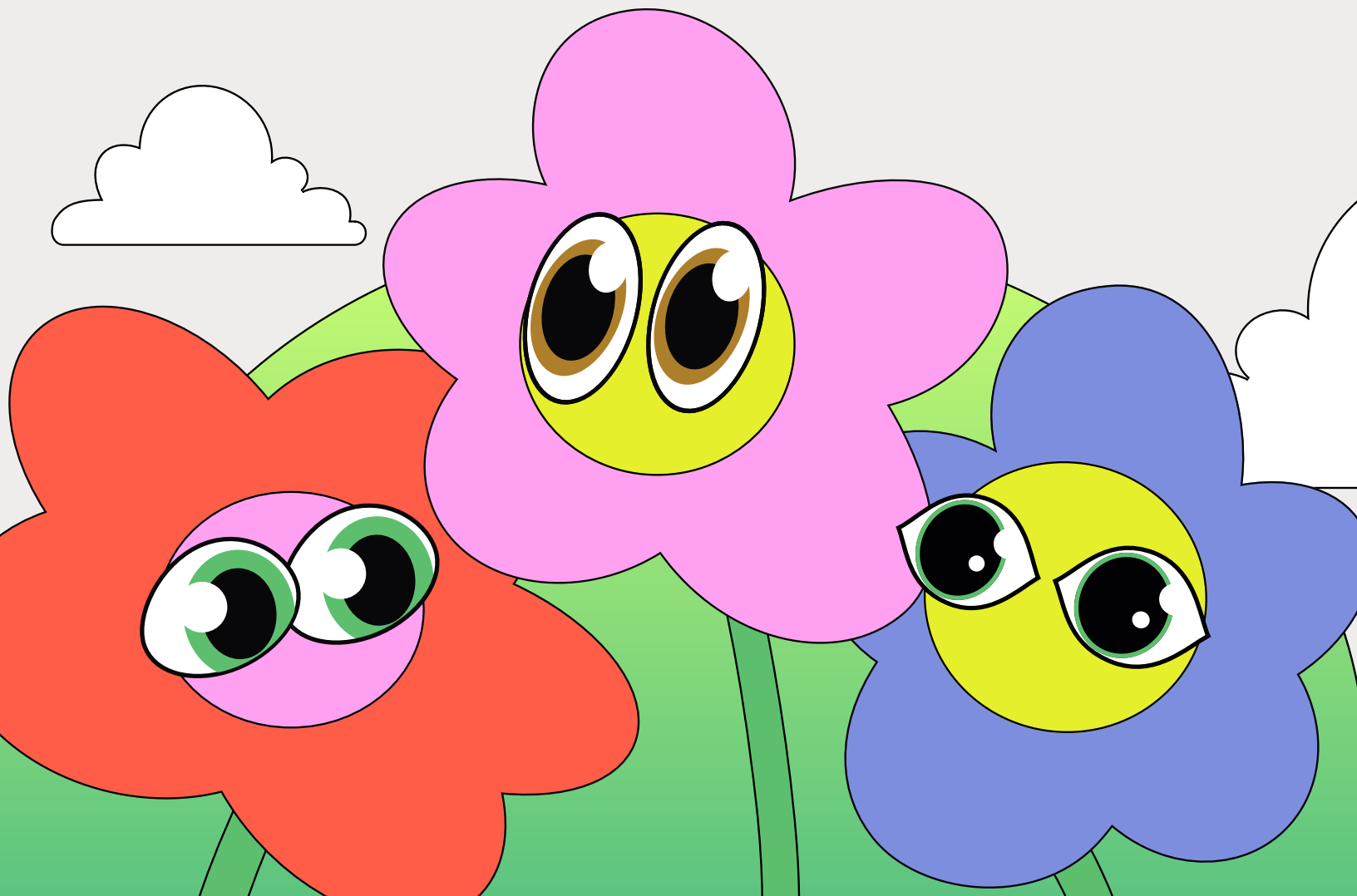


GROW

GROWTHERAPY.COM

A Guide to Private Practice

You've decided to build a practice of your own. That's a big decision, and a good one! Going independent can feel like a lot at the start, but it's far more navigable than it looks once you know the order of operations. This guide walks you through the steps that get a practice off the ground, from the legal setup to your first clients. You don't have to figure it out alone.



