

## Informed Consent for Telehealth Services

The following information outlines and explains the process of using telehealth services for psychotherapy. This document covers your rights, risks and benefits, and my policies associated with using telehealth platforms.

I offer face-to-face psychotherapy by default, and there may be times where schedules, travel, health, community, or environmental concerns arise and telehealth allows us to continue to meet. Depending on the context, you may engage in either face-to-face sessions, telehealth, or both as we schedule appointments. Telehealth isn't always a great fit for the work we might be doing, and when possible we can decide if we feel the platform doesn't address our needs and goals. Some methods we use, like EMDR, might be adjusted while using telehealth. Otherwise, the structure, policies, and cost of telehealth sessions are the same as face-to-face sessions.

### **What is Telehealth**

Telehealth means the remote delivering of health care services via technology-assisted media. This includes a wide array of clinical services and various forms of technology including but is not limited to, telephone, video, internet, tablet, desktop system or other electronic means.

I use a few options, and we can choose the one that works best for us, and alternate if needed.

Doxy.me- a secure telehealth platform found at [www.doxy.me](http://www.doxy.me). The link to my online office and waiting room is <https://doxy.me/drrobbins>

Google Hangouts- I have a HIPAA compliant Google Business platform

Telephone

### **Security and Privacy**

When using telehealth, our technology and our environments are best when they are secure and confidential. Our platform should be secure, and HIPAA compliant. While the platforms I use comply with standard protocols for protecting health information, we can't entirely control and monitor 3rd party applications. While the risk is low, it is possible that telehealth platform usage leads to demographic or other information being accessed.

Recording of online sessions should not occur unless explicitly discussed and agreed on by all involved. All telehealth session information is and will remain confidential, as in any other session, and will not be revealed without written permission, except where disclosure is required by law.

Telehealth sessions are best conducted in situations where you have relative privacy and confidentiality and cannot easily be overheard by others, and in situations where you have minimal distractions.

At times, security and privacy may not be completely accessible, and this is not a barrier to continuing to meet. It is your right to use tools and situations that best meet our needs, and we can discuss individual situations as they arise.

### **Limitations of Telehealth Therapy Services**

Telehealth offers several advantages such as convenience, flexibility, and stability so that we can continue to meet if meeting in person is not an option. It may however involve disadvantages and limitations. There may be a disruption to the service (e.g., phone gets cut off, video drops, technology checks). This can be frustrating and interrupt our usual flow. There is a risk of misunderstanding one another when communication lacks in-person cues, or the timing for response feels different. We can identify challenges if they arise, and adjust as needed.

### **In Case of Technology Problems**

While using telehealth we may encounter technology issues. Difficulties with hardware, software, or 3rd party services may result in interruptions. If technology disrupts our appointment, we can switch to the phone, try another platform, and decide on our next steps together. If a session cannot continue, we can re-schedule if possible, or try again the following week after addressing the technical issue we encountered. If a session can't continue due to technology, it is still considered that the session was attempted and the fee will be charged.

### **Payment and Cancellation**

Your fee will be charged at the conclusion of each telehealth session. In the event that you are unable to keep either a face-to-face appointment or a telehealth appointment, notify me at least 48 hours in advance. If advance notice is not received, you will be financially responsible for the session you missed.

If you have Beacon insurance through SFHP, there are no changes related to fee. Beacon includes telehealth sessions without pre-authorization, and we can choose to use telehealth at our discretion. We can discuss cancellations and how they impact our sessions.

### **Emergency Management Plan**

If we are using telehealth platforms and you are experiencing an emergency, we can work together to create a plan. This may include reaching out to others for support, planning for helpful activities, planning care, or seeking medical/hospital/other assistance if necessary.

If you encounter any other urgent situations, we can pause our session as you address the matter or end the session if a matter requires your full attention.

### **Conclusion**

If you have any questions, you are welcome to ask at any time, and we can devise a schedule and session plan that best meets our needs.