



## PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT OLA HOU CLINIC'S POLICIES

Ola Hou Clinic, 98-084 Kamehameha Hwy Suite 306, Aiea, Hawai'i 96701-5310  
Phone: (808) 487-5433 / Fax: 487-5444

### INTRODUCTION

This handout was prepared to help answer some questions you might have about the clinic's policies. Read both sides of this handout carefully. You will be asked to sign a statement attesting to your having read and understood this handout, and your agreeing to abide by the clinic's policies. If you have any questions or concerns about anything written in this handout, please do not hesitate to ask your psychotherapist. This handout is your to keep.

### FINANCIAL POLICIES

Ola Hou Clinic is committed toward being considerate of an individual's ability to pay for psychological treatment or assessment. Our psychotherapists are sensitive to the financial hardships of those who seek our help and try to adjust our rates accordingly. We seek to provide professional psychological care to all who request our services. For this reason:

1. Our standard fees are lower or comparable to the average charge for services of psychologists in Hawaii.
2. Our psychologists accept most insurances that cover psychological services.
3. Gradual repayment plans are available for those without insurance or for those having difficulty meeting their share of the fees.

To keep our fees as low as possible and still provide quality professional psychological care, it is necessary our patients agree to abide by the following financial policies.

*It is customary to pay for professional services at the time it is rendered.* Please be prepared to handle the charge of each session at the time of the session. Pay the receptionist before or after each session in cash, VISA, Master Card, or by check made payable to "Ola Hou Clinic".

In case of financial hardship, if you are not able to pay your portion of the charge, you can accumulate a bill up to \$100.00. Your psychotherapist has the right to refuse service if the bill exceeds this amount.

Please understand that having insurance does not guarantee your insurance company will pay for all the services you request. **You are required to pay the portion of the charge not covered by your insurance company.** The Ola Hou Clinic will bill your insurance as a service to you.

Should you have any questions or concerns about your bill, please immediately contact the Ola Hou Clinic's receptionist or inform your psychotherapist at your next session.

The following are charges the clinic has to make in order to keep our business costs to a minimum, so we can pass on those savings to you in reduced rates. **None of the following charges are covered by your insurance.** You are required to pay these charges out of your own pocket.

A \$10.00 service charge will be added to your bill for all **returned ("bounced") checks** from the bank.

If you do not give **24 hours notice of cancellation, or miss your appointment**, then you will be charged half the cost of the total fee for your missed appointment.

If an attempt is not made to reduce your owed balance, than your account will be sent to a professional **bill collecting agency**. You will be charged extra for our having to use this agency. Note, the Ola Hou Clinic is *not* responsible for regularly sending you bills about your account. You are responsible to regularly talk to the receptionist or to your psychotherapist to **find out what your balance is**.

You will be charged the hourly fee for **written reports**, made by the psychotherapist on your behalf. **Phone calls** made to or from the psychotherapist on your behalf will be charged if over 5 minutes in duration. Again, your insurance does not cover these costs.

### APPOINTMENTS

Psychotherapy sessions typically start on the hour and usually end after 45-50 minutes (groups are either 45 or 75 minutes in length.) **If you are late** to a session, the session will still end at ten minutes before the hour, yet you will be charged the full 45-50 minutes. The psychotherapist is not obligated to make up time you have lost. The psychotherapist has to keep a set time schedule in order to respect the time of his/her other appointments.

The psychotherapist is not obligated to wait and keep your appointment if you are **more than 15 minutes late** to a session. If you know you are going to be late, please inform the receptionist.

It is important to **make your appointments as far in advance as possible**, because the psychotherapist often has a very busy schedule.

CONTINUED ON THE OTHER SIDE

You are strongly encouraged to make scheduled appointments that continually fall on one particular day and hour of the week (a "time slot"). This way you are assured of getting to see the psychotherapist regularly. Make appointments with your psychotherapist or the receptionist.

Please inform the receptionist should you have special concerns about being contacted at home or work.

***If you miss two sessions in a row,*** the psychotherapist is not obligated to reserve a time slot for you for future appointments. You will still be seen by the psychotherapist, but may have to arrange a different appointment time if available. However, because cancellations may deprive others of the opportunity for services, please understand the psychotherapist has the right to refuse further treatment ***if you continually miss appointments.***

## EMERGENCIES

An emergency is a serious situation requiring immediate attention, which cannot be handled by leaving a message (on the clinic's phone answering machine) or by waiting to talk to your psychotherapist during regular working hours.

Each psychotherapist has their own method of dealing with emergencies. Ask your psychotherapist about what his or her procedure is.

The psychotherapist is not responsible for your welfare apart from his/her office. The psychotherapist is not obligated to make contact with you. ***Please call the Suicide and Crisis Center, 521-4555, or go to the emergency room of the nearest hospital, if you cannot make contact with your psychotherapist.***

## MANAGED CARE

Your insurance carrier likely utilizes a managed care system for monitoring mental health services.

Your psychotherapist has to do extra paperwork in the form of reports for treatment authorization to the insurance company every few sessions. To compensate for this extra labor without charging you more in fees, the psychotherapist may:

1. Every so often take time out of your session to fill out the required reports;
2. Spend a few minutes at the beginning of every session checking your insurance authorization status by doing filing, checking payment records, and other paper handling.
3. Your regularly scheduled appointments may be occasionally canceled and rescheduled at a later date if our clinic has not yet received authorization from the insurance company for your psychotherapist to provide treatment services.

The brief time spent filing out forms and checking your file's record provides an opportunity for your psychotherapist to review the problems, goals and progress of your treatment.

## RECORD-KEEPING

The Ola Hou Clinic follows the guidelines of the American Psychological Association in how long patient records are kept. An adult patient's records will be kept for **7 years** past the last date the patient was seen. A child's records will be kept for 7 years from the date the child becomes an adult at age 18 (in other words, a child's records will be kept until she or he reaches age 25).

If you want records kept longer, then you must make arrangements with our office to either have your records transferred to another provider, or you may have the records released to you with the exception of progress notes (notes made by your psychotherapist while you were in session with him or her) or other sensitive or copyrighted material. There will be a fee for these services to cover copying and handling.

## OTHER CLINIC POLICIES

In respect of the rights of others, ***smoking*** is not allowed in the waiting room or in the therapist's private office.

Please do not ***eat or drink*** in the waiting room or offices.

The Ola Hou Clinic welcomes ***children*** to be present in the waiting room while you are in psychotherapy. However, children are allowed only if they are old enough to take care of themselves unsupervised. Please respect the receptionist's work and her *unavailability* to provide child care. Your session will be interrupted if your child makes any disturbance in the waiting room. Children will not be allowed into the session with you unless they are the focus of treatment.

Please turn off ***cell phones and pagers*** while in session with your psychotherapist. Unless it is an emergency situation, receiving phone calls or pages during session is disruptive to your treatment.

Please use the public telephone located in the first floor lobby when you want to make ***personal phone calls.***

The Ola Hou Clinic is not responsible for ***personal items*** you leave in the waiting room. The receptionist will not keep an eye on nor hold items while you are in session or going to the restroom. Please carry all personal items with you or leave them in your car or at home.

***Restrooms*** are located in the lobbies on each floor. A key is available from the receptionist.

Unless it is a business matter, please do not chat with the ***receptionist*** before or after your appointments. Please be considerate of her job duties.

**Thank you for abiding to these policies.**