



Austin Wellness, PLLC  
www.austin-wellness.com  
10010 Anderson Mill Rd.  
Austin Texas 78750  
512-257-0050

Communication Electronic Consent and Social Media Internet Policy - 1 of 2 Revised 2020

## CONSENT TO COMMUNICATE VIA ELECTRONIC DEVICES FORM CONSENT TO SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNET POLICY FORM

You have requested that Austin Wellness, PLLC communicate with you via computer, fax, email, cordless phone, cell phone, instant and/or text messaging. The information you receive from Austin Wellness, PLLC in this manner may contain personally identifiable information about you, which may be protected by federal and state privacy and security laws. Austin Wellness, PLLC cannot guarantee confidentiality when you are communicating via computer, fax, email, cordless phone, cell phone, instant and/or text messaging.

These devices and/or methods could compromise confidentiality and come with additional risks that include but are not limited to the following:

- The possibility of technology failure resulting in messages and information not being received.
- The possibility of misunderstandings increased with text-based modalities such as text or email due to the absence of nonverbal/visual cues.
- Use of email may result in various servers creating permanent records of these transactions.
- Many employers and government agencies review email archives on a routine basis, record letters typed on a keyboard, and/or engage in data mining programs to identify transmissions containing specified content.
- Email may not be checked daily and may result in a possible lag in turn around/response.
- Confidentiality may be breached at many points when using electronic communication including unauthorized monitoring/interception of transmissions from one computer to another.
- Electronic communication may also be breached as the information passes through the servers along the route to each other. This means that it is possible that third parties may access your records/communication.
- Insurance company may consider any electronic communication (in all forms) to be part of the medical record and request them.
- Austin Wellness, PLLC email communication is *not encrypted*. However, encrypted email messages can be decoded by motivated hackers.
- Fax, email, instant and/or text messages can be immediately broadcast worldwide and be received by many intended or unintended recipients.
- Fax, email, instant and/or text messages could be intercepted by unauthorized third-parties.
- Recipients can forward fax, email, instant and/or text messages to other recipients without the original sender's permission or knowledge.
- Backup copies of fax, email, instant and/or text messages may exist even after the sender or the recipient has deleted the sender's copy.
- Fax, email, instant and/or text messages can be more easily falsified than handwritten or signed documents.

You understand and acknowledge that there are risks outside of Austin Wellness, PLLC control when your personal information is emailed or sent via fax, instant and/or text message because such a communication will not be sent using secure technology, such as encryption.

By understanding the inherent risks of the aforementioned devices, you can make an informed choice about when/where/how to use those tools. Because you now have this knowledge of the risks related to the use of technology, Austin Wellness, PLLC acknowledges that if you use any of these methods of communication, you are giving permission to Austin Wellness, PLLC to do the same.

Austin Wellness, PLLC will take reasonable steps to ensure that all information sent to or received back from you in fax, email, instant and/or text messages is kept confidential. By acknowledging below, you consent to fax, email, instant and/or text messages or online correspondence, which includes your understanding of the risks mentioned above.

Client Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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Communication Electronic Consent and Social Media Internet Policy - 2 of 2 Revised 2020

## CONSENT TO SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNET POLICY FORM

Austin Wellness, PLLC primary concern is client confidentiality and privacy. Social Media can compromise client confidentiality and respective privacy, and it could affect therapeutic relationship boundaries. Please read the following to understand Austin Wellness, PLLC Internet policy on Social Media.

Austin Wellness, PLLC consistent responses to various interactions that may occur on the Internet:

- Austin Wellness, PLLC will not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.
- Austin Wellness, PLLC will not respond to SMS (mobile phone text messaging) or messaging on Social Networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn etc.
- Social Media sites are not secure, engaging this way could compromise your confidentiality, and it may also create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of your legal medical records.

If you use location-based services on your mobile phone, you may wish to be aware of the privacy issues related to using these services:

- If you have GPS tracking enabled on your device, it is possible that others may surmise that you are a therapy client due to regular check-ins.

Austin Wellness, PLLC uses email only to arrange or modify appointments, administrative business or related logistical communication and not as a means of therapy. If you choose to communicate by email you may wish to be aware that:

- All emails are retained in the logs of your Internet service providers.
- While it is unlikely that someone will be looking at these logs, they are, in theory, available to be read by the system administrator(s) of the Internet service provider.
- That any emails received from you and any responses that you receive become a part of your legal record. Emails to and from you are NOT encrypted.

You may find Austin Wellness, PLLC on business review sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Yahoo Local, Bing, or other places which list businesses.

- These sites include forums for users rate their providers and add reviews.
- Many of these sites comb search engines for business listings and automatically add listings regardless of whether the business has added itself to the site.
- If you should find Austin Wellness, PLLC listing on any sites, please know that the listing is NOT a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement.
- The American Counseling Association's Ethics Code states under Principle C.3.b. "Counselors who use testimonials do not solicit them from current clients nor former clients nor any other persons who may be vulnerable to undue influence."

I acknowledging the Social Media and Internet Policy under which Austin Wellness, PLLC is legally obligated to waive confidentiality. I hereby agree to cooperate to the best of my ability as shown by my signature below.

Client Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_