



## Client Services Agreement

Welcome to Auburn University Psychological Services Center (AUPSC). This document (the Client Services Agreement) contains important information about the professional services and business policies at AUPSC. It also contains summary information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), a federal law that provides privacy protections and client rights with regard to the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Information (PHI) used for the purpose of treatment, payment, and health care operations. HIPAA requires that AUPSC provides you with a Notice of Privacy Practices (the Notice) for use and disclosure of PHI for treatment, payment, and health care operations. The Notice is available on our website and will be emailed to you, explains HIPAA and its application to your personal health information in greater detail. The law requires that AUPSC obtains your signature acknowledging that AUPSC has provided you with this information at your first appointment. Although these documents are long and sometimes complex, it is very important that you read them carefully and ask any questions that you may have. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us. You may revoke this agreement in writing at any time. That revocation will be binding on AUPSC, unless AUPSC has taken action in reliance on it; if there are obligations imposed on AUPSC by a third party that is responsible for paying for the services you have received at AUPSC; or if you have not satisfied any financial obligations you have incurred to AUPSC.

### OVERVIEW

AUPSC is a training clinic for the doctoral (Ph.D.) program in Clinical Psychology at Auburn University. AUPSC ensures confidentiality and operates under the ethical guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) and HIPAA. The Auburn University Department of Psychological Sciences has been accredited by the APA since 1976. For more information on our accreditation status, you may contact the APA Committee on Accreditation: 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242, (202) 336-5979, [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org). AUPSC is open to all community residents and provides services for individuals, couples, families, groups, and organizations. New clients are accepted for services based on both the training needs of AUPSC and the needs of the client. Since this is a training clinic, clients will be seen by a graduate student in clinical psychology (referred to as graduate clinicians). Each graduate clinician is carefully supervised by a licensed psychologist who is a faculty member of the Clinical Psychology Program of the Department of Psychological Services. AUPSC is a non-profit organization; however, fees will be charged to help offset operation costs.

### PROCEDURES

There are several steps to becoming a client at AUPSC:

The platform in which our clinic delivers services can be one of the following:

- In person in Cary Hall on Auburn University main campus
- Face to Face via video conferencing

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Initials

The delivery of these services may depend on the type of services you are receiving, presenting concerns, availability of clinicians, as well as university operations. Communication between the client and clinic can be through phone or email during regular business hours. If the University is closed or temporarily remote, the phone will not be answered.

1. Individuals interested in therapy services should contact AUPSC by phone at 334-844-4889 or by email at [aupsc@auburn.edu](mailto:aupsc@auburn.edu) to discuss setting up an initial intake appointment. Individuals seeking psychological evaluations are not required to complete an intake. Instead, they should contact AUPSC to provide their contact information for the waiting list. They will be called to begin their evaluation as soon as a graduate clinician is available. Of note, all clients interested in services will need to complete a brief screening survey to discuss fit and appropriateness for services at AUPSC.

2. The individual or family who is seeking therapy services will complete an intake. Necessary paperwork is completed, and individuals have the opportunity to ask any questions about the clinic procedures. Next, a graduate clinician conducts a clinical interview, generally lasting 1-2 hours. During the interview, individuals can explain the problems they are having. The interview will also focus on the relevant social, family, medical, and treatment history. All involved family members should attend this session. There is a standard \$80.00 fee, which is due at the time of the intake. This \$80.00 covers the cost of the intake and the initial paperwork.

3. Information gathered in the intake is discussed with the Clinic Director and AUPSC Staff at weekly meetings. If the Clinic Director and AUPSC staff agree that AUPSC is the appropriate agency to serve the client's needs, the new client will be assigned to a graduate clinician. This may not be the same graduate clinician who conducted the intake. In cases where the client may be better served in another setting, the intake clinician or the Clinic Director will try to help the client or caregiver(s) find services elsewhere.

