

Encompass Counselling takes your privacy and handling of your data very seriously. Encompass Counselling is a registered data controller with the Information Commission Service (ICO). Our registration number is: ZA072720 and can viewed on the ICO website: www.ico.org.uk What is this privacy policy for?

You are being given this privacy policy to let you know how Encompass Counselling collects, uses and stores your personal data and lets you know your rights.

Who is responsible for data control at Encompass Counselling (the data protection officer) and how do I contact them?

Claire Blackburn, Counsellor and Counselling Manager:
17b Northgate, Sleaford NG34 8BH. 07704 251 237.
claireblackburn@hushmail.com

What personal details will Encompass Counselling take from me?

Personal data, or details, means any information about an individual from which the person can be identified. On your request to have online counselling sessions at Encompass Counselling we take, store and handle your name, telephone contact number, address, emergency contact number, your GP details, any diagnosed mental health conditions/relevant medication/treatment (past or present) and date of birth. Your details are provided by you on your therapeutic contract and sent to Claire Blackburn via secure online methods (please see overleaf).

Why do you take these details and how are they used?

Your details above are taken to help us provide clients with the counselling services requested from us. Your details are taken to help us provide you with the best possible service, to maintain records, organise your session day and times and to assess suitability to receive therapeutic services from Claire Blackburn. Your details are held so we can respond to any enquires you make, to investigate complaints or concerns, protect you and other people, identify and protect those at risk of harm, to keep track of the services we provide and to help Encompass Counselling conform to ethical, legal and insurance requirements. Further explanations follow:

Name: So we can identify you in our filing system and help us maintain records.

Telephone contact number: So we can contact you if we need to rearrange or cancel a session date and time or for any other relevant reason.

Address: If there are outstanding monies owing to Encompass Counselling by you, we may write to you at this address.

Date of Birth/Age: Knowing your age allows us to work in your best interest and can be used to provide a GP or other agencies with your DOB for identification purposes if necessary.

Emergency Contact Details: These are taken so we can call your chosen contact in the event you become ill or distressed during your session and need assistance home.

GP Details: Your GPs are contacted and given your name, address and date of birth to help identify you in situations where you pose a serious risk of harm to yourself. Your GP isn't contacted for any other reason unless you request us to. If so a discussion takes place between you and your counsellor first and you will be asked to sign a consent form.

Diagnosed mental health conditions/relevant medication and treatment: This helps Encompass Counselling tailor any counselling services offered to your individual needs and allocate you with an appropriate counsellor. Relevant medication includes any medicated treatment for depression or anxiety as an example.

Ethical and Legal requirements. At Encompass Counselling we have a duty to share your information in certain situations under UK law. These include situations which involve the protection of a child, vulnerable adult, yourself or the public. Further to this we are required to disclose information/details for the prevention and detection of crime or in any situation where we are required to do so by any court or law.

Encompass Counselling can only provide/promote an ethical service if we have information available to us that allows us to act in your best interest and comply with relevant laws and ethics.

Your relevant personal details will be provided to the relevant agencies and/or courts if it is necessary to retrieve any outstanding monies owed to Claire Blackburn by you for your sessions. For example if you have not paid for your sessions or missed sessions and not paid in line with the therapeutic contract and monies remain outstanding then it may be necessary to retrieve these monies through a small claims court.

If you do not wish to give your personal data

Where we need to collect personal data by law, or under our terms of contract and you fail to provide them when requested, or do not wish to, then we would be unable to provide you with counselling sessions.

Can I request to see my data?

Yes. Please put any request in writing to the email or address at the end of this leaflet and you will be responded too within 28 days. You will not incur a fee for viewing your personal data.

Accuracy of Personal Details

It is important that the personal details we hold on you is accurate and current. Please keep us updated and informed of any changes.

Website and Email

Encompass Counselling's website and email address are fully compliant with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). If you make an enquiry on our website or via email, your personal details entered are not retained or stored in any way. Details from email or website enquiries will be deleted after a reply has been sent. Claire Blackburn will respond to any email or website enquiry you make on the legal basis that by making the enquiry you consent to your details being used for the purpose of dealing with and responding to your enquiry.

Sending Therapeutic Contracts with your personal data online

If you request to proceed with online/telephone counselling sessions you will be asked to sign a therapeutic contract and send it back before sessions proceed. A therapeutic contract is a written agreement which contains fee information, your chosen use of online platform for sessions, your personal data and is a written reference of terms and conditions that surround your sessions. This promotes ethical safe therapeutic practice for you. All therapeutic contracts, which contain your personal data are requested to be sent back using encryption to promote the protection of your privacy online. All emails are accessed on Claire Blackburn's work laptop which is double password protected, has anti-virus and only accessed by Claire Blackburn. Once your contract is received it is printed and stored in paper form in lockable files in the Encompass Counselling offices. Your email or attachment containing your personal details is deleted.

