



Last reviewed: 30th June 2026

Data Protection Policy

Introduction

Your privacy is very important to me, and you can be confident that your personal information will be kept safe and secure and will only be used for the purpose it was given to me. I adhere to current data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (EU/2016/679) (the GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003.

This privacy notice tells you what I will do with your personal information from initial point of contact through to after your therapy has ended.

Please contact me if you have any questions about my data protection policy via email info@sarahwtherapy.co.uk

'Data controller' is the term used to describe the person/ organisation that collects and stores and has responsibility for people's personal data. In this instance, the data controller is me. I am registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. My registration number is ZB877419.

My lawful basis for holding and using your personal information

The GDPR states that I must have a lawful basis for processing your personal data. There are different lawful bases depending on the stage at which I am processing your data.

If you are currently having therapy or if you are in contact with me to consider therapy, I will process your personal data where it is necessary for the performance of our contract. The GDPR also makes sure that I look after any sensitive personal information that you may disclose to me appropriately. This type of information is called 'special category personal information'.

If you have had therapy with me and it has now ended, I will use legitimate interest as my lawful basis for holding and using your personal information. The lawful basis for me processing any special categories of personal information is that it is for provision of health treatment (in this case counselling) and necessary for a contract with a health professional (in this case, a contract between me and you).

How I use your information

Initial contact:

When you contact me, I will collect information to help with your enquiry. This will include your name and contact details. Alternatively, your GP or other health professional may send me your details when making a referral or a trusted individual may give me your details when making an enquiry on your behalf. If you decide not to proceed, I will ensure all your personal data is deleted within 28 days. If you would like me to delete this information sooner, please let me know.

While you are accessing counselling:

Confidentiality is a crucial part of therapy, and it is hugely important to me that this is respected to allow for honest discussion; however, I am tied to some ethical and legal restrictions. I have a legal duty to break confidentiality and contact police if I believe you are involved in money laundering, drug trafficking (not drug taking) or terrorism.

Ethically, I may break confidentiality if I feel you pose a serious safeguarding risk to yourself or others. Self-harming behaviours and suicidal thoughts generally do not fall within this category unless I believe there is a severe risk to life.

I would discuss the need to break confidentiality with you before doing so, unless I felt this could result in harm to yourself or others.

I receive monthly supervision to review my work. Whilst session themes are discussed in supervision, no identifying information is shared.

Only I can access your files on my work laptop. Your personal details (address, mobile number etc) will be kept separate from session notes. You will be assigned a client number to protect your anonymity in session notes. As is general practice, I keep brief notes (2-3 sentences per session) to keep a record of our sessions without any identifying information and specific people/ places etc are not included in session notes. You have the right to request to see these notes.

I only have your contact number (assigned to your client number) on my work phone.

If I take written notes during a session or if we complete activities etc together no identifying information will be written down and the notes will be destroyed within 28 days.

I use the following to handle personal data: One Drive, Microsoft 365 and Whatsapp.
No details are shared with third parties.

General text/ whatsapp messages and emails no longer needed will be deleted every 6 months.
Client notes and personal details will be destroyed after 7 years.
Please contact me if you would like this to be completed sooner.

Your Rights

You have a right to ask me to delete your personal information, to limit how I use your personal information, or to stop processing your personal information. You also have a right to ask for a copy of any information that I hold about you and to object to the use of your personal data in some circumstances.

You can read more about your rights at ico.org.uk/your-data-matters. If I do hold information about you I can:

- give you a description of it and where it came from
- tell you why I am holding it, tell you how long I will store your data and how I made this decision
- tell you who it could be disclosed to
- let you have a copy of the information

You can also ask me at any time to correct any mistakes there may be in the personal information I hold about you, remove a next of kin etc. To make a request for any personal information I may hold about you, please email info@sarahwtherapy.co.uk

If you have a complaint about how I handle your personal data please email me info@sarahwtherapy.co.uk

If you want to make a formal complaint, please contact the ICO which is the statutory body that oversees data protection law in the UK. For more information go to ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint.

Website Information

Visitors to my website

When someone visits my website, I use a third-party service (Webhealer) to collect standard internet log information and details of visitor behaviour patterns. I do this to find out things such as the number of visitors to the various parts of the site. This information is only processed in a way that does not identify anyone.

I use Wordpress to edit the website.

Webhealer and Wordpress do not make any attempt to find out the identities of those visiting my website.

You can find their data policies on:

<https://en-gb.wordpress.org/about/privacy/>

<https://www.webhealer.net/privacy-policy/>

Like most websites we use cookies to help the site work more efficiently. No user-specific data is collected by me or any third party. If you fill in a form on my website, that data will be temporarily stored on the web host before being sent to me.