



Authentic Life

Christian Counseling

Mailing address:

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Alccounseling.com | mary@alccounseling.com | Ph. 720-295-6592

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT & POLICIES

REGULATION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN COLORADO:

Authentic Life Christian Counseling (“ALCC”) Lakewood office is located at 12211 W Alameda Pkwy Suite 105 Lakewood, CO 80228 . Mary Dominguez, M.A., LPCC (Mary Dominguez Counseling, LLC is the mental health professional providing services at ALCC.) Mary holds a Masters of Art in Counseling from Denver Seminary and a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies from Texas A&M University. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor Candidate. Mary is supervised by Jessica Klika, MA, LPC #0012981. She is trained as a Brainspotting practitioner and a Certified Synergetic Play Therapist. Further information regarding education, experience and training is available upon request.

Mary Dominguez, M.A., LPCC is working as an independent contractor with ALCC. Due to ALCC’s collaborative approach to counseling, minimally identifying information (presenting issue, first name, appointment time, etc.) may be shared with other ALCC providers in furtherance of your treatment goals. If you prefer that access to your therapeutic information be limited to Mary Dominguez, M.A., LPCC only, you may ask them to restrict access to any information. Please talk with Mary Dominguez, M.A., LPCC about your options. Please be advised that Mary Dominguez Counseling, LLC is an independent counseling business, separate from ALCC.

- 1) Everyone fifteen (15) years and older must sign this disclosure statement. A parent or legal guardian with the authority to consent to mental health services for his or her minor child/ren, must sign this disclosure statement on behalf of his or her minor child under the age of fifteen (15) years old. This disclosure statement contains the policies and procedures of ALCC and is HIPAA compliant. No medical or psychotherapeutic information, or any other information related to your privacy, will be revealed without your permission unless mandated by Colorado law and Federal regulations (42 C.F.R. Part 2 and Title 25, Article 4, Part 14 and Title 25, Article 1, Part 1, CRS and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), 45 C.F.R. Parts 142, 160, 162 and 164).
- 2) The Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (“DORA”), Division of Professions and Occupations (“DOPO”) has the general responsibility of regulating the practice of Licensed Psychologists, Licensed Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Certified and Licensed Addiction Counselors, and registered individuals who practice psychotherapy. The agency within DORA that specifically has responsibility is the Mental Health Section, 1560 Broadway, Suite #1350, Denver, CO 80202, (303) 894-2291 or (303) 894-7800 DORA_MentalHealthBoard@state.co.us. The State Board of Licensed Professional Counselor Examiners regulates Licensed Professional Counselors, and can be reached at the

address listed above. Clients are encouraged, but not required, to resolve any grievances through ALCC's internal process.

- 3) You, as a client, may revoke your consent to treatment or the release or disclosure of confidential information at any time in writing and given to your therapist.
- 4) Levels of Psychotherapy Regulation in Colorado include Licensing (requires minimum education, experience, and examination qualifications), Certification (requires minimum training, experience, and for certain levels, examination qualifications), and Registered Psychotherapist (does not require minimum education, experience, or examination qualifications.) All levels of regulation require passing a jurisprudence take-home examination.

Certified Addiction Counselor I (CAC I) must be a high school graduate, complete required training hours and 1,000 hours of supervised experience. Certified Addiction Counselor II (CAC II) must complete additional required training hours and 2,000 hours of supervised experience. Certified Addiction Counselor III (CAC III) must have a bachelor's degree in behavioral health, complete additional required training hours and 2,000 hours of supervised experience. Licensed Addiction Counselor must have a clinical master's degree and meet the CAC III requirements. Licensed Social Worker must hold a master's degree in social work. Psychologist Candidate, a Marriage and Family Therapist Candidate, and a Licensed Professional Counselor Candidate must hold the necessary licensing degree and be in the process of completing the required supervision for licensure. Licensed Clinical Social Worker, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, and a Licensed Professional Counselor must hold a master's degree in his or her profession and have two years of post-masters supervision. A Licensed Psychologist must hold a doctorate degree in psychology and have one year of post-doctoral supervision. Registered Psychotherapist is a psychotherapist listed in Colorado's database and is authorized by law to practice psychotherapy in Colorado but is not licensed by the state and is not required to satisfy any standardized educational or testing requirements to obtain a registration from the state. Registered psychotherapists are required to take the jurisprudence exam.

