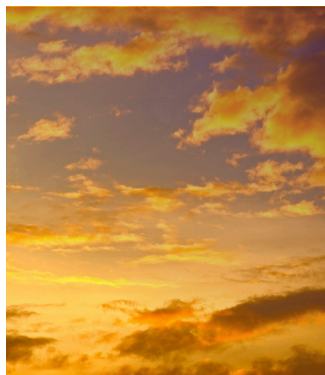




Catholic
Charities
Archdiocese of Dubuque



Counseling Handbook

Table of Contents

Mission and Beliefs	1
About Us	2
Programs	3–4
Client Rights	5–6
Client Responsibilities	7
Grievance Procedure	8
Office Hours/ Appointment Scheduling	9–10
Insurance/ Fee Policy/ Refund Policy	11
Office Locations	12
Notice of Privacy Practices	13
Use and Disclosure for Treatment, Payment, and Healthcare Options	14
Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization	14
Uses and Disclosures with Neither Consent nor Authorization	15–16

Mission & Beliefs

1



Our Mission

The mission of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Dubuque is to reduce poverty, strengthen families and empower communities in the 30 most northeast counties of Iowa. Through our partnership with parishes and communities, we respond to changing social needs and provide help and create hope for the most vulnerable populations, such as:

- families, seniors, and adults with disabilities in need of Affordable Housing;
- individuals, families, and couples in need of professional Mental Health Counseling;
- those recently released from jail or prison in need of mentoring and support through our Jail & Prison Ministry program; and
- immigrants in need of professional and affordable Immigration Legal Services

We help anyone in need, regardless of faith or background and believe that every person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

We Believe

- In people's ability to recover, reclaim, and transform their lives.
- That all people have unique strengths, talents, and skills that will help them overcome their problems.
- That coordinated, accessible, and effective services strengthen communities.
- In providing affordable services that meet the highest standards of quality.
- In people participating in treatment planning and in accomplishing a successful outcome from services.
- Our services help individuals and families enhance their quality of life.

About Us

2



How We Are Funded

The programs of Catholic Charities are funded through client fees, the generous support of the people who donate Catholic Charities, the Dubuque United Way, and grants.

We Serve

Catholic Charities' services are provided to anyone living in the Archdiocese of Dubuque. You do not need to be Catholic to receive services. Catholic Charities will help regardless of religion, race, gender, gender identification, sexual preference, or financial status.



Mental Health Counseling

Catholic Charities provides professional counseling services for individuals, couples, and families experiencing a variety of social, emotional, and interpersonal issues. Catholic Charities also provides support groups in certain office locations, telehealth services, and crisis pregnancy counseling (at no charge).

Affordable Housing

Catholic Charities Housing offers safe and affordable permanent housing for families, seniors and adults with disabilities.

Disaster Services

Catholic Charities acts as a liaison to identify local and national resources to assist parishes and communities during times of disaster.

Immigration Legal Services

Catholic Charities' immigration attorneys provide affordable legal services to help reunite families by assisting them in navigating the immigration system and advocating on their behalf.

Post Adoption Search

Catholic Charities recognizes that adoption is a lifelong process. When we receive written documentation from either the adoptee or the biological parent, the agency will act as an intermediary to search for the other party and facilitate communication if desired by all parties.

Jail and Prison Reentry Services

Through a vast network of volunteer mentors and support groups, Catholic Charities' Jail & Prison Reentry Services strives to prepare and support returning citizens as they work toward positive re-entry into family and community life.

Post Abortion Counseling/ Project Rachel

Project Rachel is a free and confidential program for anyone who is having difficulty with the emotional after-effects of an abortion.



You Have The Right To:

- Be received and treated in a manner that enhances autonomy, privacy, dignity, and self-esteem.
- Participate in your assessment and treatment planning, to be informed about the types of treatment that might help you and the risks involved, to choose the type of treatment you receive, and to limit the scope and duration of your treatment.
- Be fully informed about our confidentiality procedures and the ways we protect the privacy of your information (please refer to our Notice of Privacy Practices).
- Receive counseling services that are compatible with your religious beliefs, with respect for unique religious faiths, social philosophies, and cultural backgrounds.
- Express any disagreements you might have with your counselor about your counseling services and, if necessary, to file a complaint or grievance with your counselor's supervisor (see Grievance Procedure, page 6).
- Be given a specific reason for referral or discontinuation of your treatment if that becomes necessary.
- Give Catholic Charities feedback about your counseling experience in the form of a written evaluation that will be provided to you at the end of your treatment.

