Privacy Policy

This notice includes our Notice of Privacy Practices as well as our Privacy Policy for this website. If you have any questions about any of this, feel free to reach out and ask. You can call us at 972-586-2127, email us at info@truesteptherapy.com, or send us a note through the contact form, and we will try to answer any questions that you may have.

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Last modified: September 25, 2026

This notice describes how information about you as a client may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. In 1996 the U.S. Congress passed legislation known as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act or HIPAA. This notice is being provided in compliance with HIPAA.

Our Commitment to Your Privacy:
True Step Counseling and Therapy Services, PLLC ("we," "us," or "our") is committed to protecting the privacy of your Protected Health Information (PHI). We are required by law to maintain the privacy of your information, provide you with this notice, and follow the terms currently in effect.

Uses and Disclosures:
The following circumstance may require us to use or disclose your personal information.

Treatment: Your health information may be used by staff members, clinicians, or Business Associates, or disclosed to other health care professionals for the purpose of evaluating your health, diagnosing medical conditions, and providing treatment. For example, results of laboratory tests and procedures will be available in your medical record to all health professionals who may provide treatment or who may be consulted by us.

Payment: Your health information may be used by staff members, clinicians, or Business Associates in order to bill and collect payment for services and items you have received from us. For example, we may use and disclose your information to obtain payment from third parties that may be responsible for costs, such as family members or bill collectors. Also, we may use your information to bill you directly for services and items.

Health Care Operations: Your health information may be used to support the day-to-day activities and management of this office. For example, information on the services you received may be used to support budgeting and financial reporting, and activities to evaluate and promote quality, including supervision and training. Likewise, service providers who support our operations (such as electronic record systems) may have access to your information, under confidentiality and data protected agreements.

Law Enforcement: Your health information may be disclosed to law enforcement agencies, without your permission, to support government audits and inspections, to facilitate law-enforcement investigations, and to comply with government mandated reporting.

Public Health Reporting: Your health information may be disclosed to public health agencies as required by law. For example, we are required to report certain communicable diseases to the state's public health department.

Safety: Your health information may be disclosed to reduce or prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of another individual or the public. We will only make disclosures to a person or organization able to prevent the threat.

Workers Compensation: We may release your information for workers' compensation and similar programs.

Other uses and disclosures require your authorization: Disclosure of your health information or its use for any purpose other than those listed above or permitted by HIPAA requires your specific written authorization. We will obtain your written authorization before: sharing psychotherapy notes (in most cases), using your information for marketing purposes, selling your health information, or any other use not described in this notice. If you change your mind after authorizing a use or disclosure of your information, you may submit a written revocation of the authorization at any time. However, your decision to revoke the authorization will not affect or undo any use or disclosure of information that occurred before you notified us of your decision.

Additional Uses of Information:

Appointment reminders: Your health information may be used by us to call or send you appointment reminders or scheduling changes.

Electronic communications: Your health information may be used to communicate with you between sessions by phone, voicemail, text message, email, or secure portal messaging, depending upon your consents to these means of communication as well as by which means you prefer or you reached out from. We encourage communications through the secure client portal or the HIPAA compliant phone line, but we understand that certain people may prefer other means. While we take reasonable steps to protect your information, these methods may carry some risks. Be sure to let us know if there are any methods where you request not to be contacted, or else providing the information or reaching out to us through a specific means will be considered consent to be contacted through these methods.

Information about treatments: Your health information may be used to send you information on the treatment and management of your medical condition that you may find to be of interest. We may also send you information describing other health related goods and services that we believe may interest you.

Individual Rights:
You have certain rights under the federal privacy standards. These include:

- The right to request restrictions on the use and disclosure of your protected health information; we are not required to accept the restrictions. However, if accepted, we will comply with the restrictions.
- The right to receive confidential communications concerning your medical condition and treatment.
- The right to inspect and copy your protected health information
- The right to amend or submit corrections to your protected health information; amendments to your information may be limited; the Privacy Officer will notify you of any changes that cannot be made and why. If your information is corrected; we will endeavor to identify any party who received the incorrect information and provide them with the corrected information.
- The right to receive an accounting of how and to whom your protected health information has been disclosed. Contact the Privacy Officer so you may fill out a written request, please allow 60 days.
- The right to receive a printed or electronic copy of this notice.

