



Counseling with AJ, LLC Informed Consent
Mailing: PO Box 263, Dillingham, AK 99576
Physical: 333 Main St., Suite 104, Dillingham, AK 99576
Contact: aj@counselingwithaj.com 907-843-3282

Welcome: Thank you for choosing Counseling with AJ, LLC for your mental and behavioral health needs. We would like to take this opportunity to share crucial information regarding the services provided, confidentiality, and policies. Please read through this document in its entirety. Feel free to ask any questions regarding the information found within.

Purpose and Goals of Services: Counseling with AJ, LLC works to provide effective individual and family services focusing on evidence-based practices geared towards meeting the individual or family's needs. Goals and objectives will be outlined in an individual treatment plan and developed in collaboration between the therapist, the potential client, and the client's parent(s)/guardian(s). Individual and family counseling services will focus on the emotional/behavioral struggles of the client and increasing the client's skills or their family's skills for coping with those struggles.

Appointments: Typically, Counseling with AJ, LLC staff is available for appointments Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The staff will implement accommodations for the clients' and families' schedules upon request. Appointments are typically 45-50 minutes and may occur once per week, every other week, or per month. Appointments may be made after an initial intake session which can take up to 90 minutes. The client and therapist will agree upon the frequency of appointments before services are rendered.

Cancellation/No-Show Policy: If you need to cancel an appointment, please provide us with 24 hours' notice, and we will work to do the same. We understand that there are times when you do not know 24 hours in advance (for example, illness), but please call or email as soon as you know you cannot attend the scheduled appointment. If there is a pattern of missing sessions, canceling, or no-shows, our staff will work with you and your family to identify reasons for missing sessions. We will then come up with a resolution that could include; deciding on a different appointment time, providing a referral source to receive services from another agency, or suspending services at that time. Missed or no-show appointments will be charged \$50 at the therapist's discretion.

Staff: Staff members that work for Counseling with AJ, LLC and providing counseling services are licensed professional counselors (LPC) and are required to be licensed professionals in a counseling related field to provide counseling services.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality is an essential aspect of the counseling process. Your information and information shared in counseling will not be shared with others in verbal or written communications except in the following circumstances:

This information is required by the Board of Professional Counselors which regulates all licensed professional counselors, Phone: (907) 465-8444, Fax: (907) 465-2974,
Email: ProfessionalCounselors@Alaska.Gov, P.O. Box 110806, Juneau, AK 99811-0806

- Staff members are bound by duty to warn. Staff members are required, by law, to breach confidentiality when they have reasonable knowledge that a participant's actions may be harmful to themselves or others.
- Counseling with AJ, LLC will only share information on the signed Release of Information Form with the person or organization requesting information.
- Courts may subpoena counseling documents or request that counselors breach confidentiality at times. When possible, staff members will discuss the procedures for releasing records with the client and enlist the client's or parent(s)/guardian(s)' assistance in resolving the situation that has necessitated such disclosure.
- We are Mandated Reporters. We must report current or past abuse, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, mental abuse, or neglect. If a staff member believes that abuse has or is happening, they must report it to the appropriate agencies.
- At times staff may seek peer consultation or supervision from another counselor. If I seek peer consultation or supervision, I will maintain your confidentiality. There will be no identifying information about you that I will share in the case of peer consultation.

Additionally, Counseling With AJ, LLC staff will not google or look up personal information for you and Counseling With AJ, LLC staff expects the same to maintain boundaries in the counseling relationship and personal lives of you as a client and therapists at Counseling With AJ, LLC.

Sessions, in person or online, will not be recorded by Counseling With AJ, LLC staff and expect the same from clients of Counseling With AJ, LLC. If a therapist finds out that sessions have been recorded this may mean the therapeutic relationship is terminated.

This counselor will comply with AS 08.29.200 of the Statutes and Regulations of Professional Counselors.

Professional Records: Counseling with AJ, LLC will maintain appropriate records regarding services provided to clients. Records are maintained in an electronic health record (EHR) through Simple Practice, a record-keeping company. Authorized staff members can only access these records. Some documents are also kept in paper form and contained in locked filing cabinets in a secure office to which only the manager of Counseling with AJ, LLC will have access. Except in unusual circumstances involving danger to self, clients or parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to copy your file. Counseling with AJ, LLC will charge a \$50 fee for this. Because these are professional records, they may be misinterpreted and upsetting to untrained readers.