CLIENT RIGHTS AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

As a client you are entitled to receive information from me about my methods of therapy, the techniques I use, the duration of your therapy, if I can determine it, and my fee structure. Please ask if you would like to receive this information.

Fees:

- 1) My fee structure, services, and fee policy are outlined as follows:
 - a) Individual therapy (45-50 minutes) - \$115.00 per session
Individual therapy (75-80 minutes)- \$140 per session
Conjoint therapy (45-50 minutes) - \$125.00 per session
Conjoint therapy (75-80 minutes) - \$150.00 per session
 - b) It is the policy of my practice to collect all fees at the time of service, unless you make arrangements for payment and we both agree to such an arrangement. In addition, I request that you fill out a "Credit Card Authorization" form to keep in your file. All accounts that are not paid within thirty (30) days from the date of service shall be considered past due. If your account is past due, please be advised that I may be obligated to turn past due accounts over to a collection agency or seek collection with a civil court action. By signing below, you agree that I may seek payment for your unpaid bill(s) with the assistance of a collections agency.

Should this occur, I will provide the collection agency or Court with your Name, Address, Phone Number, and any other directory information, including dates of service or any other information requested by the collection agency or Court deemed necessary to collect the past due account. I will not disclose more information than necessary to collect the past due account. I will notify you of my intention to turn your account over to a collection agency or the Court by sending such notice to your last known address.

- c) I **am not** a Medicaid provider. If you have Medicaid coverage that includes mental health services, I **am not** able to offer mental health services to you.

- d) Legal Services incurred on your behalf are charged at a higher rate including but not limited to: attorney fees I may incur in preparing for or complying with the requested legal services, testimony related matters like case research, report writing, travel, depositions, actual testimony, cross examination time, and courtroom waiting time. The higher fee is \$360.00 per hour. You will be required to pay a \$500.00 retainer and agree to comply with ALCC's Legal Policy, which will be provided to you as necessary.

Restrictions on Uses:

- 2) You are entitled to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information as provided by 45 CFR 164.522(a), however ALCC is not required to agree to a restriction request. Please review ALCC's Notice of Privacy Policies for more information.

Second Opinion and Termination:

- 3) You are entitled to seek a second opinion from another therapist or terminate therapy at any time.

Sexual Intimacy:

- 4) In a professional relationship (such as psychotherapy), sexual intimacy between a psychotherapist and a client is **never** appropriate. If sexual intimacy occurs it should be reported to DORA at (303) 894-2291, Mental Health Section, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1350, Denver, Colorado 80202; State Board of Licensed Professional Counselor Examiners.

Confidentiality:

- 5) Generally speaking, the information provided by and to a client during therapy sessions is legally confidential if the psychotherapist is a Licensed Psychologist, Licensed Social Worker, Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Certified and Licensed Addiction Counselor, or a Registered Psychotherapist. If the information is legally confidential, the psychotherapist cannot be forced to disclose the information without the client's consent or in any court of competent jurisdiction in the State of Colorado without the consent of the person to whom the testimony sought relates.

- 6) There are exceptions to this general rule of legal confidentiality. These exceptions are listed in the Colorado statutes, C.R.S. §12-43-218. You should be aware that provisions concerning disclosure of confidential communications does not apply to any delinquency or criminal proceedings, except as provided in C.R.S § 13-90-107. There are additional exceptions that I will identify to you as the situations arise during treatment or in our professional relationship. For example, I am required to report child abuse or neglect situations; I am required to report the abuse or exploitation of an at-risk adult or elder or the imminent risk of abuse or exploitation; if I determine that you are a danger to yourself or others, including those identifiable by their association with a specific location or entity, I am required to disclose such information to the appropriate authorities or to

