Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D., ABPP
Licensed Psychologist • Certified Group • Psychotherapist • Diplomate in Psychoanalysis

Notice of Privacy Practices

Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D., ABPP, CGP

Effective date: _____

Notice Of Privacy Practices

As required by the privacy regulations created as a result of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

This notice describes how health information about you (as a patient of this practice) may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to your individually identifiable health information.

Please review this notice carefully.

A. Our commitment to your privacy:

Our practice is dedicated to maintaining the privacy of your individually identifiable health information (also called *protected* health information, or PHI). In conducting our business, we will create records regarding you and the treatment and services we provide to you. We are required by law to maintain the confidentiality of health information that identifies you. We also are required by law to provide you with this notice of our legal duties and the privacy practices that we maintain in our practice concerning your PHI. By federal and state law, we must follow the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices that we have in effect at the time.

We realize that these laws are complicated, but we must provide you with the following important information:

- How we may use and disclose your PHI,
- Your privacy rights in your PHI,
- Our obligations concerning the use and disclosure of your PHI.

The terms of this notice apply to all records containing your PHI that are created or retained by our practice. We reserve the right to revise or amend this Notice of Privacy Practices. Any revision or amendment to this notice will be effective for all of your records that our practice has created or maintained in the past, and for any of your records that we may create or maintain in the future. Our practice will post a copy of our current Notice in our offices in a visible location at all times, and you may request a copy of our most current Notice at any time.

2373 Broadway • Suite 1421 • New York, NY 10024 • 212-877-7282
51 South St. Morristown, NJ 07960 • 973-540-9894 • Fax: 973-540-0555
NY Cert. No. 6782 NJ Lic. No. SI01619

B. If you have questions about this Notice, please contact: Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D. at 2373 Broadway Suite 1421, New York, NY 10024 (212- 877 7282) or at 51 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 (973 540 9894) for further information.

C. We may use and disclose your PHI in the following ways:
The following categories describe the different ways in which we may use and disclose your PHI.

1. Treatment. Our practice may use your PHI to treat you. For example, we may consult with other of your health care providers (with your explicit consent) in order to coordinate your care.

2. Payment. Our practice may use and disclose your PHI in order to bill and collect payment for the services and items you may receive from us. For example, we may contact your health insurer at your request or in response to a request from your insurer for whom you have provided a release of information in order to provide your insurer with details regarding your treatment to determine if your insurer will cover, or pay for, your treatment. We also may use and disclose your PHI to obtain payment from third parties that may be responsible for such costs, such as family members. Also, we may use your PHI to bill you directly for services and items. We may disclose your PHI to other health care providers and entities to assist in their billing and collection efforts.

3. Health care operations. Our practice may use and disclose your PHI to operate our business. As examples of the ways in which we may use and disclose your information for our operations, our practice may use your PHI to evaluate the quality of care you received from us, or to conduct cost-management and business planning activities for our practice. We may disclose your PHI to other health care providers and entities to assist in their health care operations.

4. Disclosures required by law. Our practice will use and disclose your PHI when we are required to do so by federal, state or local law.

D. Use and disclosure of your PHI in certain special circumstances:
The following categories describe unique scenarios in which we may use or disclose your identifiable health information:

1. Public health risks. Our practice may disclose your PHI to public health authorities that are authorized by law to collect information for the purpose of:

- Maintaining vital records, such as births and deaths,
- Reporting child abuse or neglect,
- Preventing or controlling disease, injury or disability,
- Notifying a person regarding potential exposure to a communicable disease,
- Notifying a person regarding a potential risk for spreading or contracting a disease or condition,
- Reporting reactions to drugs or problems with products or devices,
- Notifying individuals if a product or device they may be using has been recalled,

- Notifying appropriate government agency(ies) and authority(ies) regarding the potential abuse or neglect of an adult patient (including domestic violence); however, we will only disclose this information if the patient agrees or we are required or authorized by law to disclose this information,
- Notifying your employer under limited circumstances related primarily to workplace injury or illness or medical surveillance.

2. Lawsuits and similar proceedings. Our practice may use and disclose your PHI in response to a court or administrative order, if you are involved in a lawsuit or similar proceeding. We also may disclose your PHI in response to a discovery request, subpoena or other lawful process by another party involved in the dispute, but only if we have made an effort to inform you of the request or to obtain an order protecting the information the party has requested.

3. Law enforcement. We may release PHI if asked to do so by a law enforcement official:

- Regarding a crime victim in certain situations, if we are unable to obtain the person's agreement,
- Concerning a death we believe has resulted from criminal conduct,
- Regarding criminal conduct at our offices,
- In response to a warrant, summons, court order, subpoena or similar legal process,
- To identify/locate a suspect, material witness, fugitive or missing person,
- In an emergency, to report a crime (including the location or victim(s) of the crime, or the description, identity or location of the perpetrator).

4. Serious threats to health or safety. Our practice may use and disclose your PHI when necessary to reduce or prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of another individual or the public. Under these circumstances, we will only make disclosures to a person or organization able to help prevent the threat.

