

Online Informed Consent for Teletherapy Mental Health Treatment Services

In Response to COVID-19

Teletherapy mental health services occur through interactive videoconferencing with audio communication, and includes the practice of goal setting, accountability, referral to resources, problem solving, skills training, and help with decision-making. Teletherapy mental health services may also include psychological health care delivery, diagnosis, consultation, and psychotherapeutic treatment.

Please carefully read through the following statements to be sure that you understand the expectations, possible benefits, risks, and crisis procedures associated with participation in teletherapy mental health services with Renee Gillombardo, LMFT. You will be asked to provide your consent to engage in teletherapy mental health services by providing your electronic signature at the end of this form.

To participate in teletherapy mental health services with Renee Gillombardo, LMFT, I understand the following:

1. I will need a desktop or laptop computer, or tablet device with a camera for videoconferencing, speakers or headphones, and a good, private and secure internet connection. I will need to be in a private location to ensure my privacy.
2. I have the right to withhold or withdraw consent at any time. If consent is withheld or withdrawn, I may request a referral to a local mental health provider.
3. I understand that Renee Gillombardo, LMFT will inform me if teletherapy mental health services are appropriate for me. Receiving teletherapy mental health services may not be appropriate when:
 - There has been a recent suicide attempt, psychiatric hospitalization, or psychotic process (e.g., in the last three years);
 - Moderate to severe major depression or bipolar disorder syndrome;

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- Moderate to severe alcohol or drug abuse;
- Severe eating disorder;
- Repeated acute crises (e.g., occurring once a month or more frequently)
- Renee Gillombardo, LMFT determines, based on clinical judgement, that teletherapy mental health services are not an appropriate mode of treatment.

4. There are risks and consequences from receiving teletherapy mental health services, including, but not limited to, the possibility, despite reasonable efforts on the part of the therapist, that the transmission of my personal information could be interrupted by unauthorized persons; and/or the electronic storage of my personal information could be accessed by unauthorized persons.

5. Teletherapy mental health-based services and care may not be as complete as onsite, in-person services. I also understand that if my therapist believes I would be better served by another form of intervention (including onsite, in-person services), I may be referred to a mental health professional who can provide these services in my area.

6. My therapist will initiate each scheduled video-conference through the Doxy.me platform. My therapist will make three attempts to contact me within 10 minutes of the start of our session. If I do not answer the video-conference in three attempts, I understand that I may be charged for that session and the session will need to be re-scheduled.

7. Certain situations, including emergencies and crises, are inappropriate for video/computer based psychological therapy services. My therapist will appropriately monitor and respond to any struggles I may be having, If my counselor is concerned about me, loses contact with me, or if I fail to show for a scheduled tele-mental health session, I understand that my counselor will attempt to contact me to check on my well-being.

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8. To receive teletherapy mental health services, I must be physically located in Florida where Renee Gillombardo, LMFT is licensed to provide mental health treatment services. Teletherapy mental health services may not be provided if you are out-of-state or in an international locale at the time of your scheduled appointment. Renee Gillombardo, LMFT will establish your location at the beginning of every session, and you are strongly recommended to remain in the same location for each session.

9. The laws that protect the confidentiality of your personal information also apply to teletherapy mental health. As such, the information disclosed during the course of sessions is not disclosed to anyone without your written permission. However, Florida law establishes that confidentiality does not apply under the following circumstances:

- You are considered an immediate risk for harming yourself;
- You are considered an immediate risk of harming others;
- Child abuse;
- Abuse of elderly person or persons with disabilities;
- A court order.

10. No personally identifiable images or information from the teletherapy mental health interaction will be made and/or disseminated to anyone without your written consent. Clients are prohibited from recording their teletherapy mental health sessions.

If I show indicators that I may be in real trouble, including a serious risk for self-harm or harm to others, I grant Renee Gillombardo, LMFT permission to contact someone to insure my safety. The information given on my initial intake form will be used for office procedure guidelines in these crisis situations.

My signature on the initial intake consent form with Renee C. Gillombardo, LMFT, PA. reflects that I have been informed about the policies and procedures for teletherapy mental health services, and I agree to them.

