

Leandra McCluskey Counselling

Privacy Policy

Last updated: June 2025

1. Who We Are

Your privacy is important to us. This Privacy Policy explains how Leandra McCluskey Counselling collects, uses, stores, and protects your personal information in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Data Controller:

- Name: Leandra McCluskey
 - Trading as: Leandra McCluskey Counselling
 - Location: United Kingdom
 - Email: leandracounselling@gmail.com
 - ICO Registration Number: 00019342367
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2. What Personal Information We Collect

We may collect and process the following types of personal information:

Contact and Identity Information

- Your name, email address, phone number
- Details you provide when making an enquiry or booking an appointment

Health and Therapeutic Information

- Information about your mental health, medical history, and personal circumstances that you share during counselling sessions
- Session notes and records
- GP or other healthcare professional details (where relevant and with your consent)

Website and Technical Data

- IP address and browser information if you contact us via our website
 - Any messages submitted through contact forms
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3. The Legal Basis for Processing Your Data

We process your personal data on the following legal grounds under UK GDPR:

- Legitimate interests — to administer appointments, respond to enquiries, and manage our therapeutic relationship
- Contractual necessity — to fulfil our agreement to provide counselling services to you
- Legal obligation — where we are required by law to retain or disclose information

- Vital interests — in rare circumstances where there is a serious risk to your safety or the safety of others

Special category data (health information) is processed under UK GDPR Article 9(2)(h) — for the purposes of preventive or occupational medicine, medical diagnosis, and the provision of health or social care.

4. How We Use Your Information

We use your personal information only for the following purposes:

- To provide cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and counselling services
- To manage appointments and communicate with you about sessions
- To keep clinical records as required by professional guidelines (BACP / BABCP standards)
- To comply with legal or regulatory obligations
- To protect your vital interests or those of another person in an emergency

We will never sell, rent, or share your personal information with third parties for marketing purposes.

5. Confidentiality and When We May Share Your Information

All information you share with us is treated as strictly confidential. However, there are limited circumstances in which we may need to share information without your consent:

- If we believe there is a serious and imminent risk of harm to you or another person
- If we are required to do so by a court order or other legal obligation
- If you are a child or vulnerable adult and there are safeguarding concerns

Where possible, we will discuss any disclosure with you first. We may also share limited information with clinical supervisors, who are bound by the same confidentiality obligations, as part of our professional duty of care.

6. How Long We Keep Your Data

We retain personal data only for as long as necessary for the purposes it was collected, or as required by law and professional guidelines:

- Counselling records are typically retained for a minimum of 7 years after the end of therapy (or until a child reaches age 25, whichever is later), in line with BACP guidance
- Enquiry or contact information where no therapeutic relationship commenced is deleted after 12 months
- Financial records (invoices, payment records) are retained for 6 years in accordance with HMRC requirements

After the applicable retention period, your records will be securely destroyed.

7. How We Keep Your Data Safe

We take the security of your personal data seriously. Measures we take include:

- Storing physical session notes in a locked cabinet
- Using password-protected and encrypted devices for any digital records
- Using secure, GDPR-compliant email and communication platforms where possible
- Limiting access to your personal data to only those who need it

Despite these measures, no data transmission over the internet is completely secure. If you communicate with us by email, please be aware of this inherent risk.

8. Your Rights Under UK GDPR

You have the following rights in relation to your personal data:

- Right of access — you may request a copy of the personal data we hold about you
- Right to rectification — you may ask us to correct inaccurate or incomplete data
- Right to erasure — you may ask us to delete your data in certain circumstances
- Right to restriction of processing — you may ask us to limit how we use your data
- Right to data portability — you may request your data in a machine-readable format
- Right to object — you may object to certain types of processing
- Rights related to automated decision-making — we do not use automated decision-making or profiling

To exercise any of these rights, please contact us using the details in Section 9 below. We will respond within one calendar month. There is no charge for making a request, unless requests are manifestly unfounded or excessive.

9. Contact Us

If you have any questions about this Privacy Policy, or wish to exercise your data rights, please contact:

- Name: Leandra McCluskey
- Email: leandracounselling@gmail.com

We will aim to respond to all requests within 28 days.

10. How to Make a Complaint

If you are unhappy with how we have handled your personal data, please contact us in the first instance so we can try to resolve the matter.

If you remain dissatisfied, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the UK's data protection supervisory authority:

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

- Website: ico.org.uk
- Helpline: 0303 123 1113
- Address: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

You can make a complaint directly to the ICO at: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

11. Changes to This Policy

We may update this Privacy Policy from time to time to reflect changes in our practices or legal requirements. The most current version will always be available on our website. We recommend reviewing this policy periodically.

This policy was last reviewed in June 2025.