Hope Therapy & Counselling Services

Policy on Therapeutic Boundaries

Version: October 2026 | Client-Facing

This policy explains the professional boundaries that Hope Therapy & Counselling Services and our affiliate counsellors are committed to maintaining. Clear boundaries are essential for a safe, ethical, and effective therapeutic relationship. They protect you as a client, your counsellor, and the integrity of the therapeutic process.

1. The Separation Between Hope Therapy and Affiliate Counsellors

Hope Therapy & Counselling Services facilitates your connection with an independent affiliate counsellor and manages the administrative aspects of your referral. Once therapy begins, the therapeutic working relationship exists directly between you and your counsellor. Your counsellor is an independent practitioner responsible for managing the clinical, ethical, and relational aspects of your sessions, including confidentiality, safeguarding, record-keeping, and professional indemnity insurance.

If you have concerns about how boundaries are being maintained in your sessions, we encourage you to speak with your counsellor directly in the first instance. If you do not feel comfortable doing so, or if the matter is not resolved, please contact Hope Therapy & Counselling Services. Our Complaints Procedure is available at www.hopefulminds.co.uk/client-counselling-policies.

2. Professional Boundaries of Counsellors

All affiliate counsellors are required to:

- Maintain a professional relationship with clients at all times, focused on your therapeutic goals and wellbeing.
- Avoid personal, social, romantic, or financial relationships with clients outside the therapeutic context.
- Avoid dual relationships that could compromise objectivity, confidentiality, or professional judgement.
- Maintain appropriate emotional boundaries, ensuring the therapeutic relationship does not become over-involved or enmeshed.
- Not discuss clients outside of clinical supervision and other appropriate professional contexts where confidentiality is protected.

3. Professional Boundaries of Hope Therapy & Counselling Services

Hope Therapy & Counselling Services staff will:

- Maintain professional and courteous communication with clients at all times, focused on administrative support and service provision.
- Not engage in personal relationships with clients or offer clinical advice outside their professional capacity.
- Handle all client information with strict confidentiality, sharing details only with affiliate counsellors or relevant parties as necessary for therapy or safeguarding.

4. Communication and Contact Outside Sessions

All communication between you and your counsellor outside of sessions should remain professional and conducted through the agreed communication channels discussed at the outset of therapy — typically email or a secure messaging platform.

Counsellors will not engage in personal social media interactions with current or former clients (for example, following, friending, or messaging via personal accounts).

5. Online Therapy Boundaries

For clients receiving therapy online, the following additional considerations apply:

- Sessions should take place from a private, confidential space where you will not be overheard or interrupted.
- Your counsellor will similarly conduct sessions from a private and professional setting.
- Sessions will not be recorded without the explicit prior consent of all parties.
- If you encounter your counsellor on social media or in other online contexts, please be aware that they are not able to engage with you personally in those settings in order to protect your confidentiality and maintain appropriate boundaries.

6. Physical and Emotional Boundaries

Therapy is a professional service. Physical contact between counsellors and clients should be avoided unless considered appropriate in rare circumstances (for example, a handshake where culturally relevant). Clients and counsellors should not exchange personal gifts, loans, or favours.

7. Financial Boundaries

All fees must be agreed before therapy begins and paid through Hope Therapy & Counselling Services via our secure payment portal. Counsellors must not accept personal financial assistance, gifts, or favours from clients. No financial transactions outside the agreed session fees should take place.

8. Post-Therapy Contact

Once therapy has ended, counsellors must maintain professional distance. Friendships, business relationships, and romantic or sexual relationships with former clients are not permitted.

9. Training and Supervision

All affiliate counsellors undertake training in professional ethics and boundaries as part of their qualification and continuing professional development. Regular clinical supervision is used to identify and address any boundary concerns that may arise in practice.

10. Raising a Concern

If you feel that professional boundaries have been crossed at any point, please:

- Speak with your counsellor directly if you feel able to do so.

- Contact Hope Therapy & Counselling Services at contact@hopefulminds.co.uk if you prefer to raise the matter with us directly or if speaking with your counsellor has not resolved the concern.
- Refer to our Complaints Procedure, available at www.hopefulminds.co.uk/client-counselling-policies.

Contact us: contact@hopefulminds.co.uk | 0333 043 1850 | www.hopefulminds.co.uk

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