



WomanSafeHealth

## WomanSafeHealth Guiding Principles

WomanSafeHealth has the privilege of serving women, girls, trans and gender nonconforming people of every age and ability, size, shape, color, sexuality and identity, from all social, spiritual and cultural backgrounds through trauma-informed care.

It is our practice to welcome those who feel unwelcome in other settings and those who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence or disrespect. The WomanSafeHealth guiding principles are the basis upon which we engage with clients and each other.

**I welcome you** - WomanSafeHealth advocates welcome you as you are, as an individual, with your own herstory and life experiences. In turn, we ask that you see each of our advocates as individuals on your team, with their own herstory and life experiences, who support you through your process.

**I listen to you** - Our advocates are well versed in compassion-based care and want to hear what you have to say. Open dialogue and good communication are our goals. Through active listening we evaluate your needs and aim to serve you as efficiently as possible. We also need each client to actively listen to us in order for us to answer your questions and meet needs. Our advocates are here to assist with your advocacy needs, but they are not qualified to give professional legal or medical advice.

**I believe you** - When expressing a need, you should be heard and believed. If you have an urgent health issue, please seek urgent/emergency medical care, as WomanSafeHealth is not an urgent care. It is important for us to know when you may be beyond our scope of practice to ensure we are supporting you in getting the best care possible. We expect clients to believe our Advocates are up-front and open around schedule openings/limitations, and to understand our advocates are doing their best to accommodate you.

**I protect your privacy** - Our clients and advocates appreciate knowing that respecting each other's privacy is imperative to giving both clients and advocates the sense of safety we aim for at WomanSafeHealth. We also acknowledge the importance of knowing when a client has gone beyond our scope of safety and it is our duty to refer them to emergency resources.

**I am accountable to you** - Accountability is key with WomanSafeHealth advocates. Being here on time and giving the highest level of service possible are our goals. We ask our clients also be accountable by giving ample time for cancellations, arriving on time and being self-empowered, by communicating your needs in a respectful way.

**I respect "no"** - WomanSafeHealth advocates respect your personal "no". Whether it be in regards to having your advocate step out of the room for part of the visit, or the time of day or length of an appointment which works for you, we emphasize the importance of giving choices around care. In return, we expect our clients to understand that "no" may happen sometimes. We may not be able to accommodate everyone, every single time. This reciprocal perspective allows both advocates and clients to respect boundaries and maintain a healthy advocacy relationship. We understand that obtaining care can be frustrating, anxiety-provoking triggering and a wide array of intense emotional feelings.

**The following are circumstances which WomanSafeHealth will not tolerate:** Raising your voice in-person or over the phone at our advocates, speaking in a way that is belittling or condescending as well as speaking over or interrupting our advocates in person or over the phone, arriving at an appointment intoxicated, overstepping personal or physical boundaries, having expectations of care beyond our scope of practice. (see scope of practice online)

In the event that a client cannot adhere to WomanSafeHealth's guiding principles and or displays any intolerable behavior, on more than one occasion, WomanSafeHealth may release a client from the practice.