You have several rights as the individual who has information gathered, stored, and used at Catholic Charities.

You Have The Right To:

- You have the right to an electronic or paper copy of your medical record. You have access to this through Patient Portal. If you are not able to access the Patient Portal, we will provide a copy or a summary of your health information. Please use the following link to request that information: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3mSN9hDjhSvVEFiQk9mOV95LUU/view?usp=sharing>. We may charge a reasonable, cost-based fee.
- You have the right to inspect and receive health information we have about you, unless this is judged to be of potential serious harm according to Catholic Charities' policy.
- You have the right to inspect and receive a copy of your protected health information unless this is judged to be of potential serious harm according to Catholic Charities' policy. (There may be a charge for copying your protected health information.)
- You have the right to request amendment of protected health information according to the Catholic Charities policy, although we are not obligated to amend the information if there is a valid reason.
- You have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of protected health information.
- You have a right to have a copy of our Privacy Statement and our privacy practices.
- You have the right to restrict disclosures of protected health information to a health plan with respect to health care for which you have paid out of pocket in full and in accordance with your fee agreement.

Children's Medical/Therapy Records

In most circumstances, the parents of a minor child have a legal right to treatment information concerning their child; however, the best interest of the child can be an overriding issue under certain circumstances.

Please be aware that the Iowa Supreme Court ruled in 2009 that the joint legal custodial rights granted by Iowa Code Chapter 598 do not mandate or require disclosure of information to parents. The best interest of the child always takes precedence over the parent's legal rights in the event of a conflict between the two.

Client Responsibilities

You have a responsibility to:

- 
- Participate in your treatment by being as open as you can with your counselor, complete homework assignments if you agree to do them, and tell your counselor if you feel the approach he or she is taking is not working for you.
 - Be on time for your appointment or give as much notice as you can if it must be rescheduled (see Appointment Policy).
 - Abide by the financial agreement you establish at your first meeting.
- If your financial situation or insurance coverage changes, let Catholic Charities know so that a new agreement can be made.
 - Failure to abide by the financial agreement can result in outstanding fees being subjected to action by a collection agency.
 - Respect the privacy rights of other persons served by Catholic Charities.
 - Attend counseling without being under the influence or in the possession of alcohol or other mood-altering substances.
 - Attend counseling without a gun, knife, explosive, or any other weapon.
 - Avoid any disruptive or threatening behaviors toward staff or any other person while on the premises.
 - Respect the right of Catholic Charities to discontinue services if you choose not to cooperate with any of the above responsibilities.
 - Inform Catholic Charities if you DO NOT want to receive appointment reminder calls.

Grievance Procedure



You may appeal staff or agency decisions and actions if you disagree and have not been able to reach a satisfactory resolution with your counselor first. If you and your counselor cannot reach a solution that is satisfactory, you should take the issue to the Clinical Director. If that step does not resolve your concern, you may go to the Executive Director. At that time, a written statement presenting the appeal would be expected. If that does not resolve the difficulty, you may call the Iowa Protection and Advocacy Services at 515-278-2502.

Dual Roles

Ethically, your counselor may not engage in a personal relationship with you outside of counseling once you have established a counseling relationship. However, there are circumstances in which a dual role is unavoidable. Your counselor will discuss this with you if a dual role exists or has the potential to exist. Some circumstances may require a written statement of agreement.

Disclaimer

If Catholic Charities staff is not able to provide the care necessary to treat a particular condition or situation, our professional staff will assist in making a referral to another appropriate provider with your consent.

Office Hours & Appointment Scheduling

9



Generally, all offices schedule clients between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. with one evening available for later appointments. These hours vary slightly from office to office.

Appointments are usually scheduled ahead of time. The frequency of appointments will be established based on individual need. To schedule or reschedule appointments, please notify our office at least 24 hours in advance, if at all possible. Should Catholic Charities need to reschedule an appointment, you will be contacted at the earliest possible time.

Cancellations and Rescheduling

If you forget an appointment and fail to cancel or reschedule, you will be charged a \$25 no-show fee which is expected to be paid at the time of the next appointment. Your counselor is reserving an hour of his/her time for your appointment and when you cancel late or do not show, this is an hour someone else could have utilized.

Your attentiveness to your appointment time indicates your appreciation of your counselor's time. Please inform our office if you want to be reminded of your appointment time and how you prefer to be contacted.

