

PRIVACY POLICY

Last Updated: July 31, 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – YOUR PRIVACY RIGHTS

Welcome Home Family Therapy is committed to protecting your personal information with the highest standards of confidentiality and security. This summary outlines your fundamental privacy rights and our core commitments:

Information Security: We employ strong encryption protocols and maintain strict security measures to safeguard your personal information. All client data is protected with AES-256 encryption, secure password-protected systems with two-factor authentication, and regular security monitoring.

Data Control: You retain comprehensive rights to access, modify, or request deletion of your personal information in accordance with applicable privacy regulations. This includes the right to receive copies of your records, request corrections to inaccurate information, and control how your information is used and shared.

Information Sharing: We do not sell, rent, or otherwise commercialize your personal information. Data sharing is limited to authorized healthcare partners and service providers necessary for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations. We work exclusively with privacy-focused service providers who sign appropriate security agreements.

Telehealth Privacy: All remote healthcare sessions utilize end-to-end encryption and secure platforms to ensure confidentiality of communications. Video sessions through Doxy.me and Simple Practice are not recorded or stored, and only you and your therapist can access sessions.

Regulatory Compliance: We adhere to applicable California state privacy laws and professional licensing requirements for licensed clinical social workers. Our practices comply with California's Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (CMIA) and relevant consumer privacy protections.

Technology Disclosure: Any utilization of artificial intelligence or automated processing systems in connection with your care or data will be clearly disclosed, with appropriate safeguards implemented to protect your information. Currently, we do not use AI for clinical diagnosis, treatment decisions, or automated analysis of therapy sessions.

Your Rights Include:

- Access your records and request copies
- Request corrections to inaccurate information
- Ask questions about how your information is used
- Request limitations on information use
- Receive confidential communications at alternative locations
- Update your contact information and communication preferences at any time

Contact Information

Privacy Officer: S. Abigail McCarrel, LCSW, DCSW

Phone: (626) 755-4059

Email: sabigail@protonmail.com

This summary is provided for convenience only. The complete terms and conditions governing our privacy practices are set forth in the detailed policy below.

PRIVACY POLICY

Last Updated: July 31, 2025

What You Need to Know

Welcome Home Family Therapy is committed to protecting your personal information and maintaining your trust. We never sell, rent, or trade your personal information to anyone. Your data is protected with strong encryption, and you have complete control over your information.

Information We Collect

Website Visitors: When you visit our website, we collect basic technical information like your browser type and the pages you visit. We also collect any information you provide through contact forms, such as your name, email, and phone number. We use cookies to improve your browsing experience, but you can disable these in your browser settings if you prefer.

Clients: When you become a client, we collect:

- Your contact information
- Clinical notes and treatment records
- Billing information for payment processing

We don't collect your credit card information directly through our website, and we don't track your location beyond general city and state information.

How We Use Your Information

We use your information for:

- Providing family therapy services
- Maintaining clinical records
- Scheduling appointments and sending reminders
- Processing payments
- Coordinating with other healthcare providers when you give us permission
- Improving our services
- Maintaining our website
- Meeting legal requirements
- Responding to your questions

We do not use your information for marketing or advertising purposes. Everything we do with your information is focused on providing you with quality care and meeting our legal obligations.

Who Has Access to Your Information

Your Direct Care Team:

- Dr. S. Abigail McCarrel, your therapist
- Our billing specialist (who only sees information needed for payment processing)

Secure Technology Partners: We work with privacy-focused technology partners who sign appropriate security agreements with us:

- SimplePractice for secure storage of therapy records
- Doxy.me and SimplePractice for encrypted video sessions
- ProtonMail for secure email communication
- Payment processing occurs through SimplePractice

We Never Share Your Information With:

- Marketers
- Advertising companies
- Data brokers
- Social media platforms
- Anyone not directly involved in your care

Limited Exceptions: We only share information when:

- Required by law
- You give written permission
- There's imminent danger to you or others
- Necessary for coordinating your care with other providers (with your consent)

Your Privacy Rights

You have the right to:

- Access your records and request copies
- Request corrections to inaccurate information
- Ask questions about how your information is used
- Request that we limit how we use your information
- Receive confidential communications at alternative locations
- Update your contact information and communication preferences anytime

California Residents: If you're a California resident, you may have additional rights under California consumer privacy laws:

- Know what personal information we collect
- Request deletion of personal information (subject to legal retention requirements)
- Correct inaccurate information
- Opt out of sale of personal information (though we don't sell information)

To exercise any of these rights, contact us at sabigail@protonmail.com or (626) 755-4059.