Informed Consent For In-person Services During COVID-19 Public Health Crisis

This document contains important information about our decision (yours and mine) to resume in-person services in light of the COVID-19 public health crisis. Please read this carefully and let me know if you have any questions. By reading this document, and signing your initial intake form which references this consent, it will be an official agreement between us.

Decision to Meet Face-to-Face

We have agreed to meet in person for some or all future sessions. If there is a resurgence of the pandemic or if other health concerns arise, however, I may require that we meet via teletherapy. If you have concerns about meeting through teletherapy, we will talk about it first and try to address any issues. You understand that, if I believe it is necessary, I may determine that we return to teletherapy for everyone's well-being.

If you decide at any time that you would feel safer staying with, or returning to, teletherapy services, I will respect that decision, as long as it is feasible and clinically appropriate. Reimbursement for teletherapy services, however, is also determined by the insurance companies and applicable law, so that is an issue we may also need to discuss.

Risks of Opting for In-Person Services

You understand that by coming to the office, you are assuming the risk of exposure to the coronavirus (or other public health risk). This risk may increase if you travel by public transportation, cab, or ridesharing service.

Informed Consent For In-person Services During COVID-19 Public Health Crisis continued

Your Responsibility to Minimize Your Exposure

To obtain services in person, you agree to take certain precautions which will help keep everyone (you, me, our families, and other clients) safer from exposure, sickness and possible death. If you do not adhere to these safeguards, it may result in our starting/returning to a teletherapy arrangement.

You will only keep your in-person appointment if you are symptom free.

You will take your temperature before coming to each appointment. If it is elevated (100 Fahrenheit or more), or if you have other symptoms of the coronavirus, you agree to cancel the appointment or proceed using teletherapy. If you wish to cancel for this reason, I won't charge you our normal cancellation fee.

You will wait in your car or outside until no earlier than 5 minutes before our appointment time.

You will wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer prior to entering the building.

You will adhere to the safe distancing precautions we have set up in the waiting room. For example, you won't move chairs or sit where we have signs asking you not to sit. Currently our waiting room is closed in an abundance of caution.

You will wear a mask in all areas of the office. I may wear a face shield or mask as well.

You will keep a distance of 6 feet and there will be no physical contact (e.g. no shaking hands) with me.

You will try not to touch your face or eyes with your hands. If you do, you will immediately wash or sanitize your hands.

Informed Consent For In-person Services During COVID-19 Public Health Crisis continued

If you are bringing your child, you will make sure that your child follows all of these sanitation and distancing protocols.

You will take steps between appointments to minimize your exposure to COVID. If you have a job that exposes you to other people who are infected, you will immediately let me know.

If your commute or other responsibilities or activities put you in close contact with others (beyond your family), you will let me know.

If a resident of your home tests positive for the infection, you will immediately let me know and we will then begin or resume treatment via teletherapy.

I may change the above precautions if additional local, Florida State or federal orders or guidelines are published. If that happens, we will talk about any necessary changes.

My Commitment to Minimize Exposure

My practice has taken steps to reduce the risk of spreading the Coronavirus within the office and to maintain a safe and healthy environment. We have posted our efforts on our website and in the office. Please let me know if you have questions about these efforts. We are not liable if you contract Coronavirus, and you agree to hold harmless Renee C. Gillombardo, LMFT, PA.

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If You or I Are Sick

You understand that I am committed to keeping you, me, and all of our families safe from the spread of this virus. If you show up for an appointment and I believe that you have a fever or other symptoms, or believe you have been exposed, I will have to require you to leave the office immediately. We can follow up with services by teletherapy as appropriate. I may ask that I take your temperature with a thermoscan thermometer.

If I test positive for the coronavirus, you will be notified so that you can take appropriate precautions.

Your Confidentiality in the Case of Infection

If you have tested positive for the Coronavirus, I may be required to notify local health authorities that you have been in the office. If I have to report this, I will only provide the minimum information necessary for their data collection and will not go into any details about the reason(s) for our visits. By reading and signing your initial intake consent form, you are agreeing that I may do so without an additional signed release.

My signature on the initial intake consent form with Renee C. Gillombardo, LMFT, PA. reflects that I have been informed about the policies and procedures for In-Person Services during the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis, and I agree to them.