

Consent to Treatment

For Crystal A. McComas, LSCSW, LLC to provide services to you, your minor child, or your ward, you must read and sign this Consent to Treatment form. Please be advised that this form is not a contract or agreement for services. This form simply allows Crystal A. McComas, LSCSW, and LLC to provide services to you, your minor child, or your ward. You may withdraw this consent to treatment at any time and ask that your file be closed.

Please review this form carefully. If you have any questions about this Consent to Treatment form, please ask them before you sign the form.

Therapy. The intention for clinical social work services is to impart change. Change can be difficult. The change process can feel exciting and empowering, as well as frustrating and tiring. This is to be expected. Clients are encouraged to express a range of feelings and thoughts as they work to improve aspects of behavior, relationships, or various other concerns. There is no one way to impart change, and therefore no one way to do or experience therapy. Crystal A. McComas, LSCSW, LLC is often successful in helping clients find their way through change and move forward, but not always. We cannot and do not guarantee the success of any intervention or treatment modality.

Therapy for Minor Children. As a parent you may be asked to participate in your child's treatment process in some capacity. This is especially true when the child is younger than 6 years of age. To positively impact a child's mood or behavior it is often important that the change process include some aspect of the family or family life. Parent participation sends a powerful message to your child about your intentions for change.

Minor's Access to Treatment. Under Kansas law, minor children age 14 and up are permitted to make written application on their own behalf to a treatment facility "without the consent or written application of their parent, legal guardian or any other person." Kansas law also provides that when a minor child 14 and up "makes written application on their own behalf and is admitted as a voluntary patient, the head of the treatment facility shall promptly notify the child's parent, legal guardian or other person known to the head of the treatment facility to be interested in the care and welfare of the minor of the admittance of that child." As such, minors 14 and up may access treatment by signing this document, without the consent of their parents, though their parents must be notified of the admittance. Please discuss this issue with our office if you have any concerns.

Working With Physicians. Crystal A. McComas is not a medical doctor, nor is she an Advanced Practitioner Registered Nurse. As such, it may be in your or your child's/ward's clinical best interest for our office to work with your physician or your child's/ward's physician. This is especially true if medication is being considered as an intervention. By signing this document you are agreeing to have us contact your physician or your child's/ward's physician as necessary to coordinate treatment.

If you **do not wish** to have us contact your physician please mark this box: I AM WITHHOLDING PERMISSION FOR Crystal A. McComas, LSCSW, LLC TO CONTACT MY PHYSICIAN REGARDING MY CASE.

If you **do not wish** to have us contact your child's/ward's physician please mark this box: I AM WITHHOLDING PERMISSION FOR Crystal A. McComas, LSCSW, LLC TO CONTACT MY CHILD'S/WARD'S PHYSICIAN REGARDING HIS OR HER CASE.

Therapeutic Relationship. Crystal A. McComas, LSCSW, LLC respects the dignity and worth of each client. In accordance with the ethical standards established for Licensed Specialist Clinical Social Workers, Crystal A. McComas, LSCSW, LLC practices with the intention of promoting the well being of our clients. Generally, our client's interests are primary. There may, however, be exceptions in terms of my responsibilities to the larger community or society, or specific legal obligations that override loyalty owed to a client or clients. Crystal A. McComas, LSCSW, LLC must balance a dual responsibility to the client and the larger community or society. An example would be if a client were to make a threat of harm to self or other(s). Our office will review these exceptions at intake, and throughout the treatment process as necessary. Furthermore, our office will work to resolve conflicts between clients' interests and the larger society's interests in a respectful, socially responsible manner, as required by the values, ethical principles and ethical standards of our professional Code of Ethics.

Grievance Process. At any time in the treatment process a client may disagree with their therapist about some aspect of treatment. Crystal A. McComas, LCSW, LLC will attempt to resolve any conflicts in a manner that is suitable to clients, while maintaining important treatment standards. It is important for you to share your concerns with our office as soon as possible as satisfactory resolution is unlikely if you do not disclose your concerns, especially to Crystal A. McComas. You may also want to speak to another therapist, nurse practitioner or primary care physician treating you about the issue, but for effective change, please discuss your concerns with Crystal in a direct manner so that all efforts to find a resolution are explored. If the conflict cannot be resolved, Crystal may provide recommendations for you to receive services elsewhere.

Second Opinions and Service Referral. You are entitled to a second opinion regarding your diagnosis or treatment. A second opinion may be helpful if you do not agree with a diagnosis or treatment finding. Crystal A. McComas, LCSW, LLC may make a specific recommendation about where or when to seek a second opinion, especially if we do not have adequate training, experience, or services to properly address your or your child's/ward's needs. In this case we may recommend other resources that are more suitable such as a particular kind of assessment, or referral for treatment outside the scope of our practice, that another professional or agency could provide.

Confidentiality. Crystal A. McComas, LCSW, LLC is committed to protecting and maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of your treatment information and other Protection Health Information. If you have any questions regarding our privacy practices, please refer to the Notice of Privacy Practices for Crystal A. McComas, LCSW, LLC.

Confidentiality for Minor Children. In order for children and teens to trust the therapy process they must be allowed to disclose thoughts and feelings without fears of repercussions by parents or authorities. Children, too, must receive confidential services. We cannot release any information about your child to anyone without your written consent. For teenagers age 14 to 17, Crystal A. McComas, LCSW, LLC asks that families give expressed permission for most therapy discussions between teen and therapist to remain confidential even from parents or family members. Teen people will be made aware that parents could file court action to open their records. Crystal A. McComas, LCSW, LLC reserves the right to decline beginning or cease services with a child or teen whose parents do not allow the therapist to disclose only what is necessary to further treatment goals. Crystal A. McComas, LCSW, LLC will disclose information to parents if 1) the child is at serious risk of harming self or others; 2) the child is involved in potentially self-destructive behavior; 3) the child or teen is involved in a situation in which the treatment process is being impaired or rendered ineffective in some way. In the latter instance, our office may not share aspects of a situation, or specific information, but may refuse to continue the case if the child or teen will not self-disclose. Information shared by a child or teen is often used to help parents move toward more effective parenting. Therapy, however, will not be effective or impart change if children and teens believe the therapist is acting as an informant to their parents. If parents have concerns and would like to discuss this matter further, they must do so before scheduling individual sessions for a child or teen.

Breaking Confidentiality. Beyond what is noted above, there are three exceptions to confidentiality for all clients. By law, a therapist must break confidentiality if: (1) if a client is threatening to harm self or other(s) in order to protect the client or another person(s); 2) if we suspect child abuse; and (3) if a court of law orders the production of the record. If this happens, we will attempt to invoke privileged communication (a legal protection of your right to therapeutic confidentiality) if you or your attorney asks us to do so. However, under some circumstances, the court can override privileged communication and order disclosure of records.

Email or Fax Contact. You may contact Crystal A. McComas, LCSW, LLC via email or fax for the same purpose you would initiate phone contact. By initiating email contact you are accepting this understanding and agreeing to act accordingly. For evaluations, both email and fax contact are acceptable but are considered part of the evaluation. By initiating this contact you are accepting this understanding and agreeing that the email may be used in your evaluation. You are advised that email communication is protected by federal law, but should not be considered secure, although Crystal A. McComas, LCSW, LLC uses an encrypted email service to provide greater protection of confidentiality. It is possible that someone on the Internet might read your communication or our communication back to you despite the encrypted service. Crystal A. McComas, LCSW, LLC does not provide therapy via email, text or fax.

