



Phoenix & Feather Counselling

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Salmon Arm, British Columbia

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(250) 803-2919

info@phoenixfeathercounseling.ca

Privacy and Related Policies at PHOENIX & FEATHER COUNSELLING

Compliance with Privacy Legislation

PHOENIX & FEATHER COUNSELLING complies with the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) of British Columbia and applicable Canadian privacy laws. We are committed to protecting your personal information and ensuring transparency in how it is collected, used, and safeguarded.

Why We Collect Personal Information

We collect personal information to contact you, provide invoices and receipts, assess your needs, develop a treatment plan, provide services, evaluate our services, respond in the case of an emergency, or provide your records/consultation to other parties (with your consent).

What Information We Keep

We are required to keep a record of all of our clients. Your records will include contact information, emergency information, consent forms, contracts, assessments, previous records, treatment plans, session notes and summaries, billing information, and all correspondence we send or receive from you related to your treatment.

Where We Keep Your Information

We keep our physical files under supervision when in use, or in locked filing cabinets in a locked room when not in use. We keep our electronic files in a password and firewall protected server that is only accessible by our clinic and that is backed up on a regular basis, and on a secure web based practice management system that is encrypted, complies with guidelines for PHI, and is routinely backed up to ensure the security of sensitive client information.

Fees for Copies

Reasonable fees may apply for photocopies or electronic copies of records. We will provide an estimate of any fees before processing your request.

How long do we keep your information?

We are required to keep your record for at least 10 years beyond your last contact with Phoenix & Feather Counselling, or 10 years past your 18th birthday if you were a child or adolescent at the termination of treatment.

- **Ended at 16:** Retained until at least age 28 (18 + 10).
- **Ended at 10:** Retained until at least age 28 (18 + 10).
- **Ended at 19:** Retained until at least age 29 (19 + 10).

How do we destroy documents or files with your personal health information?

We destroy paper files and documents containing personal information by shredding. We destroy electronic information by deleting it and when the hardware is discarded, ensuring that it has been destroyed.

Data Breach Notification

If a privacy breach occurs that creates a real risk of significant harm, we will notify affected individuals as soon as reasonably possible and report the breach to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia when required. Notifications will describe the nature of the breach, the information involved, steps we are taking to reduce harm, and recommended actions for affected individuals.

Informed Consent and Withdrawal

Clients provide informed consent before beginning services. Consent is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time, though withdrawal may affect the services we can provide. We offer consent forms in accessible formats upon request and will document any withdrawal of consent.

Minors and Consent

For clients under the age of 19, parental or guardian consent is required. We also seek the assent of the minor where appropriate, and ensure that both parties understand the nature and limits of confidentiality.

Your Access to Your File

You have the right to see your file. If you are a current or recent client, we will schedule a time to review it with you. If you believe there is a mistake in factual information, you may request a correction. We will not change professional opinions, but you may submit documentation to support your request or provide a written note to be included in the file if we do not agree with the requested change.

How to Request access and Corrections

To request access to or correction of your personal information, contact us at info@phoenixfeathercounseling.ca or **(250) 803-2919**. We will verify your identity and respond within a reasonable time, typically within **30 days**. We may require proof of identity and may charge a reasonable fee for copying records; we will provide an estimate before fulfilling the request.

Service Providers and Third Party Processors

We use trusted service providers to support our operations (for example, website hosting, practice management, payment processing, and secure backups). These providers process personal information on our behalf under contractual confidentiality and security obligations. **We do not sell personal information.**

What is our privacy policy?

We ensure that at PHOENIX & FEATHER COUNSELLING, Crystal Heaver adheres to mandatory privacy legislation. We will not share any personal health information outside of PHOENIX & FEATHER COUNSELLING without your knowledge and consent, except in the following circumstances as required by law:

- When there is a clear and imminent risk of serious harm to someone.
- When we suspect that a child under the age of 18 years is at risk of abuse or neglect.
- When a client tells us that s/he has been sexually abused by a regulated health professional.
- When we suspect that a person in a long-term care facility is being abused.
- When a court of law subpoenas the record.
- When the licensing or governing body inspects records as a part of their regulatory activities in the public interest.

Please note that if a third-party is paying for your treatment, they will have access to information regarding your attendance (though not the content) of individual and/or group sessions. This in-

formation will be noted on the invoice through PHOENIX & FEATHER COUNSELLING's billing system.

Use of electronic communication

We communicate with clients, families, and service providers via phone, fax, email, text, and mail. Electronic communications carry inherent privacy risks. We take reasonable steps to protect privacy but cannot guarantee confidentiality of electronic channels. Please tell us your preferred communication methods. All clinical or substantive contact (emails, texts, phone calls, faxes) is documented in your health record.

Virtual Sessions and Security

Virtual counselling sessions are conducted using secure, encrypted platforms. Clients are encouraged to use private, secure internet connections and devices, use headphones, and conduct sessions in a private space to protect confidentiality.

Identity and location check for virtual sessions

At the start of each virtual session we will confirm your identity and your current location. This allows us to contact local emergency services if a safety concern arises. If you cannot provide a location, we will follow our safety procedures and may pause the session until location is confirmed.

Client Privacy Tips

To protect your privacy, avoid using public Wi-Fi for sessions, keep devices password protected, and do not share sensitive information over unsecured channels. Let us know if you have specific privacy concerns or accessibility needs.

Website Disclaimer and Cookies

The information on our website and chat is for general informational purposes only. It is not counselling, therapy, or crisis support and does not create a counsellor-client relationship. Please do not share sensitive personal or medical information via the website or chat. Our website uses cookies for functionality, performance, and analytics; you can manage or disable cookies through your browser settings. We do not knowingly collect personal information from minors online without parental or guardian involvement.

Crisis Resources

If you are in crisis, contact: **9-8-8** (Suicide Crisis Helpline), **310-6789** (BC Mental Health Support Line), **Kids Help Phone** 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868, **1-800-588-8717** (KUU-US Crisis Line for Indigenous supports), or **911** for emergencies.

Complaints and Oversight

If you have concerns about how your information is handled, you may contact the **Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia** at www.oipc.bc.ca or 1-800-663-7867.

If you have concerns about the counselling services you received, you may also contact the **Association of Cooperative Counselling Therapists of Canada (ACCT)**, our professional association.

- **Website:** www.acctcounsellor.com
- **Email:** info@acctcounsellor.com
- **Phone:** 1-855-201-ACCT (2228)

Payment Policy

By signing intake forms you agree that your therapist has discussed fees, session and service rates, late cancellation and no-show fees, and any phone consultation charges. You are responsible for outstanding balances not covered by insurance.

I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to the policies above.

Please enter today's date (YYYY-MM-DD)