

TELETHERAPY POLICIES

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Teletherapy refers to providing therapy services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or phone. I can offer these services to Pennsylvania residents only. I am licensed to practice in PA ONLY. I do not engage in telehealth with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring higher levels of support and intervention. If you are in a state of crisis or emergency, you should call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room. You may also wish to contact the crisis line, such as 1-800-273-TALK or 1-800-SUICIDE.

Benefits and risks. There are benefits and risks to doing teletherapy. One of the benefits is that the client and provider can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be helpful in ensuring continuity of care if the client or provider is unable to continue to meet in person. There are some differences between in-person therapy and teletherapy, as well as some risks, such as: Services can be impacted by technical failures, may introduce risks to your privacy, and may reduce my ability to directly intervene in crises or emergencies. Interruptions may disrupt services at important moments, and may be unable to reach you quickly or use the most effective tool.

Safety and Emergency Plan. At our first session, we will develop a plan for responding to emergencies and mental health crises. As a recipient of teletherapy services, you will need to participate in ensuring your safety during mental health crises, medical emergencies, and sessions.

-I will be requiring you to designate an emergency contact. You will need to provide permission for me to communicate with this person about your care during emergencies.

-I will be asking you for your location at the start of each session to verify your exact location.

-I will be confirming with you that your space is safe during sessions. You will be responsible for creating a safe and confidential space during sessions. You should use a space that is free of other people. It should also be difficult or impossible for people outside the space to see or hear your interactions with your provider during the session.

-I will be confirming our backup communication in case we are disconnected. If the session is interrupted and you are not having an emergency, please try reconnecting. If you are unable to reconnect, please contact me via phone at 215-601-6271.

It is important that you engage in the creation of these plans and that you follow them.

Assessment. Service delivery via teletherapy is not a good fit for every person. I will continuously assess if working via teletherapy is appropriate for your case. If it is not appropriate, I will help you find in-person providers with whom to continue services. Please talk to me if you find teletherapy media so difficult to use that it distracts from the services being provided. Bringing concerns to me is often a part of the process.

Confidentiality, Security and Privacy. Please read the HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices on my website. I have a legal and ethical responsibility to safeguard and protect all communications that are a part of your therapy session. However, the nature of electronic communications technologies is such that I cannot guarantee that our communications will be kept confidential or that other people may not gain access to our communications. There is always a risk that our electronic communications may be compromised, unsecured, or accessed by others.

I may take notes during session or write letters, per your request, as part of your treatment. These notes constitute my clinical and business records, which by law, I am required to maintain for 7 years following the termination of treatment. After this time, your records will be destroyed in a manner that preserves your confidentiality. I may keep and store some records for clients on my laptop. I employ firewalls, antivirus software, and passwords to protect the computer from unauthorized access and thus protect the records from unauthorized access.

Please do not record video or audio sessions. Making recordings can quickly and easily compromise your privacy.

Insurance. It is your responsibility to verify the specifics of your coverage. Insurance may not cover sessions for teletherapy or telehealth. Please contact your insurance company prior to engaging in teletherapy in order to determine whether these sessions will be covered. If there is a discrepancy after I file a claim, you may still be liable for payment of provided services.

Fees and cancellation. The same rates and cancellation policy will apply for teletherapy as apply for in-person therapy. The agreed upon fee is due at each session unless otherwise arranged. Sliding scale is based on demonstration of need. Telephone consultations, report writing, authorized exchanges of information, consultation with other professionals, and longer sessions will be charged at the same rate. Payment accepted is: credit card using Square. You will be asked to complete the Credit Card Billing Information form listed on my website before our first session.