Email Counselling

If you have requested to proceed with email counselling you will be asked questions about your circumstances, any medical conditions or other relevant information via email. All emails that contain these questions and answers must be on encrypted emails only and a written record will be taken by Claire Blackburn. Free encrypted emails can be sent from hushmail and other providers as an example. Once the details have been written down by Claire Blackburn the emails are deleted and the details are held in paper form and stored in a lockable filing cabinet in the Encompass Counselling's secure offices. All emails containing your sessions must be encrypted and are deleted after your counsellors reply has been sent to you. The laptop used to conduct your counselling sessions has anti-virus and double password protected locks which only Claire Blackburn has access too. You will be asked to send back a signed copy of your therapeutic contract before sessions proceed.

Online Counselling

All online MSN and video counselling sessions take place on encrypted and secure platforms.

Where are my personal data held?

Your data is held in lockable filing cabinets within Encompass Counselling offices. Only Claire Blackburn has full access to all client's personal data.

During the Covid-19 pandemic when it is not possible to access the office due to government guidelines, self isolation, insurance companies instructions, ethical bodies directions or for personal safety of myself or clients please be aware clients notes and/or contracts/personal details will be stored on an encrypted online platform compliant with GDPR regulations. No matter the situation your details are always safeguarded at my office or online.

Client notes

Client notes are kept as a requirement by professional bodies and insurance companies. They help us to keep a track on themes from your sessions and may be used in any ethical or legal complaint/issue. They differ from your personal data as no identifiable information of yours is stored on them, for example your name/address. When you request to have counselling sessions at Encompass Counselling we assign you with an individual client number which appears on your client notes instead of your name. These notes are held in a locked filing cabinet in a different file to your personal data. You have the right to view your client notes if you so wish. Please make your request in writing or verbally to Claire Blackburn and your request will be replied to within 28 days. No fee is incurred at any point

How long are client notes kept for?

Encompass Counselling only retains your client notes for as long as necessary and in line with insurance and ethical bodies requirements. Encompass Counselling cannot meet legal, insurance or ethical requirements without keeping client notes. Client notes are stored for a 5 year period after your sessions end and destroyed at that time.

Is my data shared with third parties for marketing?

No, never.

Will Encompass Counselling ever use my personal details to contact me for promotional purposes?

No, never.

Can my data be accessed by anyone outside of the agency on their request?

Your data/client notes are disclosed in any area the law dictates so, or in situations where you bring an ethical or legal complaint against Claire Blackburn/Encompass Counselling. Other than this your details/notes are fully confidential.

How long is my personal data held for?

Your personal data is held for the duration of your counselling sessions. When you end your sessions your data is held for a further five years in line with the BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy) ethical framework and insurance companies requirements. Examples of why your files/data are held for five years is they might be needed in events where you make a complaint against Encompass Counselling or one of its counsellors to a professional body, if you reenter the counselling process, if they're required by law after your sessions end or if you make a legal claim against Encompass Counselling or one of its counsellors for any reasons.

Can I request my personal data is destroyed at any time?

You have the right to request that your personal details are destroyed. Please send your request in writing to Claire Blackburn and you will receive a response within 28 days. Any request to destroy personal data will be assessed in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and your particular situation. In some circumstances Encompass Counselling may have legal grounds to override your request as we have a legal basis for taking your personal information upon your request for counselling sessions. In circumstance where we are unable to delete your data after a request we will write to you and let you know on what legal bases we are retaining your details. In situations where removal of your personal data request is accepted we would be unable to continue providing you with counselling sessions

Lawful Basis

Under GDPR law (General Data Protection Regulations) Encompass Counselling requests, securely stores and holds your personal details under the following legal bases:

- 1) Consent – You freely give your consent for your information to be processed for specific reasons. (To deliver counselling sessions.)
- 2) Contractual - You freely enter a contract with us where processing, handling and storing your data is necessary to provide you with ethical therapeutic practice.
- 3) Legitimate Interests: So Encompass counselling can run the practice, effectively, ethically and lawfully. Without retaining client notes/personal data for a 5 year period we cannot conform to our ethical bodies and insurance companies requirements.
- 4) Legal Basis for special category data: We ask you about your current or past mental health conditions and/or relevant medication in order to work in your best interest and provide you with the most appropriate counselling. For

example if you are suffering depression we invite you to tell us so we can tailor your counselling to address the needs of your depression. It is necessary for the purpose of carrying out the obligations of our contract (providing you with appropriate, ethical and safe therapy sessions) that we know this information about you. This information taken is stored on our 'intake' form which is only identifiable via your client number. Any such information disclosed is safeguarded and confidential. Safeguarding measures include keeping this data separate from your personal

data and is only identifiable via your client number, all paperwork is kept in a lockable filing cabinet within our secure building and access is limited to Claire Blackburn and/or your trainee counsellor if appropriate. It can only be disclosed where the law dictates Encompass Counselling to do so. We legally store this information under Article 9 of the General Data Protection Regulations as Claire Blackburn and all trainee counsellors are professional members of counselling and psychotherapy bodies. This means we are under an ethical obligation of confidentiality to you.

Your right to complain/object

You have the right to make a complaint about how your data is stored, used, processed or handled at any time. Complaints can be made at any time to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK's supervisory authority for data protection issues (www.ico.org.uk). Encompass Counselling would be happy to deal with any complaint in the first instance if you so wish.

Updates

Updates to this notice may occur from time to time and are available in writing or verbally from Claire Blackburn.

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