



Counselling Contract and Agreement Form

Counselling approach

I believe my clients have the desire and the capacity to grow towards fulfilling their true potential, and they are the experts in their own lives. Therefore, I will not give you advice or offer solutions, but I will work with you to help you understand yourself more thoroughly and find your inner resources. With greater self-awareness and trust in yourself, I hope you can make constructive changes, leading to a more satisfying and meaningful life.

Client rights and confidentiality

Clients have certain fundamental rights that help establish a safe and respectful environment for their counselling experience.

These rights include, but are not limited to:

1. Confidentiality: Clients have the right to expect that all information shared during counselling sessions will remain confidential, except for specific legal and ethical limitations.
2. Informed Consent: Clients have the right to be fully informed about the nature and purpose of counselling, the counsellor's qualifications, potential risks and benefits, and the therapeutic techniques that may be used.
3. Respect and Non-Discrimination: Clients have the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or any other characteristic.
4. Autonomy and Self-Determination: Clients have the right to actively participate in decisions regarding their counselling process, including goal setting, treatment planning, and the choice to discontinue counselling at any time.
5. Confidentiality of Records: Clients have the right to securely store and protect their counselling records.

The content of the sessions will be treated as highly confidential. I will need to discuss my work with my supervisor, and I will only use your first name but not any other details that identify you.

However, there are a few circumstances in which I may be required to break confidentiality:

- If I consider you to be at risk of seriously harming yourself or someone else
- If your counselling records have been requested by a court of law
- If another party or agency has requested your information, you have agreed to it and provided your written consent.

For further information, the [Australian Counselling Association \(ACA\)](#) provides guidance and resources for counsellors and clients.



Complaints Procedures

A structured process is in place to address any concerns or grievances that may arise during the counselling relationship.

1. Initial Discussion: Clients must first discuss their concerns directly with their counsellor.
2. Formal Complaint: If the client's concerns are not adequately addressed or you prefer to proceed with a formal complaint, submit a written complaint via email to the HR Officer at our organisation.
3. Investigation and Resolution: Upon receiving a formal complaint, the counselling practice will initiate an impartial inquiry into the matter. The goal is to reach a fair resolution that addresses the client's concerns.
4. Timeframe and Communication: The counselling practice will endeavour to resolve the issue within 48 hours. Some cases might take longer.
5. Mediation or External Review: If the complaint remains unresolved after the internal investigation, the client may be offered the option of mediation or an external review.
6. Escalation: If the client remains unsatisfied with the outcome of the complaint's procedure, they can escalate the complaint to relevant professional regulatory bodies or counselling associations.

Sessions

Our initial contract will run for six sessions, after which we will review the counselling process and negotiate further sessions as appropriate.

We usually will meet weekly at a regular time. The duration of the counselling session is 1 hour.

Payments/cancellations

- Each 1-hour session costs \$120.
- Payment will be taken at the beginning of each session and may be made by cash, EFTPOS, credit card, or cheque.
- Late cancellation fees are payable as follows: 0-24 hours' notice – full session fee payable. 24-48 hours' notice – 50% of the session fee is payable.

Record keeping

- I will take notes during or after each session to help me keep track of our progress together.
- These notes will be stored in a private and secure location and may be viewed by you.
- The service will keep your counselling records for seven (7) years from the date of your last contact with the service.

Email/telephone contact

- Email or telephone contact will be limited to practical arrangements only.
- I will not conduct telephone or email counselling except by prior arrangement.
- If you have an emergency between sessions, please contact the appropriate emergency service.
- In a life-threatening situation, call 000 without delay.



Ending counselling

Typically, the end of counselling would be by mutual prior agreement. However, you have the right to end your counselling at any time.

I would appreciate it if you let me know if you decide not to return to counselling and give me at least 48 hours notice. If at any time I feel that our counselling is no longer appropriate for you, I will discuss this with you. I may suggest discontinuation or a referral to a more suitable service.

Client name:	
Client signature:	
Date:	
Counsellor name:	
Counsellor signature:	
Date:	