

Lighthouse Privacy Policy

Privacy policy (updated September 26, 2026)

Welcome. As part of our service, we believe it is important that you are aware of our privacy practices and policies (e.g., how we store your data, what we can and cannot keep private). Before you disclose any of your private information to us, please read this information and ask us any questions you might have.

Who We Are

The Lighthouse - Le Phare Counselling and Psychotherapy is operated by Tranquil Lotus Ventures Inc. and is composed of a team of registered psychotherapists, counselling interns in training, and administrative personnel. We provide counselling, psychotherapy and neurofeedback services. We also work with external agencies (e.g., Veterans Affairs and private insurance companies) that may, in the course of their duties, have limited access to your personal health information in our possession.

What Is Your Personal Health Information

Personal health information is data that can be used to identify you and details of your health care. This may include your contact information (e.g., name, address, telephone number, email address), personal characteristics (e.g., age, gender, cultural or ethnic background), and health details (e.g., presenting issues, health history, medical or mental health conditions, treatments being received). For health care providers to access this information, you either need to disclose it or give permission for us to access your information from another source.

How and Why Do We Collect and Use Your Personal Health Information

- To understand your mental health and related needs, as well as recommend appropriate treatment options, provide therapy and conduct follow-ups, we will ask for personal health information via intake questionnaires and other self-report documents.
- Third-party payers (e.g., extended-health insurers, WSIB, legal representatives), when applicable, may request that we release specific information about your mental health care. We will not release your information unless they show us evidence that you have consented to the release. In many cases, these third parties wish to know your clinical provider's name, title and registration number; your session dates and duration of therapy; and your mental health conditions, treatment needs, treatment progress and disability.

Electronic Communication of Personal Health Information by Email

When We Use Email and Its Risks

We use email to communicate with you (e.g., appointment reminders, cancellations, invoices and receipts) and may use email to respond to you (e.g., answer questions or send counselling resources).

Although we use your email address because it is convenient and efficient, you may choose to have us contact you only by phone because email is not recognized as a secure form of communication. The risks of transmitting information by email include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Email may be easier to falsify than phone, fax or mail. It is also impossible to verify the true identity of the sender or ensure that only the recipient can read the email once it has been sent.
- Email can introduce viruses into a computer system and potentially damage or disrupt the computer.

- Email can be forwarded, intercepted, circulated, stored or changed without the knowledge or permission of the sender or recipient. A sender can easily misaddress an email, resulting in it being sent to unintended recipients.
- Email creates a permanent record. Even after the sender and recipient have deleted their copies, backup copies may exist on a computer or elsewhere.

Overall, the privacy and security of email communication cannot be guaranteed. We will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of email information sent and received, but cannot offer a guarantee of security. We strongly encourage you to use the secure messaging feature of our telehealth platform, Owl Practice, as a more secure way to communicate with your therapist.

When using email, please be advised:

1. We will not discuss sensitive personal health information over email, such as information related to mental health, disability or substance use, and will not use email as a substitute for treatment.
2. Emails between you and our practice become part of your clinical record. Others authorized to access that record will have access to those emails.
3. Email should not be used for emergencies or other time-sensitive matters, as we cannot guarantee that any particular email will be read and answered within a particular period of time.
4. Please resend your email or contact us if we have not responded within a reasonable time; emails can get lost.

Telehealth Services and Virtual Sessions

Instead of meeting face to face, you can meet your therapist by video or telephone for assessment and treatment. Virtual and telephone-based sessions are convenient and may be used when in-person sessions are not possible. Your clinician will discuss which mode of service is recommended based on your needs, and the mode can change during your treatment. All the laws and professional standards that apply to face-to-face mental health services (e.g., limits to your privacy and file management) apply to virtual and telephone-based care.

Virtual care is offered through a secure practice videoconferencing platform (e.g., Owl Practice). Virtual care requires the use of a webcam or smartphone, and a link to the session will be provided by email beforehand. We recommend that you test your video and audio settings the day before your session and contact Owl Practice's technical support if needed. If technical problems occur during your session, a backup plan (e.g., a phone number where you can be reached) will be used to restart or reschedule it.