4. If the client is assigned to a graduate clinician, the graduate clinician will set up an appointment to begin psychological services. Clients in therapy are encouraged to take an active role in determining the focus and goals of their treatment. Therapy sessions are typically scheduled once a week for 50 minutes. Clients receiving psychological evaluations should expect the entire evaluation process to take between six and eight weeks. This evaluation timeline is based on scheduling on a weekly basis. With session cancelations/rescheduling, this timeline varies and will lengthen. Each evaluation session typically lasts between two and four hours.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES**

Psychotherapy and psychological evaluations are not easily described in general statements. They vary depending on the personalities of the psychologist and client, and the particular problems you are experiencing. There are many different methods your graduate clinician or evaluator may use to deal with the problems that you hope to address. Psychotherapy and assessments are not like medical doctor visits. They call for a very active effort on your part. In order for them to be most successful, you will have to work on things that are discussed both during our sessions and throughout the week at home. Also, you will have to be honest about the subjects we talk about and put forth good effort on the tests you are asked to complete as part of therapy or your evaluation. Therapy and evaluations involve a commitment of time, money, and energy.

Psychotherapy and psychological evaluations can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have many benefits. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. Assessment often leads to a better understanding of yourself,

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Initials

your relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reduction in feelings of distress. However, there are no guarantees of what you will experience when you take part in therapy or a psychological evaluation.

## **PROFESSIONAL FEES**

For sessions completed in-person or telehealth, clients will be expected to pay for each session at the time it is held, unless other arrangements have been determined. Therapy clients are charged per 50 minute session. Typically, clients at AUPSC are seen once a week for one 50 minute session. In the event that a client and clinician decide to meet more than once a week, the client will be charged the agreed upon therapy fee for each time that they meet. If a client requests a therapy session longer than 50 minutes, then they will be billed for the extended time in 15 minute increments. To maintain active status as a client at AUPSC, payment must be made at the time services are rendered. After 2 consecutive sessions of nonpayment, clients will need to contact the clinic director to reinstate services.

Therapy fees in person and via telehealth are determined using a sliding scale. In order to be eligible for the sliding scale, clients will be asked to provide proof of income at their first visit. Examples of proof of income include one of the following: the most recent tax return, disability letter, food stamp letter, or unemployment benefit letter. Although names must be visible on the proof of income document to confirm eligibility, please mark through social security numbers so that they are not visible. Students qualify for \$30 per session fee for individual therapy for themselves. Eligibility for the sliding scale will be re-verified annually. In the event that a client does not wish to provide documentation of annual family income, the highest income bracket will be assumed. If a financial crisis exists (for example, loss of job or loss of housing) that causes a client to be unable to pay their weekly therapy fee, the clinician can discuss the need for a fee reduction with their licensed clinical supervisor and the Clinic Director. With written documentation of financial crisis, the client's therapy fee may be reduced by \$15 per session for up to 10 sessions.

Telephone calls to clinicians are not an effective substitute for regular therapy sessions and should be limited to emergencies. Telephone calls longer than 5 minutes will be billed at the regular session fee in 15 minute increments. In the event that consultation services are required (for example, with school professionals, psychiatrists, primary care physicians, or previous treatment providers), the client will be billed at the regular session fee in 15 minute increments. Other professional services such as reviewing previous treatment records or conducting school observations will also be billed at the regular session fee (in 15 minute increments). If treatment records are requested, a fee of \$20 may be charged to cover the cost of accessing the file, copying the materials, and mailing or faxing the requested documents.

If you become involved in legal proceedings that require your graduate clinician or your graduate clinician's supervisor's participation, you will be expected to pay for all of your graduate clinician's and your graduate clinician's supervisor's professional time, including preparation and transportation costs, even if your graduate clinician or your graduate clinician's supervisor is called to testify by another party.

Full psychological evaluations have a preset charge of \$650. Half of this fee is due at the initial assessment session, and the other half is due at the feedback session. The assessment fee includes all interviews, all assessment measures, all consultations, one written report, and one feedback session. This fee also includes AUPSC mailing or faxing the written report to one professional of the client's choice. If additional reports are requested, a fee of \$20 may be charged to cover the cost of accessing the file, copying the materials, and mailing or faxing the requested documents. In the event that a full psychological evaluation is not required, a reduced fee can be determined by the Clinic Director on a case by case basis. Assessment measures that are administered as part of therapy without a formal report will be of no additional charge to

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Initials

the normal therapy fee. Assessment costs do not exceed \$650 and will be determined by the extent of testing requested by the client.