5. Military. Our practice may disclose your PHI if you are a member of U.S. or foreign military forces (including veterans) and if required by the appropriate authorities.

5. National security. Our practice may disclose your PHI to federal officials for intelligence and national security activities authorized by law. We also may disclose your PHI to federal and national security activities authorized by law. We also may disclose your PHI to federal officials in order to protect the president, other officials or foreign heads of state, or to conduct investigations.

6. Workers' compensation. Our practice may release your PHI for workers' compensation and similar programs.

E. Your rights regarding your PHI:

You have the following rights regarding the PHI that we maintain about you:

1. Confidential communications. You have the right to request that our practice communicate with you about your health and related issues in a particular manner or at a certain location. For instance, you may ask that we contact you at home, rather than work. In order to request a type of confidential communication, you must make a written request to **Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D., ABPP at 2373 Broadway, Suite 1421, New York, NY 10024 or at 51 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960**, specifying the requested method of contact, or the location where you wish to be contacted. Our practice will accommodate **reasonable** requests. You do not need to give a reason for your request.

2. Requesting restrictions. You have the right to request a restriction in our use or disclosure of your PHI for treatment, payment or health care operations. Additionally, you have the right to request that we restrict our disclosure of your PHI to only certain individuals involved in your care or the payment for your care, such as family members and friends. **We are not required to agree to your request**; however, if we do agree, we are bound by our agreement except when otherwise required by law, in emergencies or when the information is necessary to treat you. In order to request a restriction in our use or disclosure of your PHI, you must make your request in writing to **Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D., ABPP at 2373 Broadway, Suite 1421, New York, NY 10024 or at 51 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960.** Your request must describe in a clear and concise fashion:

- The information you wish restricted,
- Whether you are requesting to limit our practice's use, disclosure or both,
- To whom you want the limits to apply.

3. Inspection and copies. You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of the PHI that may be used to make decisions about you, including patient medical records and billing records, but not including psychotherapy notes. You must submit your request in writing to **Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D., ABPP at 2373 Broadway, Suite 1421, New York, NY 10024 or at 51 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960** in order to inspect and/or obtain a copy of your PHI. Our practice may charge a fee for the costs of copying, mailing, labor and supplies associated with your request. Our practice may deny your request to inspect and/or copy in certain limited circumstances; however, you may request a review of our denial. Another licensed health care professional chosen by us will conduct reviews.

4. Amendment. You may ask us to amend your health information if you believe it is incorrect or incomplete, and you may request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for our practice. To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to **Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D., ABPP at 2373 Broadway, Suite 1421, New York, NY 10024 or at 51 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960.** You must provide us with a reason that supports your request for amendment. Our practice will deny your request if you fail to submit your request (and the reason supporting your request) in writing. Also, we may deny your request if you ask us to amend information that is in our opinion: (a) accurate and complete; (b) not part of the PHI kept by or for the practice; (c) not part of the PHI which you would be permitted to inspect and copy; or (d) not created by our practice, unless the individual or entity that created the information is not available to amend the information.

5. Accounting of disclosures. All of our patients have the right to request an "accounting of disclosures." An "accounting of disclosures" is a list of certain non-routine disclosures our practice has made of your PHI for purposes not related to treatment, payment or operations. Use of your PHI as part of the routine patient care in our practice is not required to be documented – for example, the doctor sharing information with the billing department using your information to file your insurance claim. In order to obtain an accounting of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to **Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D., ABPP at 2373 Broadway, Suite 1421, New York, NY 10024 or at 51 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960**. All requests for an "accounting of disclosures" must state a time period, which may not be longer than six (6) years from the date of disclosure and may not include dates before April 14, 2003. The first list you request within a 12-month period is free of charge, but our practice may charge you for additional lists within the same 12-month period. Our practice will notify you of the costs involved with additional requests, and you may withdraw your request before you incur any costs.

6. Right to a paper copy of this notice. You are entitled to receive a paper copy of our notice of privacy practices. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time. To obtain a paper copy of this notice, contact **Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D., ABPP at 2373 Broadway, Suite 1421, New York, NY 10024 (212 877 7282) or at 51 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 (973 540 9894)**.

7. Right to file a complaint. If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with our practice or with the New Jersey Board of Psychological Examiners. To file a complaint with our practice, contact **Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D., ABPP at 2373 Broadway, Suite 1421, New York, NY 10024 (212 877 7282) or at 51 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 (973 540 9894)**. . All complaints must be submitted in writing. **You will not be penalized for filing a complaint**.

8. Right to provide an authorization for other uses and disclosures. Our practice will obtain your written authorization for uses and disclosures that are not identified by this notice or permitted by applicable law. Any authorization you provide to us regarding the use and disclosure of your PHI may be revoked at any time *in writing*. After you revoke your authorization, we will no longer use or disclose your PHI for the reasons described in the authorization. *Please note*: we are required to retain records of your care.

Again, if you have any questions regarding this notice or our health information privacy policies, please contact **Nina K. Thomas, Ph.D., ABPP at 2373 Broadway, Suite 1421, New York, NY 10024 (212 877 7282) or at 51 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 (973 540 9894)**.

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