



Ohio Counseling Association Client Rights and Responsibilities

About this Publication

The National Board of Certified Counselors and Chi Sigma Iota has developed a national publication (located at: https://www.nbcc.org/Assets/Ethics/NBCC_CSI-Booklet.pdf) to help clients “understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities.” The Ohio Counseling Association adopted it to develop “Client Rights and Responsibilities” that specifically provides Ohioans with an understanding of mental health in Ohio and their rights and responsibilities as mental health consumers who work with professional counselors in Ohio.

Definition of Terms

Professional Counseling: According to the American Counseling Association, on a national level, “professional counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals. In Ohio, professional counseling incorporates all of the above and also includes the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, along with the administration and interpretation of psychological testing.

Practice of Professional Counseling: According to the Ohio Revised Code (Section 4757.01a), the “practice of professional counseling (in Ohio) means rendering or offering to render individuals, groups, organizations, or the general public a counseling service involving the application of clinical counseling principles, methods, or procedures to assist individuals in achieving more effective personal social, educational, or career development and adjustment, including the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders”.

Clinical Counseling Principles, Methods, or Procedures: According to the Ohio Revised Code (Section 4757.01b), the “clinical counseling principles, methods, or procedures means an approach to counseling that emphasizes the counselor’s role in systematically assisting clients through all of the following: assessing and analyzing background and current information, diagnosing mental and emotional disorders, exploring possible solutions, and developing and providing a treatment plan for mental and emotional adjustment or development. Clinical counseling principles, methods, or procedures includes at least counseling, appraisal, consulting, and referral.”

Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC): To become an LPC in Ohio, one must:

- Hold a graduate degree in counseling that is a minimum of 60 semester hours and includes all curriculum required by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Instruction of clinical psychopathology, personality, and abnormal behavior; evaluation and diagnosis of mental and emotional

disorders; and methods of prevention, intervention, and treatment of mental and emotional disorders must be present. Furthermore, the graduate degree must include a minimum 700 hours of supervised field experience in counseling that is supervised by a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor with Supervisory Endorsement (LPCC-S).

- Pass the National Counselor Examination (NCE)

Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC): To become an LPCC in Ohio, one must:

- Hold licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
- Provide clinical counseling services under supervision for 1500 hours post LPC
- Pass a field evaluation
- Pass the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Examination (NCMHCE)

Counselors Commitment to Ethical Practice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Adhering to state and national standards of practice, ethical practice, and the support, inclusion, and creation of safe environments for every client is paramount to counselors in Ohio.

Counselors in Ohio follow the standards of practice and ethical practice stated in the Ohio Revised Code (4757-5) and by the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board (OCSWMFTB) and the American Counseling Association (ACA).

Furthermore, the Ohio Counseling Association proclaims that counselors in Ohio must be intentional about being multiculturally competent in their practice and create safe spaces for all clients. The inclusion of one's ethnic, racial, religion, ability status, and cultural diversity along with sexual, affectional, intersex, and gender expansive identities are not only foundational to counseling in Ohio but considered to be critical components in diagnosing and treating clients.

Client Rights

Seeking counseling and selecting a counselor can be a difficult and intimidating process. As a client, you have the right to:

- Select a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) or Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) who meets your unique needs.
- Receive specific information about your counselor's qualifications (i.e., education, experience, and credentials)
- Obtain a copy of the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2014-code-of-ethics-finaladdressc97d33f16116603abcacff0000bee5e7.pdf?sfvrsn=5d6b532c_0) and the Ohio Revised Code Ethics (<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/chapter-4757-5>)
- Receive a written explanation of services offered, time commitments, fee scales, and billing processes prior to receipt of services.
- Be informed of any specific areas of expertise that are in addition to the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders.
- Ask questions about confidentiality and limits to confidentiality
- Be informed exception to the confidentiality in the counseling relationship
- Receive information about emergency procedures (e.g., how to contact your counselor in the event of a crisis).

- Ask questions about counseling techniques and strategies, including risks and benefits
- Establish treatment goals and how to evaluate progress with your counselor
- Ask questions about assessments including the strengths and limitations of the assessments, cost, and contributions of the assessments to overall treatment
- Understand the implications of diagnosis and the intended use of psychological reports
- Obtain copies of records and reports
- End the counseling relationship at any time
- Share any concerns or complaints you may have regarding the conduct of a LPC or LPCC with the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board (OCSWMFTB)

Client Responsibilities

In order for your counselor to provide the highest quality of services, it is important that you:

- Adhere to established schedules. If you must miss an appointment, contact your counselor as soon as possible.
- Participate fully in each session to help maximize a positive outcome.
- Follow agreed-upon goals and strategies established in session.
- Inform your LPC or LPCC of your progress and challenges in meeting your goals.
- Pay your bill in accordance with billing agreements.
- Consider appropriate referrals from your counselor.
- Inform your counselor if you are receiving mental health services from another mental health practitioner.
- Avoid placing your counselor in ethical dilemmas, such as requesting to become involved in social interactions or to barter for services.

What to do if you are Dissatisfied with Counseling

It is important to remember that counseling is a process and that a counselor who meets the needs of one client may not meet the needs of another. In the client / counselor relationship, dissatisfaction by the client can come in two forms: (1) dissatisfaction in the counseling process or relationship because it can occur for a variety of reasons such as dissatisfaction in the counselor's style of treatment, progress is taking too slow, etc. and (2) dissatisfaction because of an ethical concern in Ohio may become a legal matter.

If you are feeling dissatisfied here are steps that you could take:

- Express concern directly to the counselor if possible. Especially during periods of dissatisfaction in the counseling process or relationship, open and honest feedback may provide the counselor with insight on how to change the style, focus, or techniques in counseling.
- Seek the advice of the counselor's supervisor if the counselor is receiving direct supervision.
- Ask the counselor for a referral to another counselor and provide reasons for the referral.
- Terminate the counseling relationship if the situation remains unresolved.
- Contact the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board (OCSWMFTB) if you believe an ethical concern has happened:

Phone: 614-466-0912

Address: 77 South High Street, 24th Floor, Room 2468, Columbus, Ohio 43215
Website: <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/cswmft/home>

The Ohio Counseling Association (OCA)

The Ohio Counseling Association (OCA) was established in 1967 and is now the professional organization representing all licensed counselors, and those in graduate training to be counselors in Ohio. OCA is a state branch of the American Counseling Association and the American Counseling Association Midwest Region. OCA offers counselors an opportunity for leadership, networking, mentoring, and professional development. Notably, OCA is the primary entity to promote legislative change and advocacy efforts for all Ohio counselors.

OCA Website: www.ohiocounseling.org

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Note: Portions of this document were derived from the National Board of Certified Counselors and Chi Sigma Iota national publication to help clients “understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities”. This national publication (located at: https://www.nbcc.org/Assets/Ethics/NBCC_CSI-Booklet.pdf)