

Towson University Counseling Center

8000 York Road

Towson, MD 21252

(410) 704-2512

[www.towson.edu/counseling](about:blank)

counseling@towson.edu

Informed Consent for Telemental Health

**Client name:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Location client will be for sessions:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency contact (Local to your session location):**

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(Name) (Relationship)

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(Address) (Phone)

This document is an addendum to the Towson University Counseling Center’s standard informed consent and does not replace it. All aspects of informed consent for treatment in that document apply to telemental health (TMH) treatment. TMH refers to counseling sessions that occur via interactive audio or video conference using a variety of technologies. TMH is offered to improve access to counseling services to Towson University students when significant barriers to in-person treatment exist.

TMH services may not be appropriate, or the best choice of service for reasons including, but not limited to: heightened risk of harm to oneself or others; lack of access to, or difficulty with, communications technology; significant communications service disruptions; or need for more intensive services. In these cases, your counselor will help you establish referrals to other appropriate services.

TMH services are conducted and documented in a confidential manner according to applicable laws in similar ways as in-person services. There are, however, additional risks including:

* Sessions could be disrupted, delayed, or communications distorted due to technical failures.
* TMH involves alternative forms of communication that may reduce visual and auditory cues and increase the likelihood of misunderstanding one another.
* Your counselor may determine TMH is not an appropriate treatment option or stop TMH treatment at any time if your condition changes or TMH presents barriers to treatment.
* In rare cases, security protocols could be breached and your confidential information could be accessed by unauthorized persons.
* In order to reduce these risks, the Towson University Counseling Center uses secure video conferencing software, and has established the following TMH requirements and procedures:
  + You may only engage in routine TMH sessions when you are physically in Maryland. Your counselor will confirm this each session. If you are out-of-state, your counselor will have to limit services to referral support.
  + You and your counselor will engage in sessions only from a private location where you will not be overheard or interrupted.
  + You must use your own computer or device; do **not** use a computer or device that is publicly accessible.
  + You will ensure that the computer or device you use has updated operating and anti-virus software.
  + You will not record any sessions, nor will the Counseling Center record your sessions without your written consent.
  + You will provide contact information for at least one emergency contact in your location who the Counseling Center may contact if you are in crisis and your counselor is unable to reach you.

Should there be technical problems with video conferencing, the most reliable backup plan is contact by phone. Make sure that the Counseling Center has a correct phone number at which you can be reached, and have your phone with you at session times. If you are unable to connect to a video conference, or get disconnected, please try to connect again. If problems continue, please call the Counseling Center at the number your therapist has provided. Email is not a confidential method of communication, and your counselor may not access or respond to emails quickly. If you choose to contact your counselor by email, do not include private information, and do not expect a prompt response.

If you need to reach your clinician between sessions, you may call the Counseling Center during normal business hours. If we believe you are in crisis and we are unable to contact you, we may call your emergency contact or local emergency services providers.

If you experience an emergency:

* The Counseling Center is open from 8 am-5:00 pm, M-F, on normal business days. If you are in crisis outside of normal hours, you agree to:
  + Call Campus Police at 410-704-4444 to be connected with support services
  + Go to the nearest emergency room or call 911
* Additional crisis resources:
  + Maryland:
    - Maryland Crisis Hotline: 800-422-0009
    - TurnAround (sexual/relationship violence hotline): 410-377-8111
  + National:
    - Phone:
      * National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255)
      * National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233
    - Text/chat:
      * Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741
      * IMAlive Crisis Chat: www.imalive.org
      * Lifeline Crisis Chat: https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/
      * National Domestic Violence Hotline: https://www.thehotline.org/

I have read and understand the above information and all my questions have been answered. I hereby give informed consent to use Telemental Health in my care.

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Name (please print)

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Signature of Client (or authorized person) Date

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