



Speech Pathway

Policies and Procedures Handbook

Speech Pathway

www.speechpathway.net

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Updated: May 2018

Welcome Parents

Thank you for choosing Speech Pathway. Since 2012 we have been providing individualized speech-language services for children of all ages. We are incredibly excited to have you join us. Our team is dedicated to providing services that increase communication and decrease frustration in a safe, fun, and enriching environment that encourages creativity, friendship, expression, and learning for the whole family.

Our Mission:

Speech pathway is dedicated to partnering with families to supply innovative, simple, and creative solutions to increase a child's *communication* and decrease *frustration*.

OUR OFFICE

Office Hours

Regular office hours are 8:00am-7:00pm. Monday- Friday
Services are available by appointment only.

Office Contact Info

Main Office (405) 603-6622

Office Fax (405) 722-3244

General email info@speechpathway.net

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Code of Conduct

Speech Pathway is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all of our children, parents, volunteers, and staff. To ensure safety and comfort for all we expect all individuals to act in a mature and responsible way that respects the rights and dignity of others.

This applies to all staff, students, parents, family members, and guests.

Our code of conduct does not permit language or action that can hurt or frighten another person, or that falls below a generally accepted standard of conduct.

Discipline Policy

Positive attitude and cooperation of all clients is a vital component of speech language services; therefore any violent behavior will not be tolerated. Speech Pathway reserves the right to determine who is or is not suitable for speech services and will take all measures to provide a safe and constructive learning environment. We support a three strikes behavior policy; however, we reserve a zero-tolerance policy regarding violence. In the case of violent behavior by a child, services will be immediately terminated.

- First strike is a verbal warning.
- Second strike is a written warning signed by the parent and clinical director.
- Third strike will be a consultation with the clinical director and a possible suspension or termination of services.

We aim to provide a positive learning environment for all children and we welcome discussions with parents anytime.

Confidentiality Agreement

Speech Pathway understands the sensitivity of the information shared with our staff and strive to keep all information shared private and confidential. To maintain confidentiality, only general information about the individual/group sessions will be shared in the public areas of Speech Pathway. If you would like to discuss the session in greater detail our clinicians are available to speak in private during the beginning or end of your child's session(s)". All families must sign a [Confidentiality Agreement](#) form prior to participating in services at Speech Pathway.

Electronics & Toys Policy

Speech Pathway accepts no responsibility for any lost or stolen items.

General Policies

When allowing your child to participate in speech services, the following general policies must be followed:

- Your child can and will participate fully in speech services and will cooperate and accept our guidance in standards of behavior. Failure to adhere to these standards may result in suspension or termination of services.
- Rules for acceptance and participation in speech services are the same for everyone regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, or gender.

Insurance

At Speech Pathway our billing specialist is committed to providing the best experience possible. We will file your insurance claims for you, along with working with you and your insurance company to obtain payment for services. We do ask for you to keep in mind that we are considered a third party to your relationship with your insurance company and with the ever-changing insurance climate, situations may arise that are out of our ability to predict.

Your insurance benefits for therapy services will be **checked** and reviewed with you in detail prior to the first appointment. Please note that benefits which are quoted to you are not a guarantee that therapy will be covered. Your child's diagnosis and treatment plan of care are unique, so never assume the benefits will ensure payment for services rendered.

Reimbursement

Speech Pathway accepts most types of insurance as a form of payment, but we are "in-network" with most plans for the following companies:

- Blue Cross/Blue Shield
- Tricare
- HealthChoice
- OSMA
- Medicaid/SoonerCare
- United Healthcare

- Oklahoma Health Network
- WebTPA

Any Co-payment/co-insurance/session deductible is due at the time of service. If services are not covered for any reason by your insurance company, you will be responsible for payment in full.

Insurance Agreement

All members receiving services at Speech Pathway must agree to our Insurance Agreement. This will be completed prior to the initial evaluation. The insurance agreement is as follows.

This Insurance Agreement (the "Agreement") is made and entered into between ("Legal Guardian") and Speech Pathway LLC.