Therapy clients will be charged up to their regular session fee for missed appointments and for appointments canceled or rescheduled less than 24 hours in advance. Assessment clients will be charged \$60 for missed appointments and for appointments canceled or rescheduled less than 24 hours in advance. After 3 missed appointments in one semester, clients will be considered inactive and will need to contact the Clinic Director to reinitiate services. If clients are more than 15 minutes late for a session, the clinician and supervisor reserve the right to reschedule the appointment and charge up to the session fee.

Clients with outstanding balances will receive a financial summary statement at the end of each month, which will detail all transactions that are made. If your account has not been paid for more than 60 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, AUPSC retains the option of using legal means to secure the payment. After two consecutive sessions of nonpayment, clients will need approval by the clinic director to re-initiate services. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court which will require AUPSC to disclose otherwise confidential information. In most collection situations, the only information AUPSC releases regarding a client's treatment is the client's name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due. If such legal action is necessary, its costs will be included in the claim.

### **INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT**

Because AUPSC is a training clinic and graduate students who are not licensed clinical psychologists provide the services, third party health insurance will NOT pay for the services rendered at AUPSC. The only exceptions to this situation are the cases where the Alabama Department of Human Resources or local school systems pays for services rendered at AUPSC. Thus, AUPSC will NOT file insurance forms. If you wish to pursue reimbursement for the services you have received at AUPSC, we will provide you with a bill that lists the services provided. However, you (not your insurance company) are responsible for full payment at the time services are rendered, unless alternate arrangements have been made in advance. It is very important that you find out exactly what mental health services your insurance policy covers. If you have insurance that covers mental health services, AUPSC will be happy to refer you to a licensed therapist who might be covered by your insurance company.

If your services are being paid for by the Alabama Department of Human Resources or a school system, your contract with the Alabama Department of Human Resources or your school system requires that AUPSC provide it with information relevant to the services that are provided to you. AUPSC is also required to provide information regarding clinical diagnosis, when a diagnosis is assigned. Sometimes AUPSC is required to provide additional clinical information, such as treatment plans or summaries, or copies of your entire Clinical Record. In such situations, AUPSC will ask that you sign an Authorization Form to Release/Obtain Information in order to release information about you that is necessary for the purpose requested. This information will become part of the Alabama Department of Human Resources or the school systems records and might be stored in a computer. Though the Alabama Department of Human Resources and schools claim to keep such information confidential, AUPSC has no control over what they do with it once it is in their hands. If you refuse to allow AUPSC to release information relevant to the services that are provided to you by AUPSC, then the Alabama Department of Human Resources or the school system will not pay for services provided to you by AUPSC.

### **CONTACTING YOUR GRADUATE CLINICIAN**

You may contact your graduate clinician or their supervisor through email at [telepsc@auburn.edu](mailto:telepsc@auburn.edu) or by phone at 334-844-4889. Due to your graduate clinician's work and class schedule, the graduate clinician

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Initials

will often not be immediately available by email or phone. You are encouraged to make every effort to keep your scheduled appointments with your graduate clinician. In the event that you need to reschedule an appointment, contact your graduate clinician via AUPSC phone number or email at least one working day in advance of your scheduled session. Communications with graduate clinicians may change based on University operations. When AUPSC is closed, you may leave a message on the AUPSC answering machine, but it may not be returned immediately. Email is checked during business hours Monday through Friday, except during Auburn University holidays or clinic closures. At other times, you can send an email and your graduate clinician will reach out as soon as possible. If you are difficult to reach, please inform your graduate clinician of times when you will be available. AUPSC is not available for emergent services. In case of an emergency that occurs when AUPSC is closed (from 7 pm until 8 am Monday through Thursday and from 12 pm Friday until 8 am Monday) please call the nearest emergency room and ask for the on call psychiatric nurse. The number for the East Alabama Medical Center is (334) 705-1150. Because AUPSC is a university clinic, staffed by graduate student clinicians, there are times when your graduate clinician might not be available for an extended time, such as during a school break. These breaks occur between semesters and typically last for one week, except for the winter holiday, which lasts for up to four weeks. If you or your graduate clinician determines that you need continuous services that cannot be provided at AUPSC, your graduate clinician will provide you with a referral to an agency or therapist that can provide the services you need.