Due to the impact of no-show appointments on a counselor's time, we have had to develop the following policy: ***If a client no-shows, cancels, or reschedules with less than 24 hours notice three times within a year's time, Catholic Charities will not be able to schedule the client for an appointment for a period of no less than six months.***

Discharges/Closing Sessions

Clients who have not received any services for 60 days with no plan of future service shall be discharged (closed). In the event that a client decides to come back for counseling services after the 60-day closure, one will need to be established as a new intake and wait until the therapist has an intake opening.

Once discharged from counseling treatment, clinical records will be stored for seven years from the date of termination of service. After seven years the files will be destroyed.

In Case of Emergency

Catholic Charities does not provide crisis counseling services with a 24 hour call center, so in the event of a mental health emergency, we recommend that you call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Insurance, Fee Policy, & Refund Policy

11

Insurance

Many medical insurance policies cover at least part of the cost of mental health services. You will need to provide your insurance information and work with us to determine the extent of your coverage.

Your financial obligation may include a copay, co-insurance, and/or deductible. We will ask you to sign releases that allow us to file with your insurance company.

All insurance payments will come directly to Catholic Charities. You are also responsible for any fees not covered by your insurance. (Services not covered by insurance are eligible for renegotiation using the Sliding Obligation Toward Fee Scale).

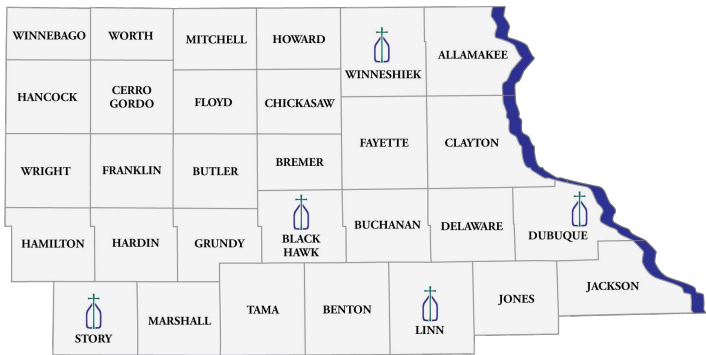
Fee Policy

At your first meeting with Catholic Charities, you will make a financial agreement with us. If you have insurance we will apply that toward your services. If you do not have insurance, or we are not a provider with your insurance, you may apply for a reduced fee according to the Sliding Obligation Toward Fee Scale. This is based on your last year's Federal Income Tax adjusted gross income. Please provide a copy for our files. You will be responsible for paying your co-payment or your sliding fee at the time of service. This information will be updated yearly. We do not send out monthly billing. Payment in full is due at the time of your appointment.

Refund Policy

If you have paid more than the amount agreed upon in your financial agreement, the overpayment will be refunded to you. This may take up to 30 days once we are notified by the insurance company.

Regional Office Locations



Ames Office

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish
2210 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50014
Phone: 515-296-2759

Dubuque Office

Pastoral Center
1229 Mount Loretta Ave.
Dubuque, IA 52003
Phone: 563-588-0558

Cedar Rapids Office

Sr. Mary Lawrence Community Center
420 Sixth St. S.E., Suite 220
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
Phone: 319-364-7121

Waterloo Office

St. Edward Parish
1425 Kimball Ave
Waterloo, IA 50702
Phone: 319-272-2080

Decorah Office

St. Benedict Parish Office
307 West Main Street
Decorah, IA 52101
Phone: 563-382-9631

Notice of Privacy Practices

13

Confidentiality

This notice describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can gain access to this information. Please review it carefully.

Catholic Charities' staff has a professional obligation to respect your confidentiality. Information may be released to others only with your written consent. In situations in which there is clear danger to you or to others, or when required by law, Catholic

Charities may need to disclose some of your confidential information. Under Iowa law, the professional staff members are mandatory reporters of neglect, physical abuse, and sexual abuse. Mandatory reporters must report suspected abuse of a child or dependent adult to the Department of Human Services, which will conduct an investigation of the report. Your records are kept confidential and are handled in compliance with the Iowa Code regarding mental health records as well as the Health and Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which sets national standards requiring security and privacy of a person's health information and defines provisions for electronic data interchange.

As defined by 45 C. F. R., Part 164 of the HIPAA rules, Catholic Charities is committed to protecting your mental health information. We maintain a record of your counseling and services that you received at Catholic Charities for use in your ongoing care and for billing purposes.

Records and professional staff are subject to court subpoena. Under court order, your information and work product of the counselor could be provided to the court. On occasion, Catholic Charities might be required to cooperate with an insurance audit or client records as well.

