

Thank you for choosing Shari Stark for your counseling needs. This document is designed to inform you about my background and to ensure that you understand the professional relationship of counseling.

Shari Stark is a Texas State Licensed Professional Counselor and an Approved Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor. She is also a National Certified Counselor. She holds a Master's Degree in Counseling and a Master's Degree in Education, with a minor in Psychology, from Texas Woman's University. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Special Education and Elementary Education from Texas A & M University at Commerce (formerly East Texas State University).

Counseling is a personal exploration and may lead to major changes in your life perspectives and decisions. Some of these life changes could be temporarily distressing. The exact nature of these changes cannot be predicted. Some clients need only a few counseling sessions to achieve their goals, while others may require months or even years of counseling. As a client, you are in complete control and may end our counseling relationship at any point. Together, I will work with you to help you achieve your personal goals.

Although our sessions may be very intimate psychologically, it is important for you to realize that we have a professional relationship rather than a social one. Our contact will be limited to sessions you will arrange with me. Please do not invite me to social gatherings, offer me gifts, ask me to write references for you, or ask me to relate to you in any way other than in the professional context of our counseling sessions. You will be best served while I am seeing you for counseling if our relationship remains strictly professional and if our sessions concentrate exclusively on your concerns. If I see you in public, I will protect your confidentiality by acknowledging you only if you acknowledge me first. I cannot guarantee confidentiality by means of electronic communication (SKYPE, e-mail). The following overrides confidentiality: Imminent harm to self or others, suspicions of abuse or neglect to children, elderly, or disabled, processing third party payer forms or when obtaining payment.

I assure you that my services will be rendered in a professional manner consistent with accepted ethical standards. Sessions are fifty minutes in duration. Please note that it is impossible to guarantee any specific results regarding your counseling goals. Together we will work to achieve the best possible results for you. Other options for counseling include talking with other professionals, and/or your clergy person or choosing to let the situation remain the same. If you have any complaints, please discuss them with me. If you are not satisfied with the resolution of the problem, you have the right to call the Consumer Complaint Hot Line at 1-800-942-5540.

The fee for my counseling services is \$90 per session hour. The fee for each session will be due and must be paid at the conclusion of each session. Cash or personal checks are acceptable for payment. There is a \$50 charge for a returned check. I will provide you with a receipt for all fees paid. In the event that you will not be able to keep an appointment, you must notify me 24 hours in advance. If I do not receive such advance notice, you will be responsible for paying for the session that you missed. In the event I am asked to appear at court and/or to provide testimony regarding your case, a fee of \$200.00 per hour will be required. The fee for this service begins from the time I leave my office until I return to the office. I have no forensic experience.

Some health insurance companies will reimburse clients for my counseling services and some will not. Those that do reimburse usually require a standard amount to be paid by you before reimbursement is allowed, and then usually only a percentage of my fee is reimbursable. You should contact your insurance company to determine whether your insurance will reimburse you and what schedule of reimbursement will be used. You will be responsible for any amount not paid by your insurance company. Any later reimbursement, from your insurance company, should be sent directly to you.

Health insurance companies often require that I diagnose your mental health before they will agree to reimburse you. In the event a diagnosis is required, I will inform you of the diagnosis I plan to render before I submit it to your insurance company. Any diagnosis made may become a part of your permanent insurance records. Your counseling file will be disposed of five years after your last session.

Please be advised that I am an independent mental health provider. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me.

_____	_____
Client Signature	Date
_____	_____
Parent/Conservator's Signature if Client is a Minor	Date
_____	_____
Shari Stark, M.S., M.Ed., LPC-S, NCC	Date