

Peninsula Biblical Counseling Ministries (PBCM)

CONSENT TO COUNSELING



OUR GOAL – Our goal in providing faith-based counseling is to help you meet the challenges of life in a way that will please and honor the Lord Jesus Christ and allow you to enjoy fully His love for you and His plans for your life. Counseling is offered based on the Counseling Donation Schedule below, with some attendance restrictions as explained by your counselor. PBCM is a ministry of Citadel Square Baptist Church & PBCM Personnel Committee. There are funds available to assist financially challenged people in paying for counseling. Please ask your counselor for details when making the appointment.

BIBLICAL BASIS – We believe the Bible provides thorough guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, our counseling is based on scriptural principles (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3-4) rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. We reject the teachings and methods of modern psychology or psychiatry, whether expressly secular or an attempted integration with biblical principles. Neither the pastoral nor the lay counselors of this church are trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, nor should they be expected to follow the methods and common practices of such specialists.

NOT PROFESSIONAL ADVICE - If you have significant medical, legal, financial, or technical questions, you should seek advice from a competent independent professional. Our counselors will cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in light of scriptural principles. More specifically, we urge our counselees to properly care for their physical bodies and to seek proper medical treatment for all physiological problems. Our counselors will assist you in responding to such problems in a godly manner, but our counsel is not intended to replace the services of a qualified physician where organic problems are present or where medication has been prescribed.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

➤ **Please Read and Sign the Following Prior to your first session.**

Confidentiality means that PBCM has a responsibility to safeguard information obtained during counseling and on your Personal Data Inventory (PDI).

All identifying information about your assessment and treatment is kept confidential, except as mandated by law. You must sign a release of information before any information about you is given to anyone, except as mandated by law.

In certain circumstances, Biblical Counseling professionals are required by law (and the law of God) to reveal information obtained during counseling (Scripture) to other persons or agencies without your consent. In such situations, we are not required to inform you of actions taken.

Please note the following exceptions to confidentiality:

- Confidentiality does not apply to cases of suspected abuse/neglect of children or the elderly.
- Confidentiality does not apply to cases of potential harm to self or others
- A Biblical Counselor may disclose confidential information in proceedings brought by a counselee against a professional e.g. Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Medical Doctor, Ordained Minister, Elected Official.
- Confidentiality does not apply to cases involving criminal proceedings, except communications by a person voluntarily involved in a substance abuse program.
- Confidentiality may not apply in cases involving legal proceedings affecting the parent-child relationship.
- Confidentiality may not apply to cases involving a minor child. In such cases, the Biblical Counselor may advise a parent, managing conservator or guardian of a minor, with or without minor's consent, of the treatment needed by or given to the minor.

Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process, and we will carefully guard the information you entrust to us.

Summarizing, there are five situations, however, when it may be necessary for us to share certain information with others:

- when a counselor is uncertain of how to address a particular problem and needs to seek advice from another pastor, counselor, or elder in this church
- when a counselee attends another church and it is necessary to talk with his or her pastor or elders
- when there is a clear indication that someone may be harmed unless others intervene
- when law may require a counselor to reveal spousal or child abuse, or some other crime, to the appropriate authorities or
- when a person persistently refuses to renounce a particular sin and it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation (see Proverbs 15:22; 24:11; Matthew 18:15-20).

HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (HIPPA)

PBCM is required by our commitment to God, and by law to protect the privacy of your health information. Although your counseling record is the physical property of the PBCM, the information contained in your health record belongs to you.

You, the counselee, have the right to:

- request a restriction on certain uses and disclosures of your information
- inspect and obtain a copy of your health record (in your PDI)
- amend your health record as provided by regulation (in your PDI)
- obtain an accounting of disclosures of your health information as provided by law
- revoke your authorization to use or disclose health information except to the extent that action has already been taken
- We do not accept Health Insurance

RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT – On rare occasions a conflict may develop between a counselor and a counselee. 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 forbids Christians from bringing lawsuits against one another in secular courts of law. In order to make sure that

any such conflicts will be resolved in a biblically faithful manner, we require all of our counselees to agree that any dispute that arises with a counselor or with PBCM as a result of counseling will be settled by mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration. The arbiters will be the elders and deacons of Citadel Square Baptist Church and Members of the PBCM Personnel Committee.

If one or more elders of the church are party to the dispute, then three arbiters will be selected from the Official Board of Elders at Citadel Square Baptist Church & PBCM Personnel Committee. Each party to the dispute will choose one arbiter, and the two arbiters then selecting the third. It is expressly understood that by consenting in advance to the arbitration, the counselee is waiving their rights to a trial in the civil courts by jury or otherwise.

TRAINING - Counseling sessions may include an intern/counselor-in-training. These individuals are subject to the same professional and ethical standards as your counselor.

CANCELLATION POLICY – Peninsula Biblical Counseling Ministries (PBCM) has a 48-hour cancellation/rescheduling polity. If you miss your appointment, cancel, or change your appointment with less than 48 hours' notice, you will be charged \$25. Exceptions are for sudden illnesses and emergencies only.

COUNSELING FEE SCHEDULE – Our counseling ministry is supported by fees made for the services provided. The usual counseling fees vary with the demand, experience, and education of the counselor. The schedule below shows our usual counseling fee schedule:

Citadel Square Baptist Church and PBCM Board Members: No Charge
President/COO/ACBC¹ Certified Biblical Counselors: \$75/Session
Vice President/ACBC Certified Biblical Counselors: \$50/Session
Interns* \$25/Session

*Peninsula Biblical Counseling Ministries (PBCM) is an equipping/training and counseling center. Interns are individuals studying to be Certified Biblical Counselors. During their studies and supervision, with the approval of their supervisor, they may take clients at a reduced fee. Their casework is strictly overseen by the President/COO or the Vice President/CAO.

Please do not let your financial situation hinder you from seeking our counseling services.

¹ ACBC: Association of Certified Biblical Counselors - <https://biblicalcounseling.com/>

Full or partial financial grants may be available upon request.

Having clarified the principles and policies of our counseling ministry, we welcome the opportunity to minister to you in the name of Christ and to be used by Him as He helps you to find proper biblical answers to your problem(s). If you have any questions about these guidelines, please talk with your counselor.

Your signature below indicates your informed consent and explicit agreement to these guidelines.

Signed _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

Witness _____ Date _____