We are required by law to:

1. Document your treatment services to:
 - a. Assure appropriate treatment and treatment planning;
 - b. Meet state licensure and accreditation standards, and
 - c. Meet documentation requirements of third party payers such as insurance, managed care, or government payment plans in order for us to be reimbursed for services provided to you.
2. Protect your counseling information.
3. Give you this notice describing our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to counseling information about you.

Use and disclosure for Treatment, Payment, & Healthcare Options

14

We may use or disclose your protected health information for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations purposes. To help clarify these terms, here are some definitions:

- Use applies to activities within Catholic Charities' offices such as sharing, employing, applying, utilizing, examining, and analyzing information that identifies you.
- Disclosure applies to activities outside of Catholic Charities' offices such as releasing, transferring, or providing access to information about you to other parties.
- Protected health information refers to information in your counseling record that could identify you.
- Payment is when Catholic Charities obtains reimbursement for services provided. An example would be when Catholic Charities discloses personal health information to your health insurer to obtain reimbursement, determine eligibility, and/or coverage.
- Healthcare operations are activities that relate to the performance and operation of Catholic Charities counseling services. Examples include quality assessment and improvement activities, business related matters such as audits and administrative services, and case management and care coordination.

Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization

Catholic Charities may use or disclose your personal health information for purposes outside of counseling treatment, payment, or healthcare operations when your appropriate authorization is obtained. An authorization is written permission above and beyond the general consent that permits only specific disclosures. In those instances when Catholic Charities is asked for such information, we will obtain a written authorization from you before releasing this information. You may revoke authorization (in writing) at any time. You may not revoke an authorization to the extent that Catholic Charities has relied on that authorization, or if the authorization was obtained as a condition of obtaining insurance coverage. Law provides the insurer the right to contest the claim under the policy.

Uses and Disclosures with Neither Consent nor Authorization

15

- **Child or dependent abuse** - If Catholic Charities has reason to believe that a person under the age of 18 or a dependent adult has been abused, abandoned, and/or neglected (or a person has observed a child subjected to these conditions or circumstances), we must report this observation or belief to the appropriate authorities. If you disclose any information during a counseling session that indicates either you or someone else has physically or sexually abused a minor or dependent adult, the counselor is required by law to report this information to the appropriate state agency. Catholic Charities' counselors are required by law to report reasonable suspicion of abuse, or if the child or dependent adult is at imminent risk.
- **Serious threat to health or safety** - If you communicate to your counselor or Catholic Charities' staff an explicit threat of imminent serious physical harm or death to yourself and/or to an identifiable victim(s) and we believe you may act on that threat, we have a duty to take appropriate measures to prevent harm to yourself or others. This may include disclosing information to law enforcement and warning the potential victim. Your counselor or designated Catholic Charities' staff will disclose the minimum amount of information necessary.
- **Health oversight activities** - If an Iowa State Board of Licensure examiners is investigating counseling practices at Catholic Charities, we may be required to disclose protected health information regarding you.
- **Judicial and administrative proceedings** - If you are involved in court proceedings, your personal health information records are privileged unless ordered by a judge. This may include legal situations such as divorce, child custody, and law enforcement requirements. Catholic Charities will make every effort to inform you in advance if this situation develops.
- **Workers' Compensation** - Catholic Charities may disclose personal health information as authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to Worker's Compensation that provide benefits for work related injuries or illnesses without regard to fault.

- Business associate - Catholic Charities will need to disclose your personal health information to an outside billing agency that is HIPAA compliant. This agency will perform activities involving personal health information, including billing, telephone contacts with insurance providers, and transmitting electronically personal health information to insurance providers. This billing agency is legally required to protect your health information.
- As of April 2005, if you were to reveal that you were a victim of sexual abuse as a minor by any personnel of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, you understand that a report would have to be made to the Dubuque Archdiocesan officials and to the civil authorities unless the statute of limitations has expired and you are no longer a minor.

If information is disclosed in these circumstances, it is limited only to that information which is relevant to that purpose. You will be informed of the disclosure if possible and if this will not risk serious harm to you or others.

If an emergency situation exists and obtaining your consent is not possible or practical, Catholic Charities may use or disclose protected information to the extent necessary during the emergency.

Although you have the right to refuse to consent to the use or disclosure of protected information for treatment, reimbursement, or health care operations, and you have the right to revoke such a consent at any time, our facility may not be able to render you the highest quality of care without the right to use or disclose your protected information in this manner. Therefore, we reserve the right to condition your care on your consent to the use or disclose protected health information for treatment or reimbursement purposes.



Catholic Charities reserves the right to change the privacy policies and practices described in this notice and to make the new notice effective for all protected health information that it maintains.