

Shermeil Dass, MD, APC

Shermeil Dass, MD ~ Julie Bonner, MD

655 Capitola Road, Suite 200, Santa Cruz, CA 95062 | Tel: 831-421-2723 Fax: 831-477-9908
www.drsdass.com | office@drsdass.com

~ General and Child Psychiatry ~

OFFICE POLICIES

PURPOSE OF THIS INFORMATION

Welcome to the clinic of Doctors Shermeil Dass and Julie Bonner. As part of our goal to deliver the best possible care, this document provides an overview of the private practice policies in as much detail as possible. Please read through these policies carefully to ensure that your decision to work with either Dr. Dass or Dr. Bonner is well informed. The Doctors look forward to the opportunity to provide quality psychiatric care to you and/or your child. If you have any questions or concerns about the health care or business practices of this office please feel free to discuss them with the Practice Manager.

PRIVACY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Services you receive in this office are confidential, except in the circumstances listed below.

- 1) Threats of harm to self or others;
- 2) Abuse of a child, vulnerable adult or developmentally disabled person;
- 3) A Court order to release information;
- 4) Subpoena of treatment records by an attorney, in which case you may obtain a protective order from the Court to prevent this release;
- 5) Situations in which a patient brings a complaint or legal action against a treatment provider;
- 6) If you will be applying your health insurance benefits, I may be required to provide to your health plan information, including some or all of your record of treatment, for your carrier to pay for services – *by signing this form you consent to release of that information to your health plan;*
- 7) If you are party to a child custody litigation at any time in the future, the Court may order release of information about your treatment in this office;
- 8) In some instances, as provided in California law, information about your health care may be exchanged with other health care professionals involved in your treatment.
- 9) If you are applying for an assistance program, like Disability, your records will be released to that agency

In circumstances other than these, we will not release information about your treatment without your authorization. For further details, please refer to the Privacy Notice.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

If you need emergency, rapid attention for your own or someone else's safety, do not delay while waiting for a return call from the Doctor. You may call 911 or report to the nearest hospital emergency room.

In the case of emergency, defined as suicidal/homicidal intent, physical aggression and/or medication adverse reaction, you may call the office at 831-421-2723. *Please do not hesitate to utilize 911 while you*

wait for a return call. If you have anonymous call blocking on your phone it is very important that you remove that function until you receive a call back. *We will be unable to reach you if you have anonymous call blocking activated.* During business hours the Doctors may be in session with another patient or otherwise occupied and not be able to call you back immediately. Please see the section on telephone fees that may apply in the event of requested telephone communication with the Doctors outside of a scheduled appointment.

PATIENT RECORDS

A record (file) will be kept of services you or your child receives in this office. You have a right to see that record, and to copy it at your expense. You may ask that factual errors in the record be corrected. You may authorize in writing that copies of that record be released to entities you designate at your expense according to charges stipulated in California law. Under certain circumstances where seeing the record may put a patient or other person at risk, the clinician may remove certain information in the record and/or require that the patient review the record in consultation with another health care provider.

INSURANCE BENEFITS AND PATIENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR FEES

This clinic accepts several insurance plans. Please check with the office to see if yours is one of those plans. MediCal as administered by the Central California Alliance for Health (Beacon Health Solutions) is accepted. MediCal administered by the State of California is not. If charges are denied by a health plan, these charges are still your responsibility, ***even if you had understood from your health plan that the charges would be reimbursed.*** If your Blue Cross or Blue Shield insurance is from outside the State of California, it may not be accepted. Please contact the office first, to get confirmation, and be prepared to pay the full amount until the Insurance Company responds.

FEES AND PAYMENT

Full payment is expected at the start of each session. This includes telephone appointments. *Telephone appointments are not covered by insurance.* You are responsible for 100% of any telephone fees you incur. The Clinic accepts cash, check or credit card payments. (We not accept American Express).

The hourly fee for intake appointments is \$750.00 per hour.

Intake appointments for adults are usually 1 hour. On occasion, they can stretch to 2 or 3 hour-long sessions, depending on the severity of the problem. This, however, is not the norm.

Intake appointments for children and adolescents are usually 3 hours.

- If your child is under 12 years of age, Dr. Dass gathers the patient's history from parents or guardians. The second of the two hours is spent interviewing the child. (If your child requires supervision, please bring someone to supervise your child.)
- If your adolescent is 12 years old or older, Dr. Dass first gathers history from the patient. The second of the two hours is spent gathering history from parents or guardians. **Dr. Dass would like parents or guardians to be present for the first 5-10 minutes of the intake session with the adolescent.**

**Depending on the complexity of some issues and the number of people Dr. Dass gathers history from, intake sessions can require more than 1 hour for adults and more than 3 hours for children and*

adolescents. You will only be responsible for the time Dr. Dass spends with you or your child. If Dr. Dass needs a second hour for an adult intake, the fee is \$650.00 per hour and if Dr. Dass needs a third hour for a child or adolescent intake, the fee is \$550.00 per hour. After Dr. Dass completes gathering history she would like to complete the intake with a 30 minute session to discuss assessment findings, diagnosis and treatment options. If in the event that Dr. Dass is subpoenaed, her court fees are \$1,500.00 per hour, portal to portal. This means you are billed from when Doctor leaves her home until she returns there.

