxiety and thought processes as well as the potential of general life disorganization as the client works to address thought life issues.

Persons contemplating counseling should realize that they may make significant changes in their lives. People often modify their emotions, attitudes, and behaviors. They may also make changes in their marriages or significant relationships, such as with parents, friends, children, relatives etc. They may change employment and begin to feel differently about themselves and may change other aspects of their lives. While the therapist will assist the client in effecting change, they cannot guarantee a specific outcome. Clients are ultimately responsible for their own growth.

Do you have any questions about fees, confidentiality, or other matters? Yes_____ No_____

Do you agree with the conditions and provision of these Practice Policies? Yes_____ No_____

Client's Signature and Print

_____/_____Date_____

Parent/Guardian's Signature/Print (if a minor)

_____/_____Date_____

Counselor's Signature

_____/_____Date_____