

**10 Hickok Street Suite 201**

**Christiansburg, VA 24073**

**540-315-1445**

[**www.counseling-connect.com**](http://www.counseling-connect.com)

PRACTICE POLICIES

APPOINTMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

Please remember to cancel or reschedule 24 hours in advance and to arrive on time for your appointment. **You will be responsible for the entire fee ($125) if cancellation is less than 24 hours or if you arrive more than 15 minutes late.**

**Cancellations and re-scheduled sessions will be subject to a full charge if not received at least 24 hours in advance.** This is necessary because a time commitment is made to you and is held exclusively for you. If you are late for a session, you may lose some of that session time.

It is your responsibility to manage your care and communicate with your therapist about your needs for services, as well as scheduling and keeping appointments. Your therapist may recommend a certain amount or frequency of sessions, but the choice to participate in therapy is yours. If you miss an appointment, then your therapist will contact you by phone or email one time. **If there is no contact between you and your therapist for 30 days or more, then your chart will be made inactive.** You are welcome to reactive your account at anytime in the future; however, you will be required to redo all of your intake paperwork and consent forms before you can be seen. **It is possible that your therapist will no longer be available upon the time that you decide to re-enter services.** Should this occur, you will be referred to a therapist at Counseling Connect or another practice.

**The standard meeting time for psychotherapy is 50 minutes.** It is up to you, however, to determine the length of time of your sessions. Requests to change the 50-minute session needs to be discussed with the therapist in order for time to be scheduled in advance.

INTAKE PAPERWORK

You will receive an intake packet when you make your first appointment. **All paperwork needs to be completed prior to our initial meeting.** If not, then we will have to reschedule your appointment after the forms are finished.

PAYMENT

We do not take insurance. If you have mental health coverage, you may file out-of-network claims with your insurance provider.

**The fee for the initial assessment is $135. The fee for regular 50 minute sessions is $125.** Pre-paid packages of multiple sessions can be purchased at a discount. Sliding scale spots are very limited and may be obtained through membership with Open Path Collective.

Payment is due at the time of service. You may pay for sessions with debit or credit card. Personal checks are not accepted.

HEALTH & SAFETY

**If you or your therapist are ill, then we will conduct your therapy session over telehealth or reschedule your appointment for a later date.** If any client or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 or comes into direct contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, then they will not be admitted into the Counseling Connect office. Masks are available in the waiting room for anyone to use during an office visit.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

**Counseling Connect, PLLC does not and shall not discriminate** on the basis of race, color, age, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, religion, disability, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services to clients and the community. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all clients, staff, volunteers, and vendors.

TELEPHONE ACCESSIBILITY

If you need to contact your therapist between sessions, please send an email or leave a voice mail to your counselor’s direct address or phone number. You can reach the practice owner and clinical supervisor, Rae Burgess by phone at 540-315-1445 or by email at [rae@counseling-connect.com](mailto:rae@counseling-connect.com). We are often not immediately available; however, we will attempt to return your call within 24 hours. **In the event that you are out of town, sick or need additional support, online sessions are available.**

**If a medical emergency arises, please call 911 or any local emergency room. In case of a mental health crisis, please call 988.**

SOCIAL MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATION

Due to the importance of your confidentiality and the importance of minimizing dual relationships, we do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc). We believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk more about it.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

We cannot ensure the confidentiality of any form of communication through electronic media, including text messages. If you prefer to communicate via email or text messaging for issues regarding scheduling or cancellations, we will do so. While we may try to return messages in a timely manner, we cannot guarantee immediate response and request that you do not use these methods of communication to discuss therapeutic content and/or request assistance for emergencies.

Services by electronic means, including but not limited to telephone communication, the Internet, facsimile machines, and e-mail is considered telemedicine by the State of California. Under the California Telemedicine Act of 1996, telemedicine is broadly defined as the use of information technology to deliver medical services and information from one location to another. If you and your therapist choose to use information technology for some or all of your treatment, you need to understand that: (1) You retain the option to withhold or withdraw consent at any time without affecting the right to future care or treatment or risking the loss or withdrawal of any program benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled. (2) All existing confidentiality protections are equally applicable. (3) Your access to all medical information transmitted during a telemedicine consultation is guaranteed, and copies of this information are available for a reasonable fee. (4) Dissemination of any of your identifiable images or information from the telemedicine interaction to researchers or other entities shall not occur without your consent. (5) There are potential risks, consequences, and benefits of telemedicine. Potential benefits include, but are not limited to improved communication capabilities, providing convenient access to up-to-date information, consultations, support, reduced costs, improved quality, change in the conditions of practice, improved access to therapy, better continuity of care, and reduction of lost work time and travel costs. Effective therapy is often facilitated when the therapist gathers within a session or a series of sessions, a multitude of observations, information, and experiences about the client. Therapists may make clinical assessments, diagnosis, and interventions based not only on direct verbal or auditory communications, written reports, and third person consultations, but also from direct visual and olfactory observations, information, and experiences. When using information technology in therapy services, potential risks include, but are not limited to the therapist's inability to make visual and olfactory observations of clinically or therapeutically potentially relevant issues such as: your physical condition including deformities, apparent height and weight, body type, attractiveness relative to social and cultural norms or standards, gait and motor coordination, posture, work speed, any noteworthy mannerism or gestures, physical or medical conditions including bruises or injuries, basic grooming and hygiene including appropriateness of dress, eye contact (including any changes in the previously listed issues), sex, chronological and apparent age, ethnicity, facial and body language, and congruence of language and facial or bodily expression. Potential consequences thus include the therapist not being aware of what he or she would consider important information, that you may not recognize as significant to present verbally the therapist.

MINORS

If you are a minor, your parents may be legally entitled to some information about your therapy. We will discuss with you and your parents what information is appropriate for them to receive and which issues are more appropriately kept confidential.

TERMINATION

Ending relationships can be difficult. Therefore, it is important to have a termination process in order to achieve some closure. The appropriate length of the termination depends on the length and intensity of the treatment. **We may terminate treatment services with you if we determine that the psychotherapy is not being effectively used or if you are in default on payment.** We will not terminate the therapeutic relationship without first discussing and exploring the reasons and purpose of terminating. If therapy is terminated for any reason or you request another therapist, we will provide you with a list of qualified psychotherapists to treat you. You may also choose someone on your own or from another referral source.

**Should you fail to schedule an appointment for four consecutive weeks, unless other arrangements have been made in advance, for legal and ethical reasons, we must consider the professional relationship discontinued and your account will be made inactive.**