



Psychotherapy & Counseling Policies

ATTENDANCE

1. The standard meeting time for psychotherapy & counseling is 53 minutes. It is up to the patient, however, to determine the length of time of the sessions. Requests to change the 53-minute session needs to be discussed with the provider for time to be scheduled in advance.
2. If the patient is late for a session, the patient may lose some of that session time.
3. If the patient's provider is running behind, the patient will receive the full time of the session; however, it may start late. This sometimes happens if a previous patient was in crisis, or another urgent matter required the provider's time.

EMERGENCY & URGENT COUNSELING SERVICES

As an employee of the NYS Senate, utilizing services provided by Allied Wellness Collective, you have access to urgent counseling services, within 24 hours of your notification to your provider or another member of our staff. If your matter is an emergency or you cannot wait up to 24 hours for a response, Allied Wellness Collective recommends that you seek emergency services at the nearest emergency room or to dial 911. Additional services are available, including:

1. *If between the hours of 9am and 10pm (eastern) M-F or 1pm-10pm (eastern) weekends:*
CONTACT Lifeline (518) 689-4673
2. For addiction and gambling (24/7): HOPENY Hotline (877) 846-7369 *Spanish language services offered.
3. 24/7 Capital District Crisis Unit: (518) 549-6500
4. 24/7 Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741
5. National Suicide & Crisis Hotline: 988

SOCIAL MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATION

Due to the importance of confidentiality and the importance of minimizing dual relationships, Allied Wellness Collective providers will not accept friend or contact requests from current or former patients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.). We believe that adding patients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of a provider/patient relationship. If there are questions about this, please bring them up when meeting with a provider and it can be discussed further.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

1. Allied Wellness Collective cannot ensure the confidentiality of any form of communication through electronic media, including text messages and email.
2. If it is preferred to communicate via email for issues regarding scheduling or cancellations, you may do so. While your provider, or a member of our staff, may try to return messages in a timely manner, they cannot guarantee immediate response and request that you do not use these methods of communication to discuss therapeutic content and/or request assistance for emergencies.
3. Services by electronic means, including but not limited to the use of a video counseling platform is considered telemedicine. Telemedicine is broadly defined as the use of information technology to deliver medical services and information from one location to another. If you and your provider chose to use information technology for some or all of your treatment, you need to understand that:
 4. You retain the option to withhold or withdraw consent at any time without affecting the right to future care or treatment nor risking the loss or withdrawal of any program benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled.
 5. All existing confidentiality protections are equally applicable.
 6. Your access to all medical information transmitted during a telemedicine consultation is guaranteed, and copies of this information are available for a reasonable fee.
 7. Dissemination of any of your identifiable images or information from the telemedicine interaction to researchers or other entities shall not occur without your consent.
 8. There are potential risks, consequences, and benefits of telemedicine. Potential benefits include, but are not limited to improved communication capabilities, providing convenient access to up-to-date information, consultations, support, reduced costs, improved quality, change in the conditions of practice, improved access to counseling, better continuity of care, and reduction of lost work time and travel costs.
 9. Effective counseling is often facilitated when the provider gathers within a session or a series of sessions, a multitude of observations, information, and experiences about the client. Providers may make clinical assessments, diagnosis, and interventions based not only on direct verbal or auditory communications, written reports, and third person consultations, but also from direct visual and olfactory observations, information, and experiences.
10. When using information technology in counseling services, potential risks include, but are not limited to the clinician's inability to make visual and olfactory observations of clinically or therapeutically potentially relevant issues such as: your physical condition including deformities, apparent height and weight, body type, attractiveness relative to social and cultural norms or standards, gait and motor coordination, posture, work speed, any noteworthy mannerism or gestures, physical or medical conditions including bruises or injuries, basic grooming and hygiene including appropriateness of dress, body language, and congruence of language and bodily expression. Potential consequences thus include the provider not being aware of what he or she would consider important information, that you may not recognize as significant to present verbally the provider.

MINORS AND PARENTS

Some minors, including those who are married and/or have children themselves, may make healthcare decisions for themselves. In general, a parents' consent is necessary for the treatment of a minor, defined as a person under the age of eighteen, and parents are entitled to protected health information regarding their child's treatment. While privacy in counseling is very important, particularly with adolescents, parental involvement is also essential to successful treatment, especially with younger children. If the provider believes that a child is a danger to him/her or is a danger to someone else, the provider will notify the parents of these concerns.

CUSTODY POLICY

In the case of a minor child, it is the policy of Allied Wellness Collective to obtain consent for treatment from all parents/guardians in cases where the parents/guardians maintain separate households. There are some exceptions to this policy such as when legal custody is assigned to one parent/guardian. In order to best serve the interests of the minor child, it is important to have all parents/guardians aware of the treatment. Parents/guardians should be aware of any information they share is part of the child's clinical records and cannot be separated. Information regarding the child's general treatment progress may be made available to all parents/guardians, pursuant to Allied Wellness Collective policy on the treatment of minor children and the New Your State Mental Health Law.

WEAPON FREE FACILITY

Our facility is a weapon free zone, no guns or knives are allowed on the premises. Failure to obey this policy can result in termination or law enforcement involvement.

DIAGNOSIS

It may be required of your clinician to provide diagnosis to a third party, such as an insurance company. Diagnoses are technical terms and best described in reference to the DSM-5. If at any time you wish to see a copy, one will be offered for your review.

TERMINATION

1. Ending relationships can be difficult. Therefore, it is important to have a termination process to achieve some closure. The appropriate length of the termination depends on the length and intensity of the treatment. Your provider may terminate treatment after appropriate discussion with you and a termination process if they determine that counseling is not being effectively used or if you are in default on payment.
2. Your provider will not terminate the therapeutic relationship without first discussing and exploring the reasons and purpose of terminating.
3. If counseling is terminated for any reason or you request another provider, your provider will make available to you a list of qualified clinicians to treat you. You may also choose someone on your own or from another referral source.
4. Should you fail to schedule an appointment for three consecutive weeks, unless other arrangements have been made in advance, for legal and ethical reasons, your provider must consider the professional relationship discontinued.