Limitations on Individual Access:
Access to your protected health information may be limited or restricted in the following circumstances:

- Psychotherapy notes.
- Information compiled in anticipation of, or for use in, a civil, criminal, or administrative action or proceeding.
- Information compiled during the course of research may be temporarily suspended for as long as the research is in progress; provided that the patient has consented to participate in the research project.
- Information that was obtained from someone other than a health care provider under a promise of confidentiality and release of the information would likely reveal the source.

Should your access to your information be limited or restricted, you may have the denial reviewed by the Privacy Committee.

Breach Notification:
If a breach of your health information occurs, we will notify you as required by law.

Our Duties:
We are required by law to maintain the privacy of your protected health information and to provide you with this notice of privacy practices. We also are required to abide by the privacy policies and practices that are outlined in this notice and to notify you of any changes to this notice.

Right to Revise Privacy Practices:
As permitted by law, we reserve the right to amend or modify our privacy policies and practices at any time. These changes in our policies and practices may be required by changes in federal and state laws and regulations. Whatever the reason for these revisions, the updated version will be available on our website and upon request. The revised policies and practices will be applied to all protected health information that we maintain.

Requests to Inspect Protected Health Information:
As permitted by federal regulation, we require that requests to inspect or copy protected health information be submitted in writing. You may obtain a form to request access to your records by contacting the Medical Records Clerk or this Office's Privacy Officer.

Please know that we are permitted by law to charge a reasonable fee for copying and expenses related a request for protected health information/medical records.

Contact Person for Complaints & Comments:
If you would like to submit a comment, question, or complaint about our privacy practices, you can do so by sending a letter outlining your concerns to:

PRIVACY OFFICER:
Alicia Huchingson, MS
Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Supervisor
(972) 586-2127 alicia@truesteptherapy.com

If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated, you should call the matter to our attention by sending a letter describing the cause of your concern to the same address. In addition, you may contact the Department of Health and Human Services directly. You will not be penalized or otherwise retaliated against for filing a complaint.

Notice to Clients
The Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council investigates and prosecutes professional misconduct committed by marriage and family therapists, professional counselors, psychologists, psychological associates, social workers, and licensed specialists in school psychology. Although not every complaint against or dispute with a licensee involves professional misconduct, the Executive Council will provide you with information about how to file a complaint. Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council, 1801 Congress Avenue, Suite 7.300, Austin, Texas 78701. Please call 1-800-821-3205 for more information. For information about your rights as a health care consumer, including how to file a consumer complaint, please visit the Texas Attorney General's Health Care page at http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/consumer-protection/health-care.

Privacy Policy

Effective Date: September 25, 2026

True Step Counseling And Therapy Services ("True Step Counseling And Therapy Services," "we," "us," or "our") respects your privacy. This Privacy Policy explains how information may be collected, used, and disclosed when you visit or interact with our website.

This Privacy Policy applies to information collected through our public website. It does not replace our Notice of Privacy Practices, which explains how we use and disclose protected health information (PHI) in connection with counseling and therapy services.

Information We Collect
You may voluntarily provide personal information when you use our website or contact us, including when you: contact us through a website form, request a consultation or additional information, schedule an appointment through our online scheduling system, contact us by email or phone, or use other features or services available through our website. Depending on how you interact with our website, information you provide may include your name, email address, phone number, how you heard about us, and other information you choose to include, such as in a message.
Please do not submit sensitive or confidential health information through our website.
Our website in intended primarily to provide information about our counseling services and allow prospective clients to contact us. Please do not submit detailed medical, mental health, or other sensitive health information through a website contact form or ordinary email. These

methods may not provide the same protection as our secure client systems. A note asking us to call or contact you is enough. If you become a client or need to provide protected health information (PHI), we will direct you to an appropriate secure system, such as the SimplePractice client portal.

Our services are not for emergency situations. If you are in crisis or are experiencing an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Information Collected Automatically
When you visit our website, certain information may be collected automatically by our website, hosting provider, security services, analytics tools, or other technologies used to operate the website. This information may include: IP address, browser type and version, device type, operating system, pages visited, date and time of visits, referring website or webpage, general information about how visitors use the website. This information may be used to operate and secure the website, understand general website traffic, improve website performance and content, and maintain the functionality of the website.

