



# Informed Consent for Telehealth

Heather Taylor Counseling Services  
Snohomish, Washington

**Benefits and Risks of Telehealth:** Telehealth refers to providing mental health 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 helpful in ensuring continuity of care when the client and clinician are in different locations or are otherwise unable to continue to meet in person. It is also more convenient and takes less time. Telehealth, however, requires technical competence by both parties to be helpful. Although there are benefits of telehealth, there are some differences between in-person treatment and telehealth, as well as some risks.

**Risks to confidentiality:** As telehealth sessions take place outside of the counselor's physical office, there is potential for other people to overhear sessions if the client is not in a private place during the session. It is the responsibility of the client to ensure that their chosen area to conduct telehealth is private and will be without interruptions during the scheduled session time. The counselor will take reasonable steps to ensure privacy & confidentiality on their end.

**Issues related to technology:** In the event that a problem with the connection or technology being used to conduct telehealth occurs, the counselor will disengage from interaction and attempt to contact the client in another way in order to continue the session or to reschedule when connectivity is more available.

**Confidentiality:** The counselor and client have a legal and ethical responsibility to make best efforts to protect all communications that are a part of telehealth services. The nature of electronic communications technologies, however, is such that it cannot be guaranteed that our communications will be kept confidential or that other people may not gain access to our communications. The counselor will try to use updated encryption methods, firewalls, and back-up systems to help keep your information private, but there is a risk that our electronic communications may be compromised, unsecured, or accessed by others. The client should also take reasonable steps to ensure the security of our communications (for example, only using secure networks for telehealth sessions and having passwords to protect the device you use for telehealth).

**Fees:** The same fee rates will apply for telehealth as apply for in-person therapy.

**Records:** The telehealth sessions shall not be recorded in any way unless agreed to in writing by mutual consent. The counselor will maintain a record of our session in the same way records are maintained for in-person sessions in accordance with ethical policies.

**Informed Consent:** This agreement is intended as a supplement to the general informed consent that was agreed upon at the outset of our treatment together and does not amend any of the terms of that agreement.

**Emergencies and Technology:** If the session is interrupted for any reason, such as technological connection failure, and **you are having an emergency**, do not call me back, but instead, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room. Contact your counselor after emergency services have been rendered and you, as the client, are in a safe situation.

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 attempt to re-connect to you via the telehealth platform on which we agreed to conduct treatment. If I do not connect via the telehealth platform within two (2) minutes, then call me at (425) 382-9553.

Assessing and evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting telehealth than in traditional in-person treatment. To address some of these difficulties, counselor will contact your listed emergency contact person in the event of a crisis or emergency to assist in addressing the situation.

**Telehealth Modality Parameters:** Client agrees that the use of telehealth modalities (phone or online platforms) will only be used during prearranged sessions with the counselor and not for casual conversation that could otherwise be communicated in an email, voicemail, or in person.

Your signature below indicates agreement with these terms and conditions.

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Client

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Heather Taylor, LMHCA  
Heather Taylor Counseling Services, PLLC

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Date