### **LIMITS ON CONFIDENTIALITY**

The law protects the privacy of all communications between a client and a psychologist. In most situations, your graduate clinician and/or the clinical supervisor can only release information about your treatment to others if you sign a written authorization form that meets certain legal requirements imposed by HIPAA. There are other situations that require only that you provide written, advance consent. Your signature on this Agreement provides consent for those activities, as follows:

- Because AUPSC is a training clinic, and your therapist will be a graduate clinician, your graduate clinician will regularly consult with a staffed clinical supervisor(s) and other graduate students about the therapy services provided to you. During a consultation, your graduate clinician will make every effort to avoid revealing your identity. Your graduate clinician's supervisor and all fellow graduate clinicians are also legally bound to keep the information confidential. If you don't object, your graduate clinician will not tell you about these consultations unless the clinician feels that it is important to your work together. Your graduate clinician will note all consultations in your Clinical Record (which is called personal health information or "PHI" in the AUPSC Notice of Psychologist's Policies and Practices to Protect the Privacy of Your Health Information).
- You should be aware that many graduate clinicians and other mental health professionals practice at AUPSC and that AUPSC employs administrative staff. In most cases, your graduate clinician will need to share protected information, such as your name and the type of services you are receiving with these individuals for both clinical and administrative purposes, such as scheduling, billing, and quality assurance. All of the mental health professionals are bound by the same rules of confidentiality. All staff members have been given training about protecting your privacy and have agreed not to release any information outside of the practice without the permission of a professional staff member.
- If a client threatens to self harm, your graduate clinician and/or your graduate clinician's supervisor may be obligated to seek hospitalization for the client, or to contact family members or others who can help provide protection.

There are some situations where your graduate clinician and/or your graduate clinician's supervisor are permitted or required to disclose information without either your consent or authorization:

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Initials

- If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information concerning your diagnosis and treatment, such information is protected by the psychologist-client privilege law. AUPSC cannot provide any information without your (or your legal representative's) written authorization or a court order. If you are involved or contemplating litigation, you should consult with your attorney to determine whether a court would be likely to order AUPSC to disclose information.
- If a government agency is requesting the information for health oversight activities, AUPSC is required to provide it for them.
- If a client files a complaint or lawsuit against AUPSC, a graduate clinician, or a supervisor at AUPSC, AUPSC, the graduate clinician, or the supervisor may disclose relevant information regarding that client in order to defend AUPSC, the graduate clinician, or the supervisor.
- If a client files a worker's compensation claim, AUPSC may disclose information relevant to that claim to the client's employer or the insurer.

There are some situations in which AUPSC is legally obligated to take actions, which AUPSC believes are necessary to attempt to protect others from harm, and AUPSC may have to reveal some information about a client's treatment.

- If your graduate clinician or your graduate clinician's supervisor knows or suspects that a child under the age of 19 has been abused or neglected, the law requires that clinician file a report with the appropriate governmental agency, usually the Alabama Department of Human Resources. Once such a report is filed, AUPSC may be required to provide additional information.
- If your graduate clinician or your graduate clinician's supervisor knows that an elderly or disabled adult has been abused, neglected, exploited, or sexually or emotionally abused, the law requires that the clinician file a report with the appropriate governmental agency, usually the Alabama Department of Human Resources. Once such a report is filed, AUPSC may be required to provide additional information.
- If your graduate clinician or your graduate clinician's supervisor believe that disclosing information about you is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health and safety of an identifiable person(s), your graduate clinician or your graduate clinician's supervisor may disclose that information, but only to those reasonably able to prevent or lessen the threat.

If one of these situations arises, your graduate clinician or your graduate clinician's supervisor will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action, and the clinician will try to limit disclosure to what is necessary.

While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing you about potential problems, it is important that we discuss any questions or concerns that you may have now or in the future. The laws governing confidentiality can be quite complex. In situations where specific advice is required, formal legal advice may be needed.