Cookies and Similar Technologies
Our website may use cookies and similar technologies to support website functionality, security, analytics, or other website features. Cookies are small data files stored on your device by your web browser. You may be able to manage or disable cookies through your browser settings. Disabling certain cookies may affect some website functionality. If we use third-party analytics, advertising, or similar technologies that collect information about website visitors, those technologies may collect information in accordance with the applicable third party's privacy practices.

How We Use Information
Information collected through our public website may be used to: respond to inquiries and requests, respond to consultation requests, facilitate appointment scheduling, communicate with prospective or current clients as appropriate, operate, maintain, and improve our website, maintain website security, prevent misuse or unauthorized activity, understand general website traffic and website performance, and improve our services and online presence.

We do not sell personal information submitted directly to us through our website.

Online Scheduling and Secure Client Services
Our website may contain links to or integrations with SimplePractice for appointment scheduling, client forms, secure communications, telehealth, and other services. Information submitted through the secure SimplePractice platform may be subject to applicable federal and Texas health information privacy laws and to the privacy and security practices applicable to that platform. Information submitted through our public website should not be considered subject to the same protections as information submitted through our secure client systems.

Protected Health Information
True Step Counseling and Therapy Services is committed to protecting the privacy of protected health information (PHI). PHI and health records are subject to applicable federal and Texas privacy laws, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Texas Medical Records Privacy Act (TMRPA), Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 181. Our Notice of Privacy Practice describes how PHI may be used and disclosed and explains applicable privacy rights. This website Privacy Policy does **not** replace or modify our Notice of Privacy Practices.

Information Sharing
We may share information collected through our website with service providers that help us operate our business and website, such as providers of: website hosting, website security, website analytics, communication services, appointment scheduling, and other technical or administrative services. We may also disclose information when required by law or when reasonably necessary to protect our rights, safety, property, website, or systems. Information that constitutes PHI is handled in accordance with applicable federal and Texas health information privacy requirements and our Notice of Privacy Practices.

Advertising and Analytics
We may use analytics, advertising, or similar technologies to understand how visitors interact with our website, measure website traffic, and where applicable, advertising effectiveness, and improve our online presence. These technologies may collect information such as IP address, device and browser information, pages visited, and interactions with the website.

Our website uses Google Analytics, a service provided by Google, to help us understand how visitors interact with our website and evaluate website traffic. Google Analytics may collect information through cookies and similar technologies. The information collected depends on our Google Analytics configuration and settings. Google may process this information in accordance with its own privacy practices. For more information, please review Google's Privacy Policy and information about how Google uses information from sites or apps that use its services.

We do not use protected health information obtained through our clinical relationships with clients for targeted advertising. Please do not submit health information through advertising forms, website forms, or other public-facing website features.

Data Retention
We may retain information collected through our website for as long as reasonably necessary and relevant to fulfill the purposes described in this Privacy Policy, respond to inquiries, maintain website operations, and comply with applicable legal obligations. Retention periods may vary depending on the type of information and the reason it was collected. Information processed by third-party service providers, such as Google Analytics, may be retained in accordance with their respective retention policies and settings.

Third-Party Websites and Services
Our website may contain links to third-party websites or services, including scheduling platforms, professional directories, social media platforms, and other resources. We are not responsible for the privacy practices, content, or security of third-party websites or services. Once you leave our website or interact directly with a third-party service, that third-party's privacy policy and terms may apply. We encourage you to review the privacy policies of third-party websites and services before providing them with personal information.

Information Security
We take reasonable administrative, technical, and organizational measures to protect information collected through our website. However, no website, electronic transmission, or method of storing information can be guaranteed to be completely secure. For this reason, please avoid submitting sensitive or confidential health information through public website forms or ordinary email.

Children's Privacy
Our website is intended for adults. We do not knowingly collect personal information online directly from children under 13.

Changes to This Privacy Policy
We may update this Privacy Policy from time to time to reflect changes to our website, services, technology, or applicable legal requirements. When we make changes, we will post the updated Privacy Policy on this page and update the effective date above.

Contact Us
If you have questions about this Privacy Policy or how information is handled through our website, please contact:

True Step Counseling and Therapy Services
Email: info@truesteptherapy.com
Phone: 972-586-2127