

Counselling Privacy Statement

As a registered data controller with the [Information Commissioners Office](#), Rachel Jackson Counselling complies with the General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018, and the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003. As such, these laws dictate that information processed about you is kept safe and private, limited to, and only used for the purpose it was provided for. In addition, information processed about you should be accurate and kept for no longer than necessary. The following statement provides details about the information processed about you when you engage with Rachel Jackson Counselling.

What's your legal basis for processing information about me?

The UK GDPR requires Rachel Jackson Counselling to have and indicate the lawful basis for processing your information. The following points list the lawful basis on which Rachel Jackson Counselling processes your information.

1. Personal information about you is processed in order **to fulfil the counselling contract** between you and Rachel Jackson Counselling.
2. Processing of sensitive personal information is necessary for the **establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims**. In the event of a legal challenge, the records retained show actions taken or not taken to fulfil obligations. They also show that the therapeutic service is appropriate and meets professional standards and duty of care.
3. Personal information may be shared **with your consent only** if it involves providing a report to your funding insurer, medical establishment, legal representative, or other nominated organisation.
4. Personal information that is processed would be necessary for reasons of **substantial public interest** when it concerns the safeguarding of children and adults at risk of significant harm.
5. Personal financial information is processed as a **legal obligation** to submit and provide evidence in regards to an annual tax return to HMRC.

What information is collected about me?

Enquiries

When you contact Rachel Jackson Counselling via the website contact form, email or telephone, your name, contact information and any information you choose to share in the message text box is collected. This information is used solely to respond to your enquiry and arrange initial contact.

The Rachel Jackson Counselling website and contact form are hosted by Webador, which processes submitted information. Messages are received via secure email

provider, Proton Mail. The website contact form, text messages and email should be used for initial contact and administrative communication only.

Please do not include sensitive personal, clinical or health information when making an initial enquiry. If such information is shared, it will be handled with appropriate care and, where relevant, recorded securely in the clinical records system, WriteUpp.

Enquiry information is kept only for as long as necessary to respond to your request and is not used for any other purpose. If your enquiry does not lead to counselling, your information will be deleted within 3 months.

Starting Therapy

Information about you will be collected from you prior to starting therapy:

- **name, age and date of birth** (to identify you)
- **home address, phone number, email address** (to make contact with you)
- **emergency contact name and number** (to support you in the event of a medical or danger to life emergency)
- **if you have a disability or mental health issue** (as part of the assessment to ensure understanding of your situation)
- **what medication you may be taking for a mental health issue** (as part of the assessment to ensure understanding of your situation)
- **name of doctor's surgery and address** (as part of the counsellor duty of care, contacting your G.P. if it is assessed that you would benefit from additional medical intervention)
- **other health information** (as part of the assessment to ensure understanding of your situation)
- **brief information about the reasons for requesting counselling** (as part of the assessment to ensure understanding of your situation)

In addition, all communication between you and Rachel Jackson Counselling is also collected. This includes:

- **emails**
- **other correspondence**

During your time in counselling, a written record will be created after each session. The following information is collected:

- **date and time of the session**
- **session number**
- **session duration**

- **the main aspects of what is discussed**
- **actions taken**
- **any agreements between you and the counsellor**

A record of fees paid and owed are also collected. This may directly involve your payment information if you are self-funding, or invoices to third-parties (i.e. health insurers) if you are being funded externally.

Why is this information collected?

The information is collected for the following reasons:

- To adhere to legal insurance requirements
- To adhere to the legal requirements of our professional body, the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy ([BACP](#))
- To help support you further if your situation significantly deteriorates
- To support the continuity and accountability of the counselling process
- To provide you with appointment details and self-help material
- To contact you in case of cancellation or to discuss an onward referral (e.g. referral to a GP or other service)
- To contact your GP or those who care about you in case of an emergency

Information about you will only be shared under the following circumstances:

