

# ***Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia***

## **Consent for the use of Technology Assisted Counseling**

*Note: This form is an addendum to the Covenant of Understanding.  
Please review that form in addition to the disclosures included in this one.*

### **WHAT IS TECHNOLOGY ASSISTED COUNSELING**

For select clients, the provision of services using secure, HIPAA compliant electronic platforms (usually a video calling service) can be a useful way to conduct or supplement therapeutic services. At this time, your counselor feels that this method may be a good fit for you and we ask you review the following information before agreeing to utilize this platform. Your counselor will continue to assess how appropriate the use of Technology Assisted Counseling ("TAC") is for your care. If you or your counselor feel that Technology Assisted Counseling is no longer a good fit for you, either you or your counselor may voice those concerns and discuss together the changes necessary to ensure your best care.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY, CODE OF ETHICS, & HIPAA**

In addition to the disclosures in the Covenant, Technology Assisted Counseling presents additional challenges to confidentiality. This means that you must be conscious of the location you choose to access the TAC platform. Be conscious about who may be able to hear you, or who may choose to enter the space while you are in session. Using public Wi-Fi may also increase the risk that your information may not be secure.

Your therapist will not record your session without your express consent, and that consent will only be applicable to the session in question. Recording of your session by you is also not permitted unless you obtain express consent from your therapist and that consent will only be applicable to the session in question.

### **ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY**

In order to access the TAC platform, you must have a stable high-speed internet connection. Most TAC platforms require a webcam/camera and microphone on your device and operate equally well on a laptop, tablet, or smart phone that is Wi-Fi enabled. Some may also work well on smart phones using their wireless network. CPC is not responsible for any charges you incur while using mobile data, so please check your plan before you use mobile data for a Technology Assisted Counseling session.

Each TAC platform operates a little differently. Your counselor will explain which platform he/she is using and how to access it. Please ask as many questions as you need in order to feel comfortable.

### **EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSISTED COUNSELING**

Remote sessions are more prone to distractions and interruptions due to the nature of the interaction. It is expected that you will make efforts to ensure that your space is private, your device is charged and/or plugged in, and that you do not multitask while in the session.

Interruptions: Before starting therapeutic services via a TAC platform your counselor will ask you for a back up way of contacting you. If you plan to use your cellular phone to access the platform, you should consider giving the counselor a way to contact you in addition to your cellular phone. Consider also having your charger handy in case your device battery drains quickly when using sustained video calls. In case of an interruption, your counselor will attempt to contact you using your back up method and you will decide together how to proceed.

Safety: Your counselor may also ask you to work with him/her to determine a safety plan in case doing therapy using TAC becomes overwhelming. This safety plan will be tailored to your specific needs in order to ensure your best care, including potentially determining your location, or identifying a way that you can let your counselor know you are not safe. As you discuss safety you or your counselor may determine that something about your situation may make TAC inappropriate for your care. Safety is not a one-time determination; your counselor will work with you on an ongoing basis to ensure that TAC is still an appropriate method to deliver services to you.

### ***INSURANCE COVERAGE***

Some insurance companies do not provide reimbursement for TAC therapy sessions. It is your responsibility to communicate with your insurance company to determine coverage.

### ***ADDITIONAL DISCLOSURES***

All policies regarding appointments, cancellation, provision of emergency services, and so on are outlined in the Covenant of Understanding and apply to Technology Assisted Counseling.

By signing below you indicate you have read, understood, and agree to the above policies.

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SIGNATURE of CLIENT

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Date

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SIGNATURE of REPRESENTATIVE if Client is a minor

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Date

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SIGNATURE of CPC THERAPIST

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Date