

Empower Therapy for Women, LLC

Office 9, 716 Xenia Ave
Yellow Springs, OH 45387

INFORMED CONSENT FOR TELETHERAPY

Teletherapy is the practice of therapy through the use of distance communication technology, such as telephone, email, Internet-based communications and Videoconference. At Empower Therapy for Women, LLC, we opt to conduct teletherapy through VSee, which is a HIPAA-compliant Internet-based videoconferencing app. Because our office is located in Ohio, we can only see clients who live in Ohio, and/or are within state boundaries at the time of service.

Teletherapy is an innovative new procedure for delivering psychotherapy. Because of recent advances in communication technology, the field of teletherapy has evolved. In addition to our general Informed Consent policy which you have already read and signed, this form will discuss potential risks, benefits and other notable issues that are important to consider before initiating teletherapy.

Consultation to Determine Appropriateness of Teletherapy: Teletherapy is not appropriate for all clients and psychological problems. Before we can commence treatment, one of our providers will conduct a free twenty-minute screening over the phone or in-person in order to determine whether your specific needs are a good match for teletherapy. If the provider feels that you are a good fit, then they will schedule your first teletherapy appointment, and give you information regarding how to access the VSee software. However, if the provider determines at that time, or at any other point, that your needs would be better met by in-person therapy, then they will offer you referral options in your area.

Risks and Benefits: Teletherapy is an innovative new procedure for delivering psychotherapy. Because of recent advances in communication technology, the field of teletherapy has evolved. It has allowed individuals who may not have local access to a mental health professional to use electronic means to receive services. Because it is relatively new, there is not a lot of research indicating that it is an effective means of receiving therapy. An important part of therapy is sitting face to face with an individual, where non-verbal communication (body signals) are readily available to both therapist and client. Without full use of this information, teletherapy may potentially be slower to progress or less effective. Teletherapy may or may not be as effective as in-person therapy and therefore you and your provider must pay close attention to your progress and periodically evaluate the effectiveness of this therapy.

Confidentiality Risks: We have chosen to use the VSee platform due to its high-quality end-to-end encryption software, which minimizes this risk of data theft. However, bear in mind that, despite these measures, anytime that information is transmitted through the internet or through distance technology, there is a risk that the information will be stolen by unauthorized third parties, which has the potential to infringe on your right to confidentiality. The meetings will not be recorded or stored and no one other than your provider will be permitted to access or observe the transmission. Anytime that we speak to you on the phone or through VSee, we will verbally ask for confirmation that we are speaking to the correct person, in order to ensure that our communications are directed to you, and only you.

Disruptions to Services: When using any distance technology services, there is always the risk of sudden and unpredictable disruptions due to a poor connection on either side, or software/hardware malfunctioning. Should this occur, then your provider will call you at your preferred number in order to complete the remainder of the appointment over the phone, or will reschedule for a later date. The Cancellation Fee policy will not apply in these situations (meaning that we will only charge for the amount of time that we were able to successfully meet, and nothing more), as long as the client has made a good faith effort to correct the source of any technical issues.

Issues Using Software: If you are having difficulty using VSee, you can call our clinic at 937-662-9080 and speak to our office manager, Matthew Moon, who can provide you with general technical assistance, or can work with VSee technical support to help you. In the event that you are unable to use VSee due to compatibility issues, we will work with you to attempt to find an alternative platform that will work for your system.

Alternative Means of Contacting Provider and Response to Messages: If you need to speak to your provider about another issue outside of the regularly scheduled appointment, you may call our clinic at 937-662-9080 and ask for your assigned provider. If they are unavailable, you may leave a message on their confidential voicemail.

Emergencies: We do not provide 24-hour or emergency therapy services. Although we will make every effort to be available to you if crises arise, you cannot depend on our staff to be available in emergency situations. If you have any urgent concerns between appointments, you can call our office number and either speak with the receptionist or leave us a message. While we check our voicemails regularly and try to respond as quickly as possible, but there is no guarantee that it will be checked within a short time frame. Upon the start of teletherapy, your provider will give you a list of emergency resources in your local area. If you are unable to reach us, and feel you must talk to a professional immediately, it is suggested that you call or go to one of the locations on your list of emergency contacts, rather than waiting for a response from your therapist.

I have read and understand the information provided above. I have discussed it with my therapist, and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I hereby consent to engaging in teletherapy.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____