- It is a requirement of the [BACP](#) that counsellors receive regular supervision in order that clients receive the best possible provision of counselling. During that supervision themes of the work with you may be shared, although your identity is changed. Supervisors also adhere to a strict code of confidentiality.
- If it becomes apparent during a session, or in consultation with a supervisor, that there is an *imminent risk* of significant harm to you or to others, then disclosures may have to be made to the appropriate agencies. This is usually done in consultation with you and only information concerning the risk would be disclosed.
- By requirement of a coroner, court order, legal proceedings, or statutory law (e.g. drug trafficking or terrorism).
- In conjunction with the counsellor's Therapeutic Will. This would only be enacted in the event of the counsellor's death, disability or other unexpected circumstances that would prevent the counsellor from continuing to engage in counselling with you. If this occurs, your name and contact details will be shared

with the Therapeutic Executor. The Therapeutic Executor will contact you to make you aware of the event, and depending on your circumstance, may signpost you to alternative support. Your contact information will only be shared if you are currently receiving counselling. This does not apply to you if you have already ended your time with the counsellor.

- When sending a report to a third-party (e.g. your external medical insurer, employer assistance program, GP or other organisation). This only happens with your consent and you have pre-agreed this with the third-party.
- Rachel Jackson Counselling uses Proton Mail for email communication. Proton Mail provides secure, encrypted email services designed to protect the confidentiality of messages. Access to emails is protected by secure login and appropriate security measures.

How long is the information about me stored?

- Information about you relating to the counselling and correspondence is stored for 7 years from the date of the final session or communication (or 7 years after your 18th birthday if you are under 18 years of age on the completion of the counselling). Once this time period has elapsed, all information about you is securely destroyed.
- Information relating to financial transactions are kept for 6 years.

How safely is the information about me stored?

Session records and all information processed about you are securely encrypted in electronic format only. All relevant and up to date security protections are in place and meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA2018).

How secure are your online sessions?

Rachel Jackson Counselling conducts online counselling through webcam sessions. The platform used to conduct these sessions is called [Zoom](#). As best as security can be on the internet, the Zoom software provides a highly secure connection. Rachel Jackson Counselling makes use of the Zoom option to connect through an end-to-end encryption, and through European servers only. For more information about the security standards and information that Zoom collects when using its software, [please see Zoom's privacy policy](#).

How secure is your payment system?

Rachel Jackson Counselling accepts payment through a third-party electronic system. When you use the electronic payment system, you may need to provide financial account data such as your credit card number or bank account number to the third-party service provider. Rachel Jackson Counselling does not have access to full details of your credit/debit card which you supply to the third-party service provider. However,

Rachel Jackson Counselling receives data about the transaction, including: your name, date, time and amount of the transaction, the type of payment method used, payment transaction identification number. Rachel Jackson Counselling does not share any of your personal information with the third-party payment service provider.

Rachel Jackson Counselling will not request payment from you in any way other than those which are set out within the counselling agreement or agreed between you and the counsellor when you meet with them in person.

Your Rights

You have a right to:

- be informed about the collection and use of your personal information
- access the personal information held about you
- request that a correction is made to any mistakes you think have been made to personal information about you
- request that personal information held about you is deleted
- request that processing of your personal information is restricted
- request that personal information about you is securely transferred to another organisation
- request that processing of personal information about you is ceased

Contact

You can contact Rachel Jackson Counselling to make a data access request or complain if you think your rights are not being respected.

Please include your full name, address, date of birth, contact number and an email address.

If making a verbal or electronic request, you will be asked to verify your identity via photo identification including a utility bill or a bank statement. The data controller, Rachel Jackson, may contact you to verify your details before the request is approved.

The GDPR states your request must be completed within 1 month.

If you remain dissatisfied, then you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

www.ico.org.uk

If you are still unsure about certain aspects of the process and have further questions before making a data access request.

Amendments to this Privacy Statement

Rachel Jackson Counselling reserves the right to make changes to this privacy statement. It is therefore advisable to update your knowledge of this privacy statement on a frequent basis. Rachel Jackson Counselling will actively inform current users of the counselling service at the time of an update.