



Your Non-Profit Community Health Center

Bethel Family Clinic

Box 1908
Bethel, AK 99559
907-543-3773 F-907-543-3545

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INFORMED CONSENT

Confidentiality: The privacy of your health information is protected by law. Bethel Family Clinic staff involved in your treatment cannot release your health information to another party without your signed consent. You may revoke your consent to share information at any time.

If you are a child or an adult with a legal decision-maker, your parent or guardian will have the right to consent to the release of your treatment information, and they may revoke this consent at any time.

It is important that you understand there are some exceptions to confidentiality rules:

1. The law requires that behavioral health providers notify appropriate authorities if you have made a clear threat of violence towards an identifiable victim.
2. If your behavioral health provider believes that you are in clear danger of suicide or unable to safely care for yourself, they must notify family members and/or the proper authorities to keep you safe. The same rule applies to information you might share about another person who is suicidal or unable to care for him/herself.
3. Your provider is mandated by law to report suspected physical or sexual abuse or severe neglect of children, the elderly or the disabled.
4. Your provider may be required by law to release certain records and to testify in court proceedings pursuant to valid subpoena or court order.
5. To provide you the best care, the ethics of behavioral health professionals may require that they consult with other professionals regarding your treatment. Your provider may consult with other mental health or medical professionals at Bethel Family Clinic. They may also consult with Dr. Sarah Angstman, a licensed psychologist in independent practice who is contracted with the Bethel Family Clinic. The professionals consulted are bound by the same confidentiality rules as your provider as employees and contractors for the Bethel Family Clinic. Additionally, they are legally bound by the federal laws and regulations of HIPAA.
6. If you are receiving treatment for a substance use disorder, the law provides additional protection for your sensitive health information. However, consultation is at times required to address mental health concerns among clients with a substance use disorder. When such concerns are identified, the Chemical Dependency Counselor (CDC) will consult with one of the Bethel Family Clinic Mental Health Clinicians. This consultation may result in sharing any and all of the substance use treatment records and may result in a referral to the clinician to better assess and meet your treatment.
7. In couple and family therapy, the information in your file legally belongs to all parties. Both partners must give permission for any information to be released about the couple or family therapy.
8. If you are in group therapy, separate files are kept for individuals within the group. We ask that group participants keep information shared in group private. However, BFC staff cannot guarantee the privacy of information shared in a group setting.



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9. We will follow Bethel Family Clinic billing procedures. Health insurers typically require the release of some treatment information for reimbursement. If you have questions about what is being shared with your insurance company, your provider will connect you with clinic staff that can help you.

Communication with Your Provider: Due to the nature of clinical work, there are times your provider will not readily available by telephone. The best way to reach your provider during working hours is to call and leave a message with the front desk staff at 907-543-3773. They will make every effort to return your call same business day, excluding evenings, weekends, and holidays. If your provider plans to be gone for any length of time, they will notify you prior and our front desk staff will be able to inform you of the anticipated length of absence.

Communicating using Technology: Bethel Family Clinic behavioral health providers will not initiate email communication with clients. However providers can respond via email if the client initiates that communication. It is important to understand that email is not a secure form of communication. If you choose to communicate with your provider by email, your confidentiality may be compromised. The clinic follows current legal encryption standards for technology-based communications. However, this does not guarantee confidentiality of email.

If you choose to communicate with your provider by email, please limit your use of email to scheduling, billing, or other administrative matters. No sensitive clinical information should be shared over email.

Behavioral health providers are not allowed to text their clients using personal cell phones under any circumstances. Bethel Family Clinic has an automated system for texting you appointment reminders. You may opt out of this service if you choose to do so.

Behavioral health providers are not allowed to be “friends” with their active clients on social media websites. Once your treatment has been completed, your provider can make individual decisions about social media interactions with you based on their professional ethics and boundaries.

Billing: Bethel Family Clinic’s fee schedule is available upon request. If you have insurance, the clinic will bill your insurance plan for you. However, it is your responsibility to become informed about your coverage, including requirements for pre-authorization of services, deductibles, and co pays. You are responsible for any portion of your fees not covered by your insurance plan.

Legal Involvement: Bethel Family Clinic behavioral health providers are not forensic practitioners. Providers prefer not to testify in court for any reason. If your provider is compelled to participate in a deposition or court testimony, hourly fees will be charged for their time. Behavioral health providers cannot write reports to provide opinions about parental fitness, custody matters, or other forensic questions. If you are involved or expect to be involved in litigation or court matters of any kind, please let your provider know as soon as possible so that you can further discuss the boundaries of your treatment and protect your treatment information.



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Emergencies: Bethel Family Clinic does not provide 24 hour emergency services. If you are in crisis, you should contact YKHC at (907)-543-6000 and ask for Behavioral Health On-Call. If you are in Bethel, you can also call 911 or walk into the YKHC Emergency Room and ask for help. If you are in a village, you can contact local law enforcement.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Bethel Family Clinic policies for behavioral health treatment.

Client Name Printed _____ **Birth Date** _____

Client Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Reviewed with Staff Member: _____ **Date:** _____