1. I Legal Guardian must make sure the office is aware of any name, address, phone and/or insurance information changes before the appointment.
2. I Legal Guardian am responsible for contacting my insurance company and understanding speech-language coverage terms before evaluation or therapy begins at Speech Pathway
3. I Legal Guardian agree to pay for any and all medical/therapy services I receive from Speech Pathway including those that my insurance company refuses to pay, for whatever reason. Speech Pathway will file a claim on my behalf (if contracted with my insurance company), however, if my insurance company denies payments for any reason (e.g. non-covered services, services not medically necessary, my failure to obtain a referral, etc.), I will pay these charges promptly upon written/verbal notification of this refusal. If the insurance company requests additional information for processing your claim, Speech Pathway will promptly comply only one time; there will be no multiple re-filing of claims. It is further understood that no appeals will be filed by Speech Pathway on my behalf.
4. I Legal Guardian understand that failure of my insurance company to pay within 60 days of claim filing date will be considered a refusal to pay and I will be responsible for payment in full due upon receipt of notification.
5. If your account is delinquent, your balance will be turned over to a collection agency and a collection fee of \$75.00 or double your balance will be added.

Group Services

Group services are private pay only and will not be filed with insurance. All policies and procedures detailed in this handbook apply to group services.

Scholarships & Financial Aid

We occasionally have the opportunity to provide a scholarship to cover part of the cost for elective services provided by Speech Pathway . If you are interested, please complete our [Scholarship Application Form](#).

Photo & Video Release

A [Photo Release form](#) for each child must be submitted before they can begin in social group. Forms are valid for each calendar year, but if your child's personal details, needs, or situation have changed please complete a new form.

Initial Intake Form

To meet the individual needs of your child, every client receiving individual therapy will need to complete an [Initial Intake Form](#). If you do not plan on receiving individual therapy and are just planning on attending social groups, an abridged intake form will be provided upon enrollment in social groups. Spare forms are always available upon request.

Termination & Dismissal Policy

Dismissal/Termination of Speech Services either permanently or for some specified time period, are set forth in accordance with the American Speech-Language Hearing Association [Code of Ethics](#). The factors for dismissal/termination taken into account include: 1. Individuals shall evaluate the effectiveness of services rendered and of products dispensed and shall provide services or dispense products only when benefit can reasonably be expected. 2. Individuals shall not guarantee the results of any treatment or procedure, directly or by implication; however, they may make a reasonable statement of prognosis. Further, Speech Pathway has the right to terminate services at any time.

Termination and /or Dismissal may occur due to:

- A. the communication disorder has been remediated or compensatory strategies have been successfully established;

- B. the individual or family chooses not to participate in treatment, relocates, or seeks another provider;
- C. treatment no longer results in measurable benefits after multiple modifications have been attempted.
- D. Attendance has not been adequate to effectively remediate the communication disorder
- E. Multiple policies and/or procedures have been violated and terms of agreement between Speech Pathway and patients have not been successful.
- F. Noncompliance with treatment recommendations.
- G. Failure or refusal to pay for services.

It is strongly encourage to speak with your clinician to express your concerns with treatment so that they may resolve any possible conflicts. In accordance with the ASHA code of ethics, If therapy is no longer efficacious treatment will be terminated. Speech Pathway will honor requests to transition services and/or make referrals or recommendations for future clinicians. Please contact our offices during business hours to make arrangements if financial situations arise.

Payments & Refunds

Private Pay

Our current session rate for Speech Therapy is \$85.00 per session (25 minutes). For families wishing to pay for services same day we offer a discounted rate. The same day payment rate for a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) is \$60.00 per session (approx. 30% off). Our Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA) rate is \$40 per session (when utilizing an SLPA; at least 1 session per quarter with an SLP is required at the current SLP rate). In addition, we now offer monthly pre-pay package pricing, which includes an additional discount off the same day payment rate. See details and restrictions for more information.

Private Pay Details & Restrictions.

