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Page 1 of 2

## **“No Secrets” Policy When Working with Couples or Families**

This written policy is intended to inform you, the participants in therapy, that when I (Crystal Hollenbeck, EdD, LMHC) agree to treat a couple or a family, I consider that couple or family (the “treatment unit”) to be the client. For instance, if there is a request for the treatment records of the couple or the family, I will seek the authorization of all members of the treatment unit before I release confidential information to third parties. Also, if my records are subpoenaed, I will assert the psychotherapist-patient privilege on behalf of the client (treatment unit). During the course of my work with a couple or a family I may see or speak separately with a smaller part of the treatment unit (e.g., an individual or two family members). These discussions should be seen by you as a part of the work that I am doing with the family or the couple, unless otherwise indicated. If you are involved in one or more of such discussions with me, please understand that generally these discussions are confidential in the sense that I will not release any confidential information to a third party / outside party unless I am required by law to do so, or, unless I have your written authorization. In fact, since those discussions can and should be considered a part of the treatment of the couple or family, I would also seek the authorization of the other individuals in the treatment unit before releasing confidential information to a third party.

However, I may need to share information learned in an individual discussion (or a discussion with only a portion of the treatment unit being present) with the entire treatment unit – that is, the family or couple, if I am to effectively serve the unit being treated. I will use my best judgment as to whether, when, and to what extent I will make disclosures to the treatment unit and will also, if appropriate, first give the individual or the smaller part of the treatment unit being seen, the opportunity to make the disclosure. Thus, if you feel it necessary to talk about matters that you absolutely want to be shared with no one, you may want to consult with an individual therapist who can treat you individually instead of seeing me for couples or family therapy as well as individual sessions. Please do not share anything with me that you would not want shared with the couple or family unit unless we will be doing individual sessions only.

This “no secrets” policy is intended to allow me to continue to treat the couple or family by preventing, to the extent possible, a conflict of interest to arise where an individual’s interests may not be consistent with the interest of the unit being treated. For instance, information learned in the course of an individual discussion may be relevant or even essential to the proper treatment of the couple or the family. If I am not free to exercise my clinical judgment regarding the need to bring this information to the family or the couple during their therapy, I might be placed in a situation where I will have to terminate treatment of the couple or family. This policy is intended to prevent the need for such termination. This policy also includes incidents when I am treating a client for individual treatment for such issues as trauma, anxiety, abuse, etc. and treating them with their partner or family members in couples or group sessions as treatment deems necessary and agreed upon. Therefore, you are in agreement that if you request for me to treat you individually and with your spouse, partner, family unit, etc. that I cannot keep secrets. Again, once I treat you outside of the individual session, the client will change from you individually to the couple, family, etc.



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Page 2 of 2

By signing below, you acknowledge you understand and agree to this No Secrets Policy.

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