

## **Consent for TeleMental Health Services**

This document is an addendum to the **Mt. SAC Informed Consent** and does not replace it. All aspects of services agreement in that document apply to TeleMental Health (TMH) counseling.

In California, “telehealth” is defined as a method to deliver health care services using information and communication technologies to facilitate the consultation, diagnosis, treatment, and care management while the patient and provider are at two different sites in California. The two most common modes of telehealth for counseling are via 1) live videoconferencing either through a personal computer with a webcam or a mobile communications device with two-way camera capability, and 2) telephone.

**I hereby consent to engage in short-term TeleMental Health (TMH) with a Mental Health Clinician (MHC) at Mt. SAC-Employee Counseling Center. I understand that TMH includes the practice of education, goal setting, accountability, referral to resources, problem solving, skills training, and help with decision-making.**

Our TMH services are not intended to provide long-term care. Participants requiring long-term mental health needs (i.e. persons experiencing moderate to severe depression, bipolar symptoms, substance use, eating disorders, psychosis, suicidal behavior, or ongoing crises) will be referred to off-campus services.

**I understand that I have the following rights with respect to TeleMental Health:**

1. I have the right to withhold or withdraw consent at any time without affecting my right to future care or treatment or risking the loss or withdrawal of any benefits to which I would otherwise be entitled.
2. I understand that the privacy laws that protect the confidentiality of my protected health information (PHI) also apply to TMH unless an exception to confidentiality applies (i.e. mandatory reporting of child, elder, or vulnerable adult abuse; danger to self or others), or I raise mental/emotional health as an issue in a legal proceeding.
3. I understand that the same laws that give me the right to access my clinical information and copies of treatment records also apply to TMH.

**I understand the following potential risks, consequences, or limitations of TeleMental Health:**

- TMH may not be appropriate if you are having a crisis, acute psychosis, or suicidal or homicidal thoughts.
- TMH may lack visual and/or audio cues that traditional face-to-face counseling provides.
- TMH may have disruptions or delays in the service and quality of the technology used. In rare cases, there are risks associated with transmitting information via technology as security protocols could fail. These risks include but are not limited to, breaches of confidentiality and theft of personal information.

**I understand the following back-up plan in case of technology failure:**

If you get disconnected from a TMH session:

1. Try to end and then restart the session.
2. If you are unable to reconnect within five minutes, your MHC will try to reestablish connection via the online portal.
3. If you are unreachable at this point, please call Mt. SAC Employee Counseling Center (909-274-6211) to reschedule a non-urgent session.
  - If your MHC assesses any urgent safety issues, they will immediately follow-up with initiation of emergency services (law enforcement safety-wellness response and/or will phone your emergency contact person).

**Emergency Protocols**

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, please call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.

At the beginning of your telehealth session, the MHC will need the physical address you are calling/logging in from.

**\*Example: this may be a different location from the permanent address the MHC has on file for you.**

**When receiving TMH:**

- It is required that you only engage in sessions when you are physically in California. The MHC will ask you to confirm this at the start of each session.
- It is discouraged to engage in sessions where you will be overheard or interrupted.
- It is encouraged that you use your own computer or device, and one that is not publicly accessible. Mt. SAC electronic devices are considered public.
- Do not record any sessions; there will be no recording of any of the sessions by either party.

### **Acknowledgments**

- I acknowledge/understand the participant risks involved with TMH and voluntarily assume them.
- I have read and understand the information provided above. I have discussed it with my MHC, and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.