Set up your business entity and a bank account

You don't strictly need one, but a Limited Liability Company (LLC) or Professional Limited Liability Company (PLLC) separates your personal finances from your practice's — so a business debt or liability doesn't follow you home. Rules vary by state, so you'll want to check your respective state's requirements. Take California, for example, it requires a Professional Corporation rather than an LLC, so check your state's requirements before you file. Once you've picked a business name and registered, you will need to request an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS. That's what lets you open a business bank account and keep your money cleanly separate from day one.

Take your headshot

A professional photographer is great if you can swing it. If not, your phone is more than perfect, and Grow's enhanced photos tool can take any picture to the next level.

Here are few tips that will help take your headshot to the next level:

- Use natural light, with the sun in front of you so it lights your face.
- Hold the phone level with your face, not above your head or below your chin.
- Prop it up so you're not holding it. You can lean it on something or buy a simple tripod online.
- Use portrait mode if your phone has it.
- Wear what you'd actually wear in session. The best outfit should look like you on a normal day.
- Need inspiration? Browse other providers' profiles in our directory to see what might work for you.

Clients are over 20% more likely to book with providers who have professional-looking photos.

Write your bio

Your profile is how the right clients find you and decide you're the one to book. You want to be clear about who you work with, what it's like to work with you, and how your practice is unique. Specificity isn't limiting. It's how the right clients find you. Vague profiles won't attract the types of clients you are excited about helping.

- 1 Don't treat your profile like a resume. List credentials and training only where they help a client understand why you're right for what they're facing.
- 2 Write to your ideal client. Picture the people you most want in your practice. What do they have in common? Who are they? You're finding clients you can best connect with and care for.
- 3 Choose specialties you can stand behind. List the areas you genuinely specialize in and can speak to with depth and clarity. Not every condition you're technically able to treat needs to be on your profile. Specialties help clients find the right fit; not badges to collect that say, "yes, I'm able to treat this."

Network with other providers

The fastest way to learn how something works is to ask someone who's already done it. Reach out to people you know in private practice and ask what they wish they'd known. Most clinicians are more than happy to share learnings from their experience. Independent doesn't have to mean alone, and a thriving peer community is one of the biggest advantages of building your practice with Grow: people to learn from and lean on when you need it.

Build a system for your taxes

Self-employment means your taxes are now your responsibility, since no one's going to be withholding them for you. But don't worry, we promise it's less daunting than it sounds once you have a system in place. At Grow, we recommend a service called [Heard](#), a tax platform built specifically for mental health providers and worth a look. Prefer a person? A CPA works too! Either way, stay on top of it from the start and remember that accountant fees and tax software are deductible business expenses.

Set up HIPAA-compliant communication

You will need protected channels for anything client-related. There's a HIPAA-aligned tier of Google Suite, plus options like Doxy Premium, Hushmail, and Proton (a community favorite). If you want a separate phone number associated with your practice, you can get a Google Voice number. There is a free version, however if you sign up for Google Suite, a better version of Google Voice is included.

Get credentialed with insurance

Taking insurance makes your practice accessible to far more people who need care, and credentialing is the entry point. You'll need to create a CAQH account — this is a database insurers and credentialing teams use to verify your information. Since payors all ask for the same documents (license, malpractice insurance, National Provider Identifier (NPI) number), you can easily upload them all at once to CAQH instead of sending them to each payor every time something expires. Nurse practitioners also need a DEA number and a collaborating physician when operating in a non-autonomous state. Be sure to complete and keep your CAQH current; it's the profile that keeps the whole process moving for you. This is also one of the places Grow shows up for you, by handling credentialing with the major payors in your state, so you're not chasing it alone.

Set your self-pay rate

Even when you are credentialed with insurance, you'll want to set a self-pay rate. Clients lose coverage, hit high deductibles before mental health benefits kick in, or find you without insurance at all. You'll want to decide your rate, and whether you'll offer a sliding scale, before you need it. Price for the whole job, not just the hour in the room: the prep, the notes, and the care between sessions all count. Setting fees is one of the most uncomfortable parts of this work, and most clinicians underprice. So make sure you name a number that lets the practice sustain you.

