



Counseling Center Informed Consent for Assessment and Treatment

Student Name (printed)

Date of Birth

Banner ID #

FIRST VISIT:

As a registered student of SUNY Buffalo State College you are eligible to receive a range of services at the Counseling Center (TCC). Our Stepped Care Model is designed to be personalized and relevant to each individual each individual student. The type of services that you are eligible to receive will be determined after the initial consultation with one of our counselors. This initial consultation usually takes about 20 minutes. The objective of the assessment process is to collaborate with you to determine the best course of treatment for your current needs. Depending on your concerns, we may offer any of several services to you including individual therapy, group therapy, referrals to other resources, or support coordination. Referrals for off-campus psychiatric services will be provided if needed. If initial solutions prove ineffective, it is your responsibility to reengage with the Counseling Center to discuss what happened, and the counselor will work with you to explore other options and, if appropriate, recommend more in-depth assessment/treatment. If your needs or concerns necessitate care beyond our short-term counseling model, a counselor will recommend an appropriate referral to another agency outside the campus community.

CONFIDENTIAL RIGHTS:

Your information is confidential, which means that no information about you can be released outside of the Counseling Center without your written consent. However, there are specific and limited exceptions to this confidentiality including:

- When there is a risk of imminent danger to one's self or to another person, the counselor is ethically and legally bound to make the necessary steps to prevent such danger. This may include seeking involuntary hospital assessment or alerting family, pertinent campus officials, or Crisis Services. Note that only the information pertinent to the situation will be released to the relevant parties.
- When there is suspicion of a child or elder being sexually and/or physically abused or is at risk of such abuse, the clinician is legally required, as a mandated reporter, to take the necessary steps to protect that child or elder and to report to the proper authorities.
- NY State SAFE Act: This law requires licensed physicians, licensed psychologists, licensed social workers, and registered nurses to alert the County Director of Community Services who informs the NY Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) if you are likely to engage in conduct that will result in serious harm to self or others. DCJS would identify whether you have a gun permit, and if so, take steps to remove your firearms. This law can also prevent you from obtaining a gun permit for five years following a report to the DCJS.
- Information may be also disclosed as a result of a subpoena or a court order in conjunction with judicial proceedings.

Electronic records and written records of your sessions are kept confidential--accessible by the TCC staff only. These records are not part of your educational records. The staff of the Counseling Center operates as a team. Therefore, your counselor may consult with other staff members or receive supervision from a senior staff member from time to time. These consultations are for professional and training purposes only and are aimed at providing the best possible care for all clients.

Further constraints on confidentiality exist when working with a minor student. If you are under 18, please inform your clinician of this so that s/he discuss with you your rights and the limits of confidentiality.

NOTE: With the exception of staff consultations, the situations described above are rare. However, if they should arise, it is our policy to discuss with you whenever possible your rights, limits to confidentiality, and any action being contemplated. If disclosure of confidential information does become necessary, we will attempt to release only the minimal information necessary to protect you and/or another person. Furthermore, in addition to our commitment to your privacy, the counselors in TCC are expected to treat all clients with respect and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, familial status, pregnancy, predisposing genetic characteristics, military status, domestic violence victim status, or criminal conviction.

TCC is a training facility as defined by the International Association of Counselors (IACS) and we provide training to students from graduate programs in the area. All professionals-in-training are supervised by licensed staff.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Your active participation in the counseling process is necessary for progress to be made. We recognize that this can be difficult at times, but the more you are able to share with your counselor, the more benefit you will gain from your counseling. Among the very important responsibilities are:

PROMPTNESS:

Arriving on time for appointments will allow you to take full advantage of your counseling sessions, which are generally 45 minutes long. Arriving late for your scheduled appointment start time may result in your appointment needing to be rescheduled.

ATTENDANCE:

In order to provide effective help with your problem(s), it is extremely important that you commit to regular attendance for all counseling appointments. If it is necessary to cancel/reschedule an appointment, we ask that you call at least 24 hours in advance whenever possible. Repeated late cancellations or no-shows (including arriving 15+ minutes late) will result in the Counseling Center closing your file. To reengage with services, you will need to access services through the triage system and may be required to meet with the Clinical Director of the Counseling Center to assess your treatment needs at that time. Community Crisis Services are also always available at 716-834-3131. A detailed "Scheduling & Missed Appointment Policy" is posted in the waiting room and is available upon request to discuss with your counselor.

NOTIFYING COUNSELOR OF CRISIS:

Emergency walk-in services will always remain available to all registered students during Urgent Care hours. If an urgent situation arises and you find yourself in acute distress, please notify the Counseling Center of this as soon as possible by calling 716-878-4436. These appointments are first-come-first-served so a wait may be necessary. If the urgent situation cannot wait for TCC Urgent Care services, you should call the 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or you can call Crisis Services 24-hour hotline at (716) 834-3131 in Buffalo/Erie County.

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH AND RECORD KEEPING:

The Counseling Center engages in ongoing research aimed at improving services. Most of this research is routine, such as analyzing data from forms like the ones you are completing today. When such data is collected, it is used for research purposes only. No individual data is reported and no names are used. Confidentiality in psychology research is mandated by the laws governing the professional practice of psychology in New York State. Clients' information is maintained in a Counseling Center computer database. This information is coded and encrypted and only accessible to authorized Counseling Center staff. If you have any questions or concerns, please discuss them with your counselor.

COMPLAINTS:

We take all feedback seriously, and with care and respect. If you have any concerns (such as lack of progress, discomfort in your therapy sessions), we encourage you to talk about it with your counselor so that s/he can respond to them. If you feel that your rights have been violated, you may ask to meet with the Clinical Manager of the Counseling Center, Dr. Charlene J. Vetter, or you may file a complaint with Rock Doyle, Assistant Vice President for Health and Wellness at SUNY Buffalo State.

RISKS:

While psychotherapy and/or medication may provide significant benefits, it may also pose risks. Psychotherapy may elicit uncomfortable thoughts and feelings, or may lead to the recall of troubling memories. Medications may have unwanted side effects.

CONSENT: I have read, understand, and agree to the information provided above. I understand the risks and benefits of counseling and voluntarily consent to receive services from the SUNY Buffalo State Counseling Center. This form is signed electronically as part of first appointment paperwork and is saved in your confidential file. A copy of your signed consent form is available upon request.

NOTE: If you do not agree to participate in services, please do NOT sign this form - call the Counselor Center at 716-878-4436 to be referred to other services.

Typing my full legal name (after "/s/") and date below constitutes my signature:

Signature of Patient: /s/ _____ Date: _____

Once signed, this form can be returned via email to counselingcenter@buffalostate.edu or via mail to the fax/address above. Confidentiality of email cannot be guaranteed, as e-mail is not a 100% secure medium.