



NEW VISION CARE MINISTRY

Policy Description: NVCM.002 Limits of Confidentiality

Revised Date: 07/11/2023

Applies To: NVBC Biblical Counselors

PURPOSE: To outline the state, federal, and NVBC limits to confidentiality in biblical counseling.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important part of the counseling process. Confidentiality will be maintained; however, all counselees must understand that absolute confidentiality is not scriptural. Scripture provides special circumstances under which facts may be disclosed to select others (Matthew 18:15-17).

Covenant church members of New Vision who through the counseling process are found to be in open rebellion and unrepentant sin will be lovingly and compassionately counseled with in a biblical manner by church leadership and Senior Pastor. The intent and goal is always restoration for the church member.

If the church leaders or Senior Pastor inquire about the status of his or her sessions, the Director of Biblical Counseling will disclose to them the information that is necessary for them to effectively and biblically fulfill their shepherding responsibility. Confidentiality, however, will remain within that small group of individuals.

By law, there are certain situations in which information about individuals undergoing counseling may be released with or without their permission (Romans 13:1-3).

These situations are covered in the *Care Ministry Agreement To Counsel* outlined below.

Care Ministry Agreement To Counsel



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Survey Name: New Vision Consent to Counsel **Survey Type:** Survey Type B: Clients must complete survey

Frequency: One Time

Survey Visibility: ☒ Visible to Clients ☐ Not Visible to Clients

Session Notes

Survey Description: Please electronically sign this form first.

Remind & Notify

[Edit Survey Info](#)

[Set Question Order](#)

Color Scheme

Request Care Text

Order	Question
	The Goal of Biblical Counseling

The Goal of Biblical Counseling

The purpose of New Vision is to help fellow believers glorify God with their thoughts, words, and actions, which is made possible by the redemptive power of Jesus Christ., the conviction and guidance of the Holy Spirit and the instruction of God's Word. An additional goal is to lead people to an understanding of what it means to be a true follower of Jesus Christ.

Please read over this *Consent to Counsel* which communicates both counselor and counselee responsibilities in the counseling relationship.

Your signature at the bottom of this form indicates your understanding and acceptance of our counseling policies and procedures.

Once this form is submitted you may proceed to the **My Care** tab to fill out your counseling request.

Understanding Biblical Counseling

We are confident that the Bible has all the instruction necessary for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3-4). Your counseling will be biblically based in which the Scriptures are, in all cases, the final authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Our counselors do not pretend to know all there is to know about biblical teaching and its application to life; nevertheless, they do know much and will do their utmost to help you. While we believe that the Bible speaks to all of life and to all of its problems, we also believe that sometimes it takes careful thought and prayerful wisdom to know how to make those connections.

Our counselors are trained to help guide you in applying biblical wisdom but will honestly tell you if you should seek additional assistance from a qualified mental health facility. It should be understood that biblical counseling consists of the giving of scriptural advice and the practical application of the same to each individual. Yet the counselee is held fully responsible for how he or she implements that advice (James 1:23-25).

If you are not sure that you will be interested in biblically-based counseling, you will be given the option of attending one or two sessions to discover what biblical counseling is like. If the counselor determines that the counselee is unwilling to use the Bible as the final authority for life, or if he is uninterested in learning to do so, future counseling sessions will not be scheduled.

The Biblical Counseling Team

Our counseling team consists of qualified and trained biblical counselors whom are trusted covenant members of New Vision. The use of the word "counselor" in this document can equally refer to a pastoral counselor, biblical counselor, or a lay-person trained in biblical counseling. Counseling trainees may be invited to join the counseling sessions in order to observe the counsel; however, they are bound to the same requirements of confidentiality as stated below.

New Vision counselors are not trained as and do not counsel as licensed psychologists, licensed psychiatrists, state certified therapists, or any other type of professional mental health care provider. Consequently as they should not be expected to follow the methods of such specialists, and under Tennessee law, no such licensing is required.

Their purpose is to minister from the Word of God as peers of the counselees. There will be no attempt to render a psychological evaluation or diagnosis. If you have significant legal, financial, medical, or other technical questions, you should seek advice from an independent professional.

Counselee's Commitment

- Coming to each meeting prepared to review your progress throughout the last week (including the completion of personalized "homework" assignments) and being prepared to share your goals for the present meeting.
- Attending all scheduled counseling sessions to the best of your ability.
- Many times, our counselors travel to the church just to meet with you. To honor your counselor's time commitments, cancellations should truly be on an emergency-only basis.
- We ask that if you need to cancel an appointment that a minimum of a 24 hours