



Anna Maria College Counseling Services

Statement of Informed Consent

Welcome to the Anna Maria Counseling Service. This document contains important information about counseling services at Anna Maria College. Please discuss any questions or concerns you may have about it with your counselor and/or the Director of Counseling.

General Information:

- The services provided by the Counseling Service are offered free of charge to all currently registered students
- The Counseling Service offers individual, short term counseling, as well as referrals to off campus resources when appropriate. Services are provided in-person or via telehealth
- The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
- Call the Health and Counseling Service at 508-849-3315 during our hours of operation for scheduling, or email counseling@annamaria.edu

Counseling may involve discussing difficult aspects of your life and you may therefore experience challenging feelings during or after the counseling sessions. Benefits of counseling can typically include symptom relief, an enhanced sense of well-being, and an increased ability to cope with stressors and challenges, including academic pressures. You may also gain a better understanding of yourself which will assist in your personal development.

Emergency Information: If you are experiencing a mental health emergency during business hours, contact the Health and Counseling Center at 508-849-3315. If it is after hours or on the weekend, or is a life threatening emergency, contact Public Safety at 508-494-9010 or call 911

Use of Email Communications and Electronic Calendar: While every effort is made to ensure the confidentiality of email communication and calendar system, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Please follow up with your counselor if you have questions or concerns about this aspect of confidentiality.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality is a key component of counseling. Confidentiality in the Counseling Service is guided by the professional ethics of the counselors, and by state and federal law. Information shared by students in counseling, including that they are attending counseling, is confidential and **may be released only with the consent of the student** or under a very limited range of exceptions.

These exceptions include:

- If there is a determination that the student poses a significant threat of serious and imminent harm to self or others
- If there is suspicion or disclosure that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or is at risk for abuse
- We receive a lawfully issued subpoena or judicial order signed by a judge
- Records of counseling sessions do not become a part of a student record or transcript. Student employees are not permitted to handle client records.

The Counseling Service believes in providing integrated care. For this reason, we may seek to make referrals to the Health Service at Anna Maria, and consult with other counselors within the Counseling Service. If you prefer to opt out of this system of care within the Health and Counseling Services, please speak with your counselor.

Session Information: Sessions are approximately 45 minutes long. It is asked that the student call the Counseling Service if you are going to be late. If you must cancel an appointment, it is your responsibility to call as far in advance as possible, and to communicate that you would like to reschedule your appointment when you cancel.

TELEHEALTH

The extent of confidentiality and the exceptions to confidentiality that are outlined in the original Informed Consent still apply in telehealth. Please speak with your counselor if you have questions.

Benefits and Risks of Telehealth

- **Risks to confidentiality:** Counseling Service clinicians will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. It is important for you to find a private place for our sessions where you will not be interrupted or overheard. It is also important for you to protect your privacy on your cell phone or other device. You should participate in counseling only while in a room or area where other people are not present and cannot overhear the conversation.
- **Issues related to technology:** There are many ways that technology issues might impact telehealth. For example, technology may stop working during a session. To minimize privacy breaches we will use a secure platform whenever possible. Your counselor will ask for a back-up phone number to use in the event of technical difficulties.
- **Crisis management and intervention:** Assessing and evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting telehealth than in traditional in-person counseling. Therefore, your counselor may create an emergency plan prior to beginning. You will need to provide an alternate contact in case of an emergency, disruption, or technological connection failure. If there is a disconnection, your counselor will try to reconnect with you. If you do not hear back from your counselor in 2 minutes, call the Counseling Service office: 506-849-3315. If you are in need of immediate assistance, call 911.
- **Efficacy:** Most research shows that telehealth can be an effective way of conducting counseling sessions. However, there is a risk of misunderstanding one another when communication lacks visual or auditory cues. Telehealth services may not be as complete as face to face services, and your counselor may determine that telehealth is not appropriate. Alternative plans will be made in those circumstances.

Acknowledgement of Informed Consent: I have read and I understand the contents of this Informed Consent. I consent to participate in the assessment and treatment offered to me by the staff of the Counseling Service. I understand that I may end my treatment at any time.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Emergency contact name: _____

Phone number: _____

Relationship: _____