The fees for follow up appointments are \$550.00 for 60 minutes, \$450 for 45 minutes and \$350.00 for 30 minutes. Generally, all follow up appointments will be 60 minutes for therapy and/or medication management or 30 minutes for medication management. Appointment times include time for documentation and record keeping. If a scheduled 1 hour session runs over time, you will be charged on that day, for any extra time, at the usual rates stated.

TELEPHONE FEES

To ensure a full comprehensive assessment of you or your child, with your authorization, the Doctors will often need to gather history from additional sources like other providers, review psychological testing and/or gather academic information. We will make every effort to gather, complete forms and review information during appointment times, but if she needs to gather or review information outside of appointment times, the Clinic will bill at \$550.00 for 60 minutes, \$450 for 45 minutes and \$350.00 for 30 minutes. *Charges only will be applied to calls when there is direct communication between the Doctor and the authorized entity. For example, there are no charges for messages left. All calls made for medication authorization will follow the fee schedule outlined above. No charges will be made for non-urgent calls made to the Clinic that don't require a return call prior to next scheduled visit. For a return call prior to the next scheduled visit or emergency calls will be charged at \$550.00 per hour at the fee schedule outlined above. All secure prescription refill requests made outside of appointment times will be charged \$50.00. Medications that require secured prescription are, for example, Ritalin or Adderall. There is no charge for refill requests made outside of appointment times for non-secured prescriptions. Any telephone charges accrued during non-office hours will be charged on the next business day, to the card you have on file.

Telephone appointments are not covered by insurance. You are responsible for 100% of any telephone fees you incur. Telephone appointments will be paid for before each session, on the day of the call. The appointment will be automatically charged to the credit card you have on file. If the card is no longer valid, for whatever reason, you must present details before the appointment.

E-mail appointments (defined as emails requiring detailed response or several emails in a work day) are not covered by insurance. You are responsible for 100% of any e-mail fees you incur. E-Mail appointments will be paid for after each session, on the same day. The appointment will be automatically charged to the credit card you have on file.

UNPAID BILLS

Accounts not paid according to the terms and conditions described above are both a business and treatment concern. The Doctors both reserve the right to terminate care with any patient until fees have been paid. Seriously delinquent accounts will be referred for collection – information necessary to effect

collection will be released to the collection agent. Should it become necessary to file suit in this context, you agree to pay any court/attorney fees.

LATE CANCELLATIONS, LATE APPOINTMENTS AND MISSED APPOINTMENTS

If you will be unable to keep an appointment you have scheduled you must provide 48-hour notice. ***Failure to provide 48-hour advance notice will result in full session fee. The appointment will be automatically charged to the credit card you have on file. If you are a Medi-Cal patient, we are not permitted to charge you. However, we may and will, drop you from the practice.*** Please note that health plans do not pay for missed appointments and these charges will be your responsibility. If you are late for your appointment you can be seen up to the time of your scheduled appointment, although you will be responsible for paying for a full session. Any missed appointments will be automatically charged to the credit card you have on file. If you cancel due to illness, you will not be charged, but must provide the office with a doctor’s report. ***If a doctor’s letter is not received, you will be charged.*** If you do not arrive within 10 minutes of your appointment start time, your appointment will be forfeit and your card will be charged for the full time of the appointment. ***Cancellations and changes are only accepted via telephone or email. If you do not receive a response to email, you must call the office to verify that we have the information. Once an appointment is made, you are responsible for keeping it or changing it.***

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

If you have any questions or concerns about administrative/business matters or your behavior health plan, you are encouraged to discuss them with the Practice Manager, Jessie Campbell. If you feel the problem is serious and/or if you have not reached resolution from discussion with Jessie, you can file a complaint with the Medical Board of California. The Doctors only handle clinical matters. All business matters are handled by Jessie Campbell. The Medical Board of California at 2005 Evergreen Street, Suite 1200 Sacramento, CA 95815

AGREEMENT

I have had an opportunity to read this document and ask questions if desired. My signature below conveys my understanding of the terms of this document, my agreement to abide by them, and my consent to receive behavioral health services.

Patient, parent or legal guardian #1	Date Signed
Patient, parent or legal guardian #2	Date Signed
Child signature (If 12 years or over)	Date Signed

****Please bring the signed office policy form and keep the other copy for your records.***