If you wish to use telehealth services, please be advised:

- Despite efforts to maintain reliable technology, services may be disrupted or distorted by unforeseen technical problems.
- Use of virtual and telephone-based sessions is voluntary. Both you and your clinician have the right to determine at any time whether these services are appropriate for your care.
- Confidentiality still applies to telehealth services. Neither you nor your clinician may record a session without the other person's permission.
- It is your responsibility to use a secure internet connection (e.g., not public Wi-Fi) and to be in a quiet, private space free of distractions during the session.
- For child or adolescent clients, the permission and contact information of a parent or legal guardian are required for telehealth sessions.

What Are the Limits to My Privacy

We work hard to protect your privacy. We periodically review our security measures to keep personal information secure. All Lighthouse personnel receive ongoing training about safeguards for clients' personal health information. However, several laws and professional standards direct us to release private information (see CRPO Standard of Practice 3.1, Confidentiality).

Your information may be released without your consent in the following situations. Whenever possible, we will aim to involve you in this process:

1. Safety issues: When staff suspect a significant, imminent risk of serious bodily harm (including physical or psychological harm) to a client or anyone else, or that a child needs protection because of physical harm, neglect or sexual abuse by a person in charge of the child, there may be a professional or legal duty to contact relevant authorities or health professionals and to warn an intended victim.
2. A judge orders the release of your information for legal proceedings, or an investigation or inspection is authorized by warrant or provincial or federal law.
3. Information is required by a regulatory body for administration or enforcement of professional standards, such as a complaint, quality-assurance assessment or mandatory report.
4. You are unable to give consent, and contacting a relative, friend or potential substitute decision-maker is necessary because you are injured, incapacitated or ill.
5. Authorized agency staff or contractors (e.g., bookkeepers and information-technology staff) may access only the parts of your file needed to fulfil their responsibilities in operating Lighthouse services.

What Is in My File

Clinicians tend to make notes about your goals, themes that emerge in your work, interventions, safety issues and progress. They do not tend to record "evidence" of what happened to you or others. Notes taken during a session are often shredded or deleted after a summary has been transferred to the client file.

Emails, texts and letters about you (e.g., from you, to you, about you or shared on your behalf) are typically kept in your file, and may then be deleted from the email server. We recommend that you do not share personal information in ordinary email or text messages because privacy breaches can occur.

Can I Access My Personal Health Information, Request Corrections or Ask for Release to Third Parties

Yes. You have the right to access your personal health information. You may request to read clinical notes, ask for corrections to factual information and obtain a copy. We cannot delete an existing record, but we will add your correction. If we cannot give you access, we will advise you in writing within 30 days if possible and explain the reason as best we can.

You also have the right to request that your file, or part of it, be provided to a third party (e.g., an insurer, legal representative or other treating medical professional). Your clinician will review the notes with you and can help explain anything that is unclear. They will also discuss the risks and benefits of releasing information to you or a third party to whom you consent. A cost is associated with reviewing and preparing the file for release; we will provide an estimate of the timeframe and cost when you make your request.

How Do We Store and Destroy Personal Health Information

Your client information is stored in electronic and/or paper files. Paper files are stored in a locked cabinet behind a locked door in Lighthouse offices. Electronic files are kept in password-protected computers, backup drives and/or an online software database designed for helping professionals (e.g., Owl Practice).

Tranquil Lotus Ventures Inc., operating as The Lighthouse - Le Phare Counselling and Psychotherapy, is the health information custodian for Lighthouse client records while services are provided through the practice. Your clinician maintains your file in Lighthouse's practice system. If your clinician leaves Lighthouse, your file remains with Lighthouse unless you choose to continue services with that clinician and request in writing that custodianship of your file be transferred to them. In that case, Lighthouse transfers custodianship to the clinician and retains a copy in accordance with applicable professional standards and the Personal Health Information Protection Act. From the date of transfer, the clinician is responsible for the transferred file.

Personal health information stored electronically is protected by appropriate security measures (e.g., privacy-compliant software with encryption).

We are required to retain your personal health information for ten years after our last contact with you (for adults), or ten years after you turn 18 (for youth), whichever is later. After the retention period, your personal information is destroyed securely to protect your privacy.

What If I Have Questions or Concerns About Privacy or Care

If you have questions about our privacy practices and procedures, please contact Melanie Herweyer, privacy contact on behalf of Tranquil Lotus Ventures Inc., operating as The Lighthouse - Le Phare Counselling and Psychotherapy.

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You also have the right to file a complaint with your clinician's regulatory body, including the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario where applicable. You may contact the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario for assistance with privacy matters related to our practice.