

Suggested Privacy and Safety Measures for Distance Counseling Services

Oasis Counseling recommends that you (the client) are aware of and use safety measures for keeping your PHI (Personal Health Information) confidential, including but not limited to the following suggestions.

Paper

It is recommended that you store all paper documents with your PHI in a locked cabinet.

When participating in distance counseling it is also recommended that you:

- Use a private, password-protected internet connection or network—not public wifi.
- Because audiovisual conferencing technology uses data streaming, additional charges may apply depending on your cell phone service plan. Check with your mobile carrier to make sure that you don't incur extra data usage fees due to this type of activity. We recommend that you use a protected, private wifi connection whenever possible. This will also ensure the best quality of audio and visual.
- Conduct the sessions in a private location where others cannot hear you.
- Use secure video conferencing technology. *Oasis uses doxy.me, a HIPPA-compliant application.*
- Do not record any sessions. *Recording of sessions is grounds for termination of therapy by Oasis.*
- Password protect your computer, tablet, phone, and any other device with a password that is unique.
- Always log out of your sessions.
- Do not have any software remember your password. Sign in every time.
- Do not share your passwords with anyone.
- Do not share your computer when you are logged on to any software.
- If you wish to avoid others knowing that you are receiving counseling services, clear your browser's cache (browsing history), and on your phone, list your therapist by a name rather than as "counselor or therapist".
- Have all of your devices set to time out requiring you to sign back in after a set idle time.
- Keep your computer updated.
- Use a firewall and antivirus program.
- When online do not login as an administrator.
- Router / Access Point
 - Only use a secure network for internet access using a WAP2 security key.
 - Use your own administrator ID and password (not the default) for your router or access point.
 - Choose a custom SSID name, not the default name.
 - Limit the range of your Wi-Fi by positioning it near the center of your home.
- Notify your counselor if you suspect any breach in your security.

Resources in case of an emergency or crisis situation:

- In the case of a life-threatening situation, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.
- In the case of suicidal or homicidal ideation, or another mental health emergency:
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
 - Birmingham Crisis Center Hotline: 205-323-7777
- For additional emotional support:
 - New Directions 24/7 Emotional Support Hotline: 833-848-1764
 - Wings Across Alabama: 1-844-999-4647
- For information on resources for mental health and substance use treatment:
 - SAMHSA's National Helpline, 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

The person listed as your emergency contact in your agency paperwork: _____
Phone number: _____