## **PROFESSIONAL RECORDS**

You should be aware that, pursuant to HIPAA, AUPSC keeps Protected Health Information about you in one professional record, which is referred to as your Clinical Record. It includes information about your reasons for seeking therapy, a description of the ways in which your problem impacts your life, your diagnosis, the goals that you and your graduate clinician set for treatment, your progress towards those goals, your medical and social history, your treatment history, any past treatment records that AUPSC receives from other providers, reports of any professional consultations, your billing records, and any reports that have been sent to anyone, including reports to your insurance carrier. If you provide AUPSC

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Initials

with an appropriate written request, you have the right to examine and/or receive a copy of your records, except in unusual circumstances that involve danger to you or others. In those situations, you have a right to have your record sent to another mental health provider. Because these are professional records, they can be misinterpreted and/or upsetting to untrained readers. For this reason, AUPSC recommends that you initially review them in the presence of your graduate clinician as well as the staffed supervisor or have them forwarded to another mental health professional so you can discuss the contents. You will be charged the same hourly rate you pay for a therapy session for this review meeting. In most situations, AUPSC is allowed to charge a fee of \$20 to cover the expense of accessing the file, copying the materials, and forwarding them to the mental health professional of your choice. The exceptions to this policy are contained in the accompanied Notice Form. If AUPSC refuses your request for access to your records, you have a right of review, which can be discussed with you upon request.

In addition to keeping records of therapy in your Clinical Record, sessions at AUPSC, whether in person or via telehealth, are recorded for the purposes of supervision and clinical service delivery. Direct observations of in person and telehealth sessions by supervisors may also take place. However, this is not done without first discussing the observation with the client or the client's caregivers recordings will be afforded all of the protection that is given a Clinical Record.

## **RESEARCH**

Certain forms are routinely completed by all clients at AUPSC and their caregivers. One purpose of these forms is to help graduate clinicians make informed decisions regarding evaluations and treatment. The forms are also used for research purposes. Ongoing research is important so that we can continue to improve the way we provide services at AUPSC. Biographical and psychological data are available to graduate students for research purposes. However, to protect the privacy of our clients, all identifying names, places, and events are removed when information from AUPSC records are used in any research project.

## **CLIENT RIGHTS**

HIPAA provides you with the following rights with regard to your Clinical Record and disclosures of Protected Health Information: requesting that your graduate clinician amend your record; requesting restrictions on what information from your Clinical Record is disclosed to others; requesting an accounting of most disclosures of Protected Health Information that you have neither consented to nor authorized; determining the location to which protected information disclosures are sent; having any complaints you make about AUPSC policies and procedures recorded in your records; and the right to a copy of this Agreement, the accompanied Notice Form, and AUPSC privacy policies and procedures. Your graduate clinician or other AUPSC representative will be happy to discuss any of these rights with you.

## **MINORS & PARENTS**

Clients under 14 years of age, who are not emancipated, and their caregiver(s), should be aware that the law may allow caregivers to examine their child's treatment records unless the child's graduate clinician or the child's graduate clinician's supervisor decides that such access is likely to injure the child, or the child's graduate clinician, the child, and the child's caregiver(s) agree otherwise. Because privacy in psychotherapy is often crucial to successful progress, particularly with teenagers, it is sometimes AUPSC policy to request an agreement from caregiver(s) that they consent to give up their access to their child's records. If they agree, during treatment, the graduate clinician will provide them only with general information about the progress of the child's treatment, and the client's attendance at scheduled sessions. The graduate clinician will also provide caregivers with a summary of their child's treatment when it is complete. Any other communication will require the child's authorization, unless the graduate clinician feels that the child is in danger or is a danger to someone else, in which case, the graduate clinician will notify the caregivers of the

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Initials

clinician's concern. Before giving caregiver(s) any information, the graduate clinician will discuss the matter with the child, if possible, and do the clinician's best to handle any objections the child may have.

## INFORMED CONSENT FOR TELEPSYCHOLOGY

This section contains important information focusing on doing psychotherapy using video conferencing through the internet at AUPSC. Please read carefully and discuss any questions or concerns you may have with your graduate clinician. Telepsychology services can only be delivered to clients within the state of Alabama.