warn the party, location, or entity you have threatened; if you become gravely disabled, I am required to report this to the appropriate authorities. I may also disclose confidential information in the course of supervision or consultation in accordance with my policies and procedures, in the investigation of a complaint or civil suit filed against me, or if I am ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction to disclose such information. You should also be aware that if you should communicate any information involving a threat to yourself or to others, I may be required to take immediate action to protect you or others from harm. In addition, there may be other exceptions to confidentiality as provided by HIPAA regulations and other Federal and/or Colorado laws and regulations that may apply. Additionally, although confidentiality extends to communications by text, email, telephone, and/or other electronic means, I cannot guarantee that those communications will be kept confidential and/or that a third-party may not access our communications. Even though I may utilize state of the art encryption methods, firewalls, and back-up systems to help secure our communication, there is a risk that our electronic or telephone communications may be compromised, unsecured, and/or accessed by a third-party. Please review and fill out ALCC's Consent for Communication of Protected Health Information by Unsecure Transmissions.

“No Secrets” Policy:

7) When treating a couple or a family, the couple or family is considered to be the client. At times, it may be necessary to have a private session with an individual member of that couple or family. There may also be times when an individual member of the couple or family chooses to share information in a different manner that does not include other members of the couple or family (i.e. on a telephone call, via email, or via private conversation). In general, what is said in these individual conversations is considered confidential and will not be disclosed to any third party unless your therapist is required to do so by law. However, in the event that you disclose information that is directly related to the treatment of the couple or family it may be necessary to share that information with the other members of the couple or the family in order to facilitate the therapeutic process. Your therapist will use his or her best judgment as to whether, when, and to what extent such disclosures will be made. If appropriate, your therapist will first give the individual the opportunity to make the disclosure themselves. This “no secrets” policy is intended to allow your therapist to continue to treat the couple or family by preventing, to the extent possible, a conflict of interest to arise where an individual’s interests may not be consistent with the interests of the couple or the family being treated. If you feel it necessary to talk about matters that you do not wish to have disclosed, you should consult with a separate therapist who can treat you individually.

Extraordinary Events:

8) In the case that I become disabled, die, or am away on an extended leave of absence (hereinafter “extraordinary event,”) the following Mental Health Professional Designee will have access to my client files. If I am unable to contact you prior to the extraordinary event occurring, the Mental Health Professional Designee will contact you. Please let me know if you are not comfortable with the below listed Mental Health Professional Designee and we will discuss possible alternatives at this time.

NAME: Vicki Faris, M.A., LPC

TEL: 720-257-9515

CREDENTIALS: Licensed Professional Counselor Colorado Candidate

The purpose of the Mental Health Professional Designee is to continue your care and treatment with the least amount of disruption as possible. You are not required to use the Mental Health Professional Designee for therapy services, but the Mental Health Professional Designee can offer you referrals and transfer your client record, if requested.

Electronic Records:

- 9) ALCC may keep and store client information electronically on ALCC's laptop or desktop computers, and/or some mobile devices. In order to maintain security and protect this information, ALCC may employ the use of firewalls, antivirus software, changing passwords regularly, and encryption methods to protect computers and/or mobile devices from unauthorized access. ALCC may also remotely wipe out data on mobile devices if the mobile device is lost, stolen, or damaged. ALCC may use electronic backup systems such as external hard drives, thumb drives, or similar methods. If such backup methods are used, reasonable precautions will be taken to ensure the security of this equipment and it will be locked up for storage. ALCC uses a cloud-based service for storing or backing up information. The cloud-based backup system ALCC uses is: Therapy Notes and the email service provider ALCC uses is: ZoHo. The electronically stored information through encryption and passwords. In addition, in order to maintain security of the electronically stored information ALCC has employed the following security measures:
- The computers that store the electronically stored information are kept in secure data centers, where various security measures are used to maintain the protection of the computers from physical access by unauthorized persons.
 - The cloud-based company and email service provider employ various security measures to maintain the protection of these backups from unauthorized use or disclosure.

It may be necessary for other individuals to have access to the electronically stored information, such as the cloud based company or email service provider's workforce members, in order to maintain the system itself. Federal law protecting the electronically stored information extends to these workforce members. If you have any questions about the security measures ALCC employs, please ask.

