



*The Baltimore Therapy Center, LLC
103 Old Court Rd., Suite A
Baltimore, MD 21208
443-598-BTC1 (2821)*

Telemental Health Services Informed Consent

Telemental health (online counseling) is a good option when coming in to the provider's office is less convenient or not possible. Although it is well validated by research, service delivery via telemental health is not a good fit for every person. Your provider will assess if working via telemental health is appropriate for your case. If it is not appropriate, your provider will help you find in-person providers with whom to continue services.

Please talk to your provider if you find the telemental health media so difficult to use that it distracts from the services being provided or if there are any other reasons why the telemental health medium seems to be causing problems in receiving services. Raising your questions or concerns will not by itself result in termination of services. Bringing your concerns to your provider is a part of our process.

You also have a right to stop receiving services by telemental health at any time without prejudice. If your provider also provides services in-person and you are reasonably able to access the provider's in-person services, you will not be prevented from accessing those services if you choose to stop using telemental health.

RISKS OF RECEIVING TELEMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Telemental health services can be impacted by technical failures, may introduce risks to your privacy, and may reduce your service provider's ability to directly intervene in crises or emergencies. Here is a non-exhaustive list of examples:

- Internet connections and cloud services could cease working or become too unstable to use
- Cloud-based service personnel, IT assistants, and malicious actors ("hackers") may have the ability to access your private information that is transmitted or stored in the process of telemental health-based service delivery.
- Computer or smartphone hardware can have sudden failures or run out of power, or local power services can go out.
- Interruptions may disrupt services at important moments, and your provider may be unable to reach you quickly or using the most effective tools.

There may be additional benefits and risks to telemental health services, which your provider will continue to assess, that arise from the lack of in-person contact or presence, the distance between you and your provider at the time of service, and the technological tools used to deliver services.

OUR COMMUNICATION PLAN

You will receive a link to a secure virtual meeting room with Google Meet shortly before your session. Except where otherwise noted, your provider employs software and hardware tools that adhere to security best practices and applicable legal standards for the purposes of protecting your privacy and ensuring that records of your health care services are not lost or damaged.

If a video connection cannot be established due to technical problems, you have the option of proceeding with a phone session or cancelling the session at no charge. If a video call is dropped or disrupted, we will spend up to 5 minutes trying to reconnect before calling you on the phone number you have provided us with. If this happens during the first 10 minutes of a session, you have the option of proceeding with a phone session or cancelling the session at no charge. After the first 10 minutes, you will be charged for a full session whether or not you choose to continue by phone.

OUR SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PLAN

You will be responsible for creating a safe and confidential space during sessions. It should be difficult or impossible for other people to see or hear your interactions with your provider during the session. If you are unsure of how to do this, please ask your provider for assistance.



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As a recipient of telemental health-based services, you will need to participate in ensuring your safety during mental health crises, medical emergencies, and sessions that you have with your provider. Your provider will require you to designate an emergency contact. You will need to provide permission for your provider to communicate with this person about your care during emergencies. Your provider will also develop with you a plan for what to do during mental health crises and emergencies, and a plan for how to keep your space safe during sessions. It is important that you engage with your provider in the creation of these plans and that you follow them when you need to.

As with all things in telemental health, however, you also have a role to play in maintaining your security. Please use reasonable security protocols to protect the privacy of your own health care information. For example: when communicating with your provider, use devices and service accounts that are protected by unique passwords that only you know. Also, use the secure tools that your provider has supplied for communications.

Please do not record video or audio sessions without your provider's consent. Making recordings can quickly and easily compromise your privacy, and should be done so with great care. Your provider will not record video or audio sessions.