### BENEFITS AND RISKS OF TELEPSYCHOLOGY

#### Benefits of Telepsychology

Telepsychology refers to providing psychotherapy services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. There are some benefits to conducting psychotherapy remotely compared to conducting psychotherapy in-person. For example:

- Continuity of care. Telepsychology may allow clients and clinicians to continue established psychotherapy services despite not being in the same location. This can be helpful in ensuring continuity of care if the client or clinician moves to a different location, takes an extended vacation, or is otherwise unable to continue to meet in person.
- Increased access to care. Telepsychology also may provide greater access to psychotherapy services for those with difficulties or limitations in obtaining mental health care, such as those who live in highly rural locations or those with physical limitations that prevent easy access to a mental health provider.

#### Risks of Telepsychology

Although there are benefits of telepsychology, there are also some differences between in-person psychotherapy and some additional risks. For example:

- Risks to confidentiality. AUPSC graduate clinicians have a legal and ethical responsibility to give their best effort to protect all communications within telepsychology. However, the nature of electronic communications technologies is such that confidentiality of communications cannot be guaranteed. Because telepsychology sessions take place outside of the therapist's private office, there is also the potential for other people to overhear sessions if you are not in a private place during the session.
- Issues related to technology. There are many ways that technology issues might impact telepsychology. For example, technology may stop working during a session, other people might be able to get access to private conversations or materials shared between clinicians and clients, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.
- Crisis management and intervention. AUPSC graduate clinicians do not engage in telepsychology with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring high levels of support and intervention. This is an important limitation of telepsychology that you should be aware of before agreeing to participate in this modality.
- Effectiveness. Most research shows that telepsychology is about as effective as in-person psychotherapy. However, some therapists believe that something is lost in the therapeutic work by not being in the same room. For example, there is debate about a therapist's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

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Initials



**Maximizing the Benefits of Telepsychology**

Treatment is most effective when psychotherapy occurs at your regularly scheduled sessions. To maximize the benefits of telepsychology, you are encouraged to make every effort to keep your scheduled appointments with your graduate clinician. In the event that you need to reschedule an appointment, contact your graduate clinician via email at least one working day in advance of your scheduled session. You are also encouraged to communication with your clinician about any concerns you have about using this modality, including issues related to maintaining confidentiality, your confidence in using telepsychology technology, or other issues regarding the effectiveness of telepsychology services.

**Minimizing the Risks of Telepsychology**

Regarding the risks to your confidentiality, AUPSC graduate clinicians will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy, including the use of updated encryption methods, firewalls, and back-up systems to help keep your information private. It is important for you to take an active part in protecting your privacy as well. Prior to initiating a telepsychology session, you should find a place for where you can be reasonably sure you will not be overheard or interrupted. It is also important for you to protect the privacy of sessions on your cell phone or other device, for example, by ensuring that you use only a private (rather than public) Internet connection, by only using devices with password protection, or if using a tablet, laptop, or computer, by using only your own password-protected user profile. You should not participate in telepsychology if you do not feel reasonably certain that you or your clinician are able to protect your privacy. Sessions cannot be held outdoors or from a vehicle.

Regarding the issues associated with the technology involved in telepsychology, AUPSC graduate clinicians and staff will take reasonable steps to provide you with a reliable means of receiving telepsychology. For your part, you are encouraged to familiarize yourself with your electronic devices and research ways to troubleshoot technological problems should they arise. You should not participate in telepsychology if you do not feel reasonably confident in the reliability of the technology available to you or confident in your ability to use that technology.

Regarding crisis management and the inherent limits of telepsychology, AUPSC graduate clinicians will conduct a thorough assessment of certain risks involving your safety and the safety of others prior to initiating telepsychology services. This assessment will include your risk of self-harm, suicide, and potential harm to others. AUPSC graduate clinicians do not engage in telepsychology with clients with high levels of such risk. Before engaging in telepsychology, you and your graduate clinician will develop an emergency response plan to address potential crisis situations that may arise during the course of telepsychology, including effective coping strategies you may use on your own, a list of trusted others whom you may contact during difficult times, and the provision of emergency response numbers and services. Additionally, prior to each telepsychology session, your graduate clinician will ask that you confirm your current physical location and the contact information of another trusted individual should emergency services need to be sent to you. You should not participate in telepsychology if you do not feel reasonably certain of your ability to maintain your own safety.