AS A CLIENT:

You as a Client agree and understand the following:

- 1) I understand that ALCC may contact me to provide appointment reminders or information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to me in accordance with ALCC's Consent for Communication of Protected Health Information by Unsecure Transmissions.
- 2) I understand that if I initiate communication via electronic means that I have not specifically consented to in ALCC's Consent for Communication of Protected Health Information by Unsecure Transmissions, I will need to amend the consent form so that my therapist may communicate with me via this method.
- 3) I understand that there may be times when my therapist may need to consult with a colleague or another professional, such as an attorney or supervisor, about issues raised by me in therapy. My confidentiality is still protected during consultation by my therapist and the professional consulted. Only the minimum amount of information necessary to consult will be disclosed. Signing this disclosure statement gives my therapist permission to consult as needed to provide professional services to me as a client. I understand that I will need to sign a separate Authorization for Release of Information for any discussion or disclosure of my protected health information to another professional besides a colleague, supervisor or attorney retained by my therapist.

- 4) I understand that, in general, ALCC provides Teletherapy, such as therapy over telephone or video chat, only on a limited basis. I understand that should I want Teletherapy, I will discuss my request with my therapist. I understand that it is in ALCC's sole discretion whether to accommodate my request for Teletherapy. On occasions where Teletherapy is appropriate, ALCC will utilize WeCounsel as the platform for Teletherapy services. I understand that communications via email and text should be limited to administrative purposes and not used as an avenue for therapy.
- 5) I understand that my therapist, does not accept personal Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and/or other friend/connection/follow requests via any Social Media. Any such request will be denied in order to maintain professional boundaries. I understand that ALCC has, or may have, a business social media account page. I understand that there is no requirement that I "like" or "follow" this page. I understand that should I "like" or choose to "follow" ALCC's business social media page that others will see my name associated with "liking" or "following" that page. I understand that this applies to any comments that I post on ALCC's page/wall as well. I understand that any comments I post regarding therapeutic work between my therapist and I will be deleted as soon as possible. I agree that I will refrain from discussing, commenting, and/or asking therapeutic questions via any social media platform. I agree that if I have a therapeutic comment and/or question that I will contact my therapist through the mode I consented to and **not** through social media.
- 6) I understand that if I have any questions regarding social media, review websites, or search engines in connection to my therapeutic relationship, I will immediately contact my therapist and address those questions.
- 7) I understand my therapist provides non-emergency therapeutic services **by scheduled appointment only**. If, for any reason, I am unable to contact my therapist by the telephone number provided to me, **720-432-7832**, and I am having a true emergency, I will call 911, check myself into the nearest hospital emergency room, or call Colorado's Crisis Hotline (844) 493-8255. ALCC does not provide after-hours service without an appointment. **If I must seek after-hours treatment from any counseling agency or center, I understand that I will be solely responsible for any fees due.** I understand that if I leave a voicemail for my therapist on the phone number provided, my therapist will return my call by the end of the next business day, excluding holidays and weekends.
- 8) If my therapist believes my therapeutic issues are above his or her level of competence or outside of his or her scope of practice, my therapist is legally required to refer, terminate, or consult.
- 9) I understand that ALCC operates on a fee-for-service basis and will only bill my insurance company on my behalf on a limited basis. I understand that I am legally responsible for payment for my therapy services. I understand that with few exceptions, it is up to me, the client, to determine whether or not my insurance company provides reimbursement for therapy services provided at ALCC. ALCC will not complete insurance paperwork but will provide me with an insurance superbill upon request. If for any reason my insurance company, HMO, third party payer, etc. does not compensate my therapist, I understand that I remain solely responsible for payment. Once I submit my claim to the insurance company, I understand that they may contact ALCC for additional information. I understand that signing this form gives permission to my therapist to communicate with my insurance company, HMO, third-party payer, collections agency or anyone connected to my therapy funding source regarding payment. I understand that my insurance company may request information from my therapist about the therapy services I

received which may include but is not limited to: a diagnosis or service code, description of services or symptoms, treatment plans/summary, and in some cases my therapist's entire client file. I understand that once my insurance company receives the information I or my therapist has no control of the security measures the insurance company takes or whether the insurance company shares the required information. I understand that I may request from my therapist a copy of any report ALCC submits to my insurance company on my behalf. Failure to pay will be a cause for termination of therapy services.