- Pre-pay packages are for private pay contracts only.
- Payment will be processed on the first of the month unless prior arrangements have been made in writing.
- Cancellations and no-shows will not be refunded.
- Reschedules are allowed (based on availability) for cancelled appointments as follows:

- 1x/month for the 5 session package
- 2x/month for the 9 session package
- 3x/month for the 13 session package
- There will be no reschedules of no-shows.
- Reschedules must be made within one week of missed appointment unless special circumstances prevent it (please speak with the clinical director for special arrangements).
- All cancellations must be made with the front desk with 24 hours advance notice whenever possible (cancellations made after appointment start time are considered a no-show).
- All past due balances must be paid in full in order to receive this special package rate.

Same-Day Discount

- Payment is due in full at the time of service in order to receive our same-day payment discount.

Group Services

Groups Services are designed to generalize your child's speech and language needs. Groups services are private pay only unless you are receiving services through the Oklahoma Health Care Authority. The total cost for group services is currently 200\$ per 8 week block. Our Easy Payment Plan for group services allows you to spread out your enrollment costs. **Initial payment of 50% due at registration**, with full balance due on the start date of the 8 session block. Your child's spot will not be reserved until your initial payment is processed. We will email you a receipt with the dates and times as well as the parent information packet.

Refund Policy

Evaluations & Individual sessions

No refunds will be made for services already rendered. If at any time, it is determined that a refund should be appropriate for a prepayment of services that are no longer going to be utilized, the client should speak with the clinical director to make arrangements.

Group services

A refund (minus a \$20 processing fee) will be issued for group services if the student's parent cancels less than one week prior to the start date. A full refund will only be issued for the following reasons: if the group is cancelled, student's parent cancels more than one week prior to the start date. No refunds are given for missed sessions. Refunds will be made by the original payment method when available, or by check. Refunds are only available by phone, at (405)-603-6622, or in person. **Please note we do not accept refund requests by email and if**

you cancel your registration with less than the required notice, no refund or credit will be given.

Scheduling

Patients will be required to sign up for recurring/standing appointments weekly/monthly. Reschedules are allowed and are detailed within our [Attendance Policy](#). All schedule changes must be made through the front office either via phone, email, or Remind text.

Attendance/Cancellation Policy

Regular attendance of scheduled therapy sessions is crucial to your child's progress. Therefore, to better serve our growing number of patients and their families, we require everyone to follow our 85% attendance policy and respect our "24 Hour cancellation" policy regarding appointment cancellations and rescheduling. Our attendance policy is as follows: All clients must maintain 85% attendance for all therapy appointments. Three no shows for scheduled appointments results in immediate discharge. Speech Pathway reserves the right to discharge patients who do not maintain 85% attendance or violate the "no show/no call" policy. Speech Pathway understands that unexpected circumstances can never fully be avoided and we are more than willing to work with each of you on a case by case basis to resolve any unexpected scheduling issues that may arise from time to time. Please make sure you notify the clinic when you are unable to keep scheduled appointments. If you have any questions, or need to reschedule an appointment please do not hesitate to call the clinic at 405-603-6622. We will be more than happy to work with you.

- In order for your child to continue making progress, our therapists and front office staff can work together with you to reschedule any cancelled/missed appointments. This may mean that another therapist may see your child depending on the rescheduled time and availability. Front office staff may discuss these options with you via Remind or by phone when a cancellation is made.
- Cancellations must be made through the front desk or through Remind with 24 hours advance notice whenever possible.
- We understand that kids get sick, and emergencies happen. So, if 24 hours notice is not possible, please just call as soon as you can, because we often have clients waiting to be seen who could use your child's cancelled appointment spot.
- Voicemail is available for you to leave a message anytime 24 hours a day. Remind is also a great way to let us know via email/text message when you need to reschedule.
- 1 cancellation per month is allowed, as long as it is rescheduled within the following week (upon availability).

- We strive to provide 25 minutes of productive treatment each session. Should your child arrive more than 15 minutes late, Speech Pathway reserves the right to cancel your appointment. If there has been no phone call prior to the appointment start time, that will be counted as a no-show for that day.
- No-shows should happen only in the case of a dire emergency, since in most cases, you are able to call, email, or text to cancel an appointment.
- After 1 or 2 no-show appointments, our office may ask you if we can make schedule changes to better accommodate for your family.
- In the rare event that a child has 3 no-show appointments in one quarter, they will be removed from the schedule so that another child on the waiting list may be seen.

