

TELEHEALTH INFORMATION & INFORMED CONSENT FOR TELEHEALTH SERVICES

Telehealth

Telehealth provides health care services through remote technologies such as through a video conferencing software platform. At LifeCare Counseling, a secure, HIPAA compliant platform is utilized to provide confidential and quality mental health services. While LifeCare offers Telehealth (Teletherapy) as an option, we also encourage clients to consider their best fit whether that is Telehealth or in-person appointments. Below are answers to commonly asked questions about Telehealth.

Who Can Use Telehealth Services?

Telehealth services are for individuals who may be unable to access mental health services due to COVID-related concerns, location, transportation issues, mobility problems, scheduling issues or for the added convenience. Many mental health issues can be addressed through Telehealth platform, but Telehealth may not be a good fit for everyone depending upon client need, history, etc. It's important to speak with your therapist about Telehealth and if it is the right fit for you. Ideally, the first appointment known as the intake session is completed (when possible) in person, but LifeCare Counseling works with each client/situation.

Do Insurance Plans Cover Telehealth Services?

It's important to check with your insurance provider on whether Telehealth services are covered in your policy/plan. While it may be likely that if your insurance covers an in-person session, that a Telehealth session would also be covered; this may not always be the case.

Is My Information Confidential with Telehealth Services?

Whether through Telehealth or in-person, psychotherapy is required to adhere to HIPAA standards for client privacy. LifeCare is committed to client privacy of protected health information (PHI). We use secure software for all telehealth appointments called Doxy.Me. This is an encrypted program platform that protects data information which includes audio and visual information. While LifeCare Counseling initiates safety measures/protocols and safeguards in protecting client's confidentiality; clients should be aware of the potential issues that could impact their privacy during session and/or private information.

What Type of Device/Equipment Do I Need for a Telehealth Appointment?

For Teletherapy appointments, an internet-connected device is necessary so that you can use the secure, platform software that is used by LifeCare Counseling. Your device can be a desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Operating systems including Windows, Apple, Mac, Amazon Fire, Google, and Android devices typically are compatible with Telehealth platforms. Additionally, your device should have at least one of the following browsers:

- Chrome
- Safari
- Firefox
- Internet Browser

What If I Start Out with Telehealth but then Decide I Want to See My Therapist in Person?

Both in-person and Telehealth therapy services are offered. Just be sure to communicate your preferences with your therapist.

What do I need to do to prepare for a Telehealth Session?

Prior to your Telehealth session, you'll receive a Telehealth appointment link. Simply click on the link within the email. The link will prompt you for your name/location and will then place you in a virtual waiting room via Doxy.Me. Make sure

your audio/visual is working properly and simply wait for your therapist to connect with you. Please also make sure you are in a private setting so that you and your therapist can focus on your session.

Informed Consent for Telehealth: By signing this form, I understand and agree Telehealth guidelines and information provided within this document:

- I understand that Telehealth/Teletherapy may not be appropriate for everyone but that my therapist and I have determined that we may utilize this platform for my mental health treatment until such time that it is determined that in-person sessions are more clinically appropriate (i.e., trauma processing, etc.).
- I understand that I may need to come in for an Intake Session (first session) in-person/in-office when possible or if my therapist requested I do so.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that Telehealth services are covered with my insurance carrier. Note: There are occasions that a client does not have coverage under their policy for Telehealth.
- I understand that the laws that protect privacy and the confidentiality of mental health information also apply to Telehealth/Teletherapy, and that no information obtained in the use of Telehealth/Teletherapy which identifies me will be disclosed to other entities without my consent.
- I understand that I have the right to withhold or withdraw my consent to the use of Telehealth/Teletherapy during my care at any time, without affecting my right to future care or treatment.
- I understand that Telehealth/Teletherapy may involve electronic communication of my personal mental health information.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to maintain privacy with respect to my environment and to notify my therapist if any privacy issues occur as well as be familiar with the appropriate technology to participate in Telehealth.
- I understand that while there are conveniences with virtual mental health care, these services rely on technology which come with risks in transmitting protected health information or other breaches in confidentiality.
- I understand that LifeCare Counseling uses a secure, encrypted software program for Telehealth sessions.
- I understand that I am to use my own personal equipment for Teletherapy and not the use of employer/company owned computer or network that may also compromise my protected health information.
- I understand that Telehealth Services are not intended for crisis or mental health emergency situations but agree to designate an emergency contact person to be notified if a mental health crisis/emergency arises.
 I understand and give consent to authorize my therapist and/or LifeCare staff to contact my Virtual Care support person (listed below) should a mental health or medical emergency occur during a Telehealth session.

Client Signature

Date

Client’s Virtual Care Support Person & Contact Information

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature (if minor)

Date

Clinician Signature

Date