For this reason, we recommend you initially review your records with your therapist or have them forwarded to another mental health professional to discuss the contents. If your therapist refuses the request for access to your records, you have a right to have that decision reviewed by another mental health professional. Your therapist will discuss this with you upon your request. With your written approval, you also have the right to request that a copy of your file be made available to any other healthcare provider.

Professional Records will be maintained for 7 years in accordance with Alaska state law that regulates professional counselors.

Risks and Benefits to Behavioral Health Services: Any mental/behavioral health treatment has potential risks and benefits. Some participants have reported remembering unpleasant events that arouse strong emotional feelings such as uncomfortable levels of sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, frustration, loneliness, helplessness, or other uncomfortable feelings at the onset of behavioral/mental health treatment. Additional potential risks involve changes in clients' relationships with significant others.

In many situations, the goals we work on in treatment can cause feelings to worsen before any improvements are observable. Finally, there is a risk that treatment may not work in some situations. Potential benefits to behavioral/mental health services include an improved ability to relate with others; a clearer understanding of self, values, and goals; increased academic productivity; a noticeable improvement in mood and emotion management abilities; and an ability to cope with stress or anxiety in a more effective manner. Taking personal responsibility for working with these issues may lead to more significant growth. While the course of treatment is designed to be helpful, Counseling with AJ, LLC, can make no guarantees about the treatment outcome.

Participant Eligibility for Services: Eligibility for services is determined through the development of the comprehensive diagnostic assessment completed by an appropriate staff member of Counseling with AJ, LLC, in collaboration with the client and relevant collateral contacts. A client's need may be determined inappropriate by the therapist, and we may refer you to another agency/therapist at the discretion of the therapist working with you or your child.

Participant involvement in the Development of the Individualized Treatment Plan: Members of the interdisciplinary treatment team include the client, the client's parent(s)/guardian(s), staff members of Counseling with AJ, LLC, the client's physician, and anyone else deemed appropriate by the client or parent/guardian. This team will work together to develop a treatment plan that meets the client's needs. This process includes the identification of times, dates, frequencies, objectives, goals, tasks, and criteria for the exit of services.

Complaint/Grievance Process: It is the intent of Counseling with AJ, LLC, to provide services equitably and professionally, with complete respect for all due rights of our clients. Counseling with AJ, LLC, wants to anticipate and prevent any possibilities for the abuse and neglect of our participants. All participants or their legal guardian(s) have a right to appeal and a right to file a grievance. In the event of such an occurrence, the instance will be fully documented in writing by each party involved to facilitate just and equitable action.

Emergency Situations: In case of an emergency outside of regular business hours (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM AKST), please contact the following:

- Your local behavioral/mental health services emergency center
- 24/7 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: Call or text 988
- The nearest emergency room
- Call 911 for immediate emergency care

Right to Choose Behavioral Health Services Provider: Clients and their parent(s)/guardian(s) get to choose if they desire to receive behavioral health services and who the provider of services will be to assist them in accomplishing the objectives stated in their treatment plan.

By signing this form, the client or parent(s)/guardian(s) indicate that they have chosen Counseling

with AJ, LLC, to provide mental/behavioral health services and acknowledge they understand that they have the right to revoke that decision, in writing, at any time. Should the client or parent(s)/guardian(s) desire to seek services from another provider, Counseling with AJ, LLC, will provide a list of referral sources.

Updated Information: To ensure that our agency can reach you as needed, please ensure that you update your contact information with your therapist.

Payment: Counseling with AJ, LLC, is a private pay practice. You are responsible for the payment of services received. Fees are outlined in the fee schedule. Counseling with AJ, LLC accepts credit card payments (using Square), cash, and checks made out to Counseling with AJ, LLC. Payments are due within two weeks of services rendered. An invoice with the amount owed is provided to the clients. If clients have delinquent accounts, their services may be suspended or terminated at the therapist's discretion.

In case of an Emergency Situation in our Office or the Community: In the case of an Emergency Situation that occurs while a client is in session, Counseling with AJ, LLC staff will do the following; 1. Call 911 or other emergency services, 2. Contact parent/guardian or the client's emergency contact, and 3. Document the situation.

Social Media: Counseling with AJ, LLC staff prohibits making or accepting friend or contact requests from current or former clients or their family members on any social media platform. Adding clients as friends or contacts on these platforms can compromise confidentiality and our respective privacy.

Voluntary Nature of Services and Rights of Termination: Mental/behavioral health services provided through Counseling with AJ, LLC are voluntary and may be terminated by the client at any time. If we determine that the therapist cannot meet the participant's needs, we will provide thirty days' notice and a referral source. These reasons may include but are not limited to repeated missed appointments or lack of progress toward goals.