Sick Policy

It is the policy of Speech Pathway that in the event the patient becomes ill, Speech Pathway will utilize the following guidelines for re-admitting patients into treatments as listed below:

Cancel appointment if one or more of these conditions are present:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or above
- Vomiting, nausea or severe abdominal pain
- Other symptoms suggestive of acute illness

Return to Therapy Guidelines:

- Fever free for full 24 hours without the use of medication
- Symptom free of vomiting, nausea or severe abdominal pain
- All health conditions listed above have been treated and resolved

Homework and Clinician Communication

Clinician Communication

At Speech Pathway we have begun to use Remind to communicate more effectively and efficiently with parents and families. Remind is an easy/secure application allowing us to share photos, videos, and homework following individual and group sessions directly with you. It also provides you as a parent a way to ask a clinician about ways to meet their needs at home. To sign up follow the directions below.

- To get text notifications for group services: Text **@speechway** to 81010
- To get text notifications for group services online: Visit remind.com/join and enter the class code **@speechway** along with your mobile phone number. You'll get text notifications at the number you entered.

- To get mobile app notifications: Download the mobile app for iOS and Android devices and create a new account (or log in if you already have one.) To join a class, tap the + by Classes Joined and either join with your class code **@speechway** or search for your class. You'll automatically get app notifications.
- Get email notifications: Visit remind.com/join and enter the class code **@speechway** and your email address.
- Join from your inbox: Send a blank email to spsocial@mail.remind.com. You'll get a response with more instructions.

Remind is confidential and any photos, videos, or conversations will only be shared between you and the clinician. If you would prefer to communicate with your clinician over the phone feel free to call our offices at (405) 603-6622 during regular office hours and we can schedule a time to speak with you.

Homework

Homework or home practice is an essential component of speech services. Our goal is to help not only the client but also the client's family make a meaningful difference outside of the clinic rooms. We will share homework ideas, strategies, and activities during each session. We do our best to make homework functional and easy to target throughout your daily life. Occasionally, drill work is the best for certain cases to obtain maximum progress, but we will also try to give you ideas on how to make that drill more fun! We encourage parents to ask questions and request additional support when needed.

Type and frequency of documentation

Documentation of performance including data for goals targeted and progress made will be recorded as mandated by insurance, typically for every appointment attended. Group services that do not require medical documentation for insurance will have informal documentation as warranted. At Speech Pathway, we will hold a meeting with parents approximately every 90 days to discuss the current progress and the individualized plan of intervention.

Waiting Room Policies

Speech Pathway aims to provide a pleasant, confidential, and highly individualized services. While waiting you may overhear confidential information. It is your obligation to maintain confidentiality. All participating parties will be required to sign our **Confidentiality Agreement** prior to beginning services. Parents are encouraged to attend treatment session, however, if your child performs better without you in the room, or if you have other children who would

cause a distraction, families are welcome to wait in our lobby during sessions. Parents are asked to come back to the treatment room during the last 5 minutes of each session, where you will sign in for the day, go over home practice ideas, and consult with your child's therapist. To provide effective care we ask all patrons to follow the following waiting room policies.

- No loud conversations or devices in the lobby. Utilizing headphones is preferred, and if you need to take a phone call, we ask that you step outside as a courtesy to the other clients.
- We understand that children may have snacks with them. We ask that you please keep the area clean, and throw away any trash. All drinks should have lids.
- Due to confidentiality as well as noise level and space constraints, we try to minimize time spent in the lobby. If you would like to consult with your child's therapist, please do so during the beginning or end of their session *in the treatment room*.

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING SPEECH PATHWAY WHERE WE AIM TO DECREASE FRUSTRATION BY INCREASING COMMUNICATION! WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU!

*Policies and procedures may be updated at anytime. Speech pathway keeps current policies and procedures posted on our website, and may also notify you of updates about our policies and procedures via email as necessary.