

STATE OF NEW YORK

8103

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

October 13, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. BRONSON -- read once and referred to the Committee on Judiciary

AN ACT to amend the civil practice law and rules, in relation to extending confidentiality privileges to certain communications to or from a licensed mental health counselor

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The civil practice law and rules is amended by adding a new
2 section 4508-a to read as follows:

3 § 4508-a. Licensed mental health counselor. (a) Confidential informa-
4 tion privileged. A person licensed as a licensed mental health counselor
5 under the provisions of article one hundred sixty-three of the education
6 law shall not be required to disclose a communication made by a client,
7 or his or her advice given thereon, in the course of his or her profes-
8 sional employment, nor shall any clerk, stenographer or other person
9 working for the same employer as such licensed mental health counselor
10 or for such licensed mental health counselor be allowed to disclose any
11 such communication or advice given thereon; except

12 1. that such licensed mental health counselor may disclose such infor-
13 mation as the client may authorize;

14 2. that such licensed mental health counselor shall not be required to
15 treat as confidential a communication by a client which reveals the
16 contemplation of a crime or harmful act;

17 3. where the client is a child under the age of sixteen and the infor-
18 mation acquired by such licensed mental health counselor indicates that
19 the client has been the victim or subject of a crime, the licensed
20 mental health counselor may be required to testify fully in relation
21 thereto upon any examination, trial or other proceeding in which the
22 commission of such crime is a subject of inquiry;

23 4. where the client waives the privilege by bringing charges against
24 such licensed mental health counselor and such charges involve confiden-

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 tial communications between the client and the licensed mental health
2 counselor.

3 (b) Limitations on waiver. A client who, for the purpose of obtaining
4 insurance benefits, authorizes the disclosure of any such privileged
5 communication to any person shall not be deemed to have waived the priv-
6 ilege created by this section. For purposes of this subdivision:

7 1. "person" shall mean any individual, insurer or agent thereof, peer
8 review committee, public or private corporation, political subdivision,
9 government agency, department or bureau of the state, municipality,
10 industry, co-partnership, association, firm, trust, estate or any other
11 legal entity whatsoever; and

12 2. "insurance benefits" shall include payments under a self-insured
13 plan.

14 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.