- 10) I understand that this form is compliant with HIPAA regulations and no medical or therapeutic information or other information related to my privacy, will be released without permission unless mandated by Colorado law as described in this form and the Notice of Privacy Policies and Practices. By signing this form, I agree and acknowledge I have received a copy of the Notice or declined a copy at this time. I understand that I may request a copy of the Notice at any time.
- 11) I understand that if I have any questions about my therapist's methods, techniques, or duration of therapy, fee structure, or would like additional information, I may ask at any time during the therapy process. By signing this disclosure statement I also give permission for the inclusion of my partners, spouses, significant others, parents, legal guardians, or other family members in therapy when deemed necessary by myself or my therapist. I agree that these parties will have to sign a separate Consent for Third-Party Participation Agreement or may have to sign a separate disclosure statement in order to participate in therapy.
- 12) I understand that should I choose to discontinue therapy for more than sixty (60) days by not communicating with my therapist, my treatment will be considered "terminated." I may be able to resume therapy after the sixty (60) day period by discussing my decision to resume therapy services with ALCC. Ability to resume therapy after sixty (60) days will depend upon my therapist's availability and will be within his or her sole discretion. This disclosure statement will remain in effect should I resume therapy if one (1) year has not elapsed since my last session. However, I may be asked to provide additional information to update my client record. I understand "discontinuing therapy" means that I have not had a session with my therapist for at least sixty (60) days, unless otherwise agreed to in writing.
- 13) There is no guarantee that psychotherapy will yield positive or intended results. Although every effort will be made to provide a positive and healing experience, every therapeutic experience is unique and varies from person to person. Results achieved in a therapeutic relationship with one person are not a guarantee of similar results with all clients.
- 14) Because of the nature of therapy, I understand that my therapeutic relationship has to be different from most other relationships. In order to protect the integrity of the counseling process the therapeutic relationship must remain solely that of therapist and client. This means that my therapist cannot be my friend, cannot have any type of business relationship with me other than the counseling relationship (i.e. cannot hire me, lend to or borrow from me; or trade or barter for services in exchange for counseling); cannot have any kind of romantic or sexual relationship with a former or current client, or any other people close to a client, and cannot hold the role of counselor to his or her relatives, friends, the relatives of friends, people known socially, or business contacts.

15) I understand that should I cancel within 24 hours of my appointment or fail to show up for my scheduled appointment without notice (“no-show”), excluding emergency situations, my therapist has a right to charge my credit card on file, or my account, for the full amount of my session.

16) I also affirm, by signing this form, I am at least fifteen (15) years old and consent to treatment and therapy services here at ALCC or that I am the legal guardian and/or custodial parent with the legal right to consent to treatment for any minor child/ren who is under the age of fifteen (15), for whom I am requesting therapy services here at ALCC.

17) I understand that if I am consenting to treatment and therapy services for my minor child/ren that my therapist will request that I produce the Court Order Custody Agreement and/or Parenting Plan that grants me the authority to consent to mental health services for my minor child. Further, I understand and agree to keep my therapist informed of any proceedings or supplemental court orders that affect my parenting rights, custody arrangements, and decision making authority. I understand that failing to provide the Court Order Custody Agreement and/or Parenting Plan will prohibit my therapist from providing therapy to my minor child/ren. I understand that it is beyond the scope of my therapist’s practice to provide custody recommendations. Any request for custody recommendations will be denied. A Court is able to appoint professionals with the expertise to make such recommendations.

18) By signing this form, I affirm that I am fully informed of the therapy services I am requesting and that ALCC is providing, and grant my consent to receive such therapy services. My signature below affirms that the preceding information has been provided to me in writing by my primary therapist, or if I am unable to read or have no written language, an oral explanation accompanied the written copy. I understand my rights as a client/patient and should I have any questions, I will ask my therapist.

Client Name/Signature

Date

Client Name/Signature

Date

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature (Please specify Relationship to Client)

Date

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature (Please specify Relationship to Client)

Date

Therapist Signature

Date