Build your online presence

It's not mandatory, but providers who invest in a website, a social presence, and basic SEO tend to get found faster.

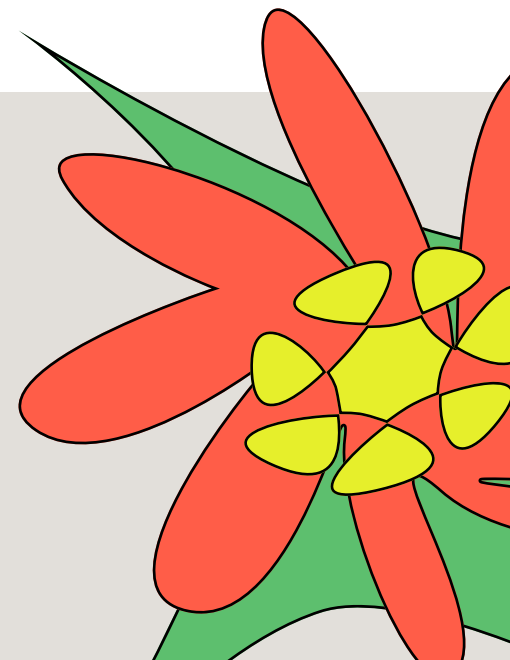
A few useful principles to keep in mind:

- Keep it simple. Make sure everything is easy to find and your booking button is obvious.
- Stay consistent with fonts, colors, and imagery and make sure it reads well on both desktop and mobile.
- Use language that is clear and uses keywords to help your website rank in search. This is for your clients, not a resume for your peers. Unless you want it to be!
- Have reviews or testimonials? Use them, they really can help give your online presence a good boost.

You're in control of your practice and you don't have to build it alone.

That's why we started Grow. We're mental health advocates and healthcare veterans who believe independent clinicians deserve a real partner, not just a platform. We take on the operational weight of running a business — credentialing, billing, scheduling, claims — so it isn't yours alone. We build a community so the work never feels isolating. And we bring the expertise that helps you keep growing as a clinician. Our goal isn't to fill your calendar. It's to help you build a practice you're proud of.

If you've been thinking about starting, Grow can help. We're free to join, with no minimum hour commitment. Your clients have someone in their corner, and now you can too, with a partner that is here to support how you practice, not tell you how to.



FREE CREDENTIALING

Get paneled with the major payors in your state so you can start seeing clients who use insurance.

GUARANTEED BILLING

Submit a claim and stop worrying about it. The claims you submit are guaranteed to be paid.

MARKETING & VISIBILITY

Help the right clients find you, through directory visibility, profile optimization and marketing support.

TELEHEALTH

See clients virtually and/or in person; the Grow platform supports both.

EHR

Scheduling, client management, and invoicing all in one place, with live assistance from our provider support team.

PEER COMMUNITY

Unlock a private community of Grow clinicians for support, advice, and the occasional vent session.

HEALTH INSURANCE

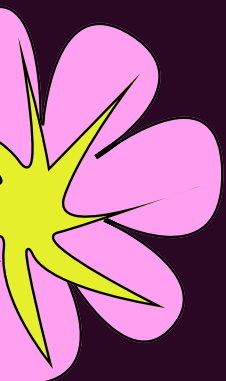
We offer affordable healthcare coverage for Grow providers through our insurance partner.

INTAKE AND SCHEDULING

Bring your existing clients with you, and let new ones book online or by phone through our dedicated support team.

DEDICATED SUPPORT

Have questions about billing, the EHR, or anything else? We've got real people ready to help.



When billing, claims, and out-of-pocket-only payments aren't eating your time or narrowing who you can serve, you can put your energy where it belongs: caring for the communities and people who need it most.

Want to see how that works for your practice?
Visit our site or book an intro call today.

TO LEARN MORE VISIT

[GROWTHERAPY.COM](https://growtherapy.com)