



COLUMBIA PSYCHOLOGY.com

HEALING CENTER LLC

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INFORMED CONSENT FOR TELEHEALTH

This Informed Consent for Telehealth contains important information focusing on doing therapy using the phone or the Internet. Please read this carefully, and let me know if you have any questions. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

Benefits and Risks of Telehealth

Telehealth refers to providing therapy services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. One of the benefits of Telehealth is that the client and clinician can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be very convenient in situations when travel must be limited due to illness, weather, or other circumstances. Telehealth, however, requires some technical competence on both our parts to be helpful. Although there are benefits of Telehealth, there are some differences between in-person therapy and Telehealth, as well as some risks. For example:

- Risks to confidentiality. Because Telehealth sessions take place outside of the therapist's private office, there is potential for other people to overhear sessions if you are not in a private place during the session. On my end, I will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. But it is important for you to make sure you find a private place for our session where you will not be interrupted. It is also important for you to protect the privacy of our session on your cell phone or other device. You should participate in therapy only while in a room or area where other people are not present and cannot overhear the conversation. **Create some type of white noise outside the room you'll be using**, if there are others in the home. This will increase your comfort and privacy. For example, you can set a radio with music outside your door, or have others in the home play music or use headphones so they can't hear you.
- Distractions. It is important to be in a quiet, private space that is free of distractions (including cell phone or other devices) during the session. Although you're at home, **don't try to do housework or other tasks** during your session. It will take away from your time and the effectiveness of the session. Never drive



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during a session. However, pets are welcome, and one of the benefits of Telehealth! This is a great chance to bring your **favorite pet** to therapy!

- Issues related to technology. There are many ways that technology issues might impact Telehealth. For example, technology may stop working during a session, other people might be able to get access to our private conversation, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.
- Crisis management and intervention. Usually, I will not engage in Telehealth with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring high levels of support and intervention. Before engaging in Telehealth, we will develop an emergency response plan to address potential crisis situations that may arise during the course of our Telehealth work.
- Efficacy. While Telehealth can seem strange at first, know that it is already practiced regularly and successfully by clients and clinicians around the world, and there is research to support that it is as effective as in-person therapy. For most people, once they get through the initial awkward stage, they get the hang of it and it is much like a regular session. However, some clinicians believe that something is lost by not being in the same room. For example, there is debate about the clinician's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

Electronic Communications

This option is available to you through a secure platform as part of Simple Practice, my electronic medical record that is consistent with HIPAA-compliant practices. Simple Practice was chosen, as all data is securely encrypted, calls are anonymous, and none of your information is stored. You will need a computer, tablet, OR smartphone, as well as internet connection (you are solely responsible for any necessary cost for you to obtain any necessary equipment to take part in Telehealth). To read more about Telehealth and Simple Practice, here is a guide:

<http://columbiapsychology.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ClientPortal-Telehealth-03-1.pdf>



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Confidentiality

I have a legal and ethical responsibility to make my best efforts to protect all communications that are a part of our Telehealth. Please note that I have taken every measure possible to ensure the security of your private information. 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 a risk that our electronic communications may be compromised, unsecured, or accessed by others. You should also take reasonable steps to ensure the security of our communications (for example, only using secure networks for Telehealth sessions, and using passwords to protect the device you use for Telehealth). It is important to use a secure internet connection rather than public/free Wi-Fi. It is also recommended that your anti-virus/malware is up-to-date.

The extent of confidentiality and the exceptions to confidentiality that I outlined in my Informed Consent still apply in Telehealth. Please let me know if you have any questions about exceptions to confidentiality.

Appropriateness of Telehealth

From time to time, we may schedule in-person sessions to “check-in” with one another. I will let you know if I decide that Telehealth is no longer the most appropriate form of treatment for you. We will discuss options of engaging in in-person counseling or referrals to another professional in your location who can provide appropriate services. Please note that I am licensed only in the state of Missouri, which means that currently I cannot provide Telehealth services to you during any time that you are located outside of the state of Missouri (even if you are only temporarily traveling outside of the state).

Emergencies and Technology

Assessing and evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting Telehealth than in traditional in-person therapy. To address some of these difficulties, we will create an emergency plan before engaging in Telehealth services. I will ask you to identify an emergency contact person who is near your location and who I will contact in the event of a crisis or emergency to assist in addressing the situation.

_____ My initials here indicate that I authorize Columbia Psychology Healing Center LLC to contact this person in case of emergency. My Emergency Contact is:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

If the session is interrupted for any reason, such as the technological connection fails, and you are having an emergency, do not call me back; instead, please contact 911 or your local emergency room (Missouri Psychiatric Services is 573-882-4141). If you are in



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crisis, please call the national suicide prevention lifeline at 1-800-273-8255, or NAMI at 1-800-950-6264. Call me back after you have called or obtained emergency services.

If the session is interrupted and you are not having an emergency, disconnect from the session and I will wait two (2) minutes and then re-contact you via the Telehealth platform on which we agreed to conduct therapy. If you do not receive a call back within two (2) minutes, then call me on the phone number I provided you (573-818-7010).

If there is a technological failure and we are unable to resume the connection, you will only be charged the prorated amount of actual session time.

Fees

The same fee rates will apply for Telehealth as apply for in-person therapy. Practice Policies are the same as for in-person therapy, and payment in full is required in order to reserve an appointment. Please note that if you are receiving a superbill from me that you use to obtain insurance reimbursement, some insurance companies may not reimburse the same rate for Telehealth. A law is in place in the state of Missouri for parity; however, it is recommended that you check with your insurance company in advance of your session to see if your specific plan covers Telehealth services.

Records

The Telehealth sessions shall not be recorded in any way unless agreed to in writing by mutual consent. I will maintain a written document of our session in the same way I maintain documents of in-person sessions in accordance with my policies.

Informed Consent

This agreement is intended as a supplement to the general informed consent that we agreed to at the outset of our clinical work together and does not amend any of the terms of that agreement. Your signature below indicates agreement with its terms and conditions.

Client

Date

Clinician

Date