Security Measures

We protect your information with:

- AES-256 encryption for data storage and transmission
- Secure password-protected systems with two-factor authentication
- Regular security updates and monitoring

- Role-based access controls so staff only see what they need for their job

Physical Security:

- Locked filing cabinets for paper records
- Secure facilities with restricted access
- Automatic screen locks on workstations
- Secure disposal of materials containing client information

Telehealth Privacy

Your video sessions are completely secure through:

- End-to-end encryption on Doxy.me and SimplePractice
- Secure healthcare platforms designed for confidential communications
- Sessions are not recorded or stored
- Only you and your therapist can access the session

To Maintain Privacy During Sessions:

- Use a private internet connection
- Find a private space
- Consider using headphones
- Ensure others cannot overhear your session

Family Therapy and Documentation

We practice collaborative documentation, which means you participate in documenting what we accomplished in each session. We spend the last five minutes of each session reviewing key takeaways, giving you transparency about what's being recorded and allowing you to provide feedback on our work together.

In family therapy, we maintain a "No Secrets" policy, meaning information shared in individual sessions may be discussed with other family members. The exception is when someone's safety is at risk. This policy will be explained before any individual sessions.

Children's Privacy

For clients under 18, we follow California laws regarding consent for mental health treatment. Parents and guardians have specific rights regarding their child's information, while we maintain appropriate confidentiality protections for teen clients. We do not knowingly collect information from children under 13 through our website.

Data Retention and Artificial Intelligence**Record Retention:**

- Adult records: 10 years after last service
- Minor records: Until age 25 or 10 years after last service (whichever is longer)
- Billing records: 7 years as required by law

Secure Disposal: Paper records are securely shredded and electronic records are permanently deleted.

Artificial Intelligence: Currently, we do not use artificial intelligence systems for:

- Clinical diagnosis
- Treatment decisions
- Automated analysis of therapy sessions
- Client risk assessment
- Billing decisions

We may use completely anonymous data (with all identifying information removed) for quality improvement research and treatment outcome analysis, but you can opt out of research use entirely at any time.

If we ever add AI tools in the future, we'll:

- Provide 60-day advance notice
- Require your explicit consent
- Maintain your right to opt out
- Ensure human oversight for all AI decisions

Website and Cookies

Our website uses cookies to:

- Remember your preferences
- Analyse website performance through Google Analytics
- Improve your browsing experience

You can:

- Disable cookies in your browser settings
- Opt out of Google Analytics tracking
- Browse our website without providing personal information

Complaints

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated:

Contact Us Directly:

- Email: sabigail@protonmail.com
- Phone: (626) 755-4059

File Complaints With:

- California Attorney General's Office
- California Department of Consumer Affairs
- California Board of Behavioral Sciences (for licensing complaints)

You will never be penalized for filing a complaint or asking questions about privacy.

Emergency Information

For Mental Health Emergencies:

- Call 911

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

Additional Emergency Resources:

- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233
- California Parents and Youth Helpline: 855-427-2736

Contact Information

Privacy Officer: S. Abigail McCarrel, LCSW, DCSW

Phone: (626) 755-4059

Email: sabigail@protonmail.com

Business Hours:

- Monday: 1:00 PM - 9:00 PM PST
- Tuesday: 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM PST
- Wednesday: 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM PST
- Thursday: 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM PST
- Friday: 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM PST

Response Times:

- General privacy questions: Within 5 business days
- Access requests: Within 15-30 days
- Complaint acknowledgments: Within 2 business days

Legal Compliance and Changes

This policy complies with applicable federal and California state privacy laws including:

- California Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (CMIA)
- Relevant California consumer privacy protections
- Professional licensing requirements for licensed clinical social workers
- Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) for website interactions

We may update this policy to reflect changes in our practices or legal requirements. When we do, we'll:

- Post the updated policy on our website
- Notify you of significant changes via email
- Provide written notice for major changes affecting treatment records

Common Questions

What information do you collect about me?

We collect contact information you provide, basic technical information when you visit our website, and health information during treatment. We never sell your information to anyone.

How can I see what information you have about me?

Contact us at sabigail@protonmail.com and we'll provide it within 15-30 days.

Can I request deletion of my information?

You can request deletion of personal information, though we must keep treatment records for legal requirements.

Are my telehealth sessions private?

Your telehealth sessions are completely private. We use encrypted, secure platforms, making your sessions as secure as in-person visits. We do not currently use any AI systems for clinical analysis, diagnosis, or treatment decisions.

By using Welcome Home Family Therapy's services, you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agree to be bound by this Privacy Policy. This policy is effective as of July 30, 2025, and we review and update it regularly to ensure continued compliance with applicable laws and best practices.

Questions? We're here to help explain our privacy practices. Contact us at sabigail@protonmail.com or (626) 755-4059.