**APPROPRIATENESS OF TELEPSYCHOLOGY**

The appropriateness of telepsychology services will be evaluated before beginning this modality of psychotherapy and also periodically throughout your treatment in telepsychology. Ultimately, AUPSC clinical supervisors have the final say in who is eligible for telepsychology services. Your graduate clinician, in consultation with his/her clinical supervisor, may decide that telepsychology is not appropriate to meet your needs. Alternatively, after initiating telepsychology, your graduate clinician and their supervisor may determine that the benefits of the modality no longer outweigh the risks. In the event that telepsychology services are denied or discontinued, be aware that such a decision is meant to mitigate the

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Initials

risks to you. Your graduate clinician will make reasonable efforts to provide you with alternative options for continued psychotherapy services, including options for engaging in in-person counseling or referrals to another professional in your location who can provide appropriate services.

### **OTHER ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

You and your graduate clinician will decide together which kind of telepsychology service to use. You may need to have a certain type of computer or cell phone to use telepsychology services. You are solely responsible for any cost to you to obtain any necessary equipment, accessories, or software to take part in telepsychology.

For communication between sessions, AUPSC graduate clinicians will use email communication only with your permission and only for administrative purposes unless other agreements have been made. This means that email exchanges with AUPSC clinicians should be limited to administrative matters, including: scheduling or rescheduling appointments, billing, and other related issues. You should be aware that AUPSC cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any information communicated by email. Therefore, AUPSC graduate clinicians will not discuss any clinical information by email, and you are discouraged from discussing sensitive issues related to your telepsychology mental health care in email as well. Also, AUPSC graduate clinicians do not regularly check emails sent to AUPSC, nor do they respond to such emails immediately. Therefore, email communication between you and your graduate clinician should not be used in emergency situations.

If an urgent issue arises, you should feel free to attempt to reach your clinician by email, but you are strongly encouraged not to wait for a reply; rather, in the event that you are in crisis or have an urgent mental health need, you should utilize the contact information for emergency services provided to you at the outset of telepsychology (see the document titled Emergencies and Telepsychology).

### **NOTICE OF AUPSC BREAK OPERATIONS**

Auburn University Psychological Services Center (AUPSC) operates on the academic calendar of the university. As a result, our clinic's hours of operation change University during holiday breaks and between semesters. On occasion, these breaks may last up to 4 weeks. When the clinic is closed, no clinicians, supervisors, or staff are available to communicate with or have a session. Any forms of contact will not be reviewed until the clinic opens.

### **Crisis Procedures during Clinic closure and breaks**

I understand that AUPSC does not have a 24 hour answering service and is not open during university breaks, student/semester breaks, and holidays. Should I feel that I am experiencing a crisis or emergency situation during a time when the clinic is closed (such as evenings, weekends, holidays, or other closures), I should call one of the following emergency services:

#### **Call 911 for immediate assistance**

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	988 or 1-800-273-8255 (TALK)
East Alabama Mental Health Emergencies	1-800-815-0630
East Alabama Medical Center - Emergency Service	334-528-1150
(AU students only) AU Student Counseling and Psychological Services	334-844-5123

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Initials

AUPSC Client Services Agreement

I acknowledge that my clinician has reviewed these procedures with me and has provided me with a copy for my reference. Lastly, if your AUPSC graduate clinician will be unavailable for an extended time, they will inform you well in advance of their absence. Together, the two of you will make reasonable arrangements for your care during that time, including the provision of contact information of another member of the AUPSC team to contact if needed.

If you have questions about procedures at AUPSC, you should discuss them with your graduate clinician, the staffed clinical supervisor, or the Clinic Director whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, AUPSC will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT AND AGREE TO ITS TERMS AND BILLING POLICIES. IT ALSO SERVES AS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE HIPAA NOTICE FORM DESCRIBED ABOVE.

I \_\_\_\_\_ give my consent for \_\_\_\_\_ live observation and/or \_\_\_\_\_  
(Initial) (Initial)  
recorded telepsychology sessions by AUPSC for the purpose of training and supervision.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client Name (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client Date of Birth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature (If Applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Clinician Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

If not the client, the person responsible for payment for this client’s psychological services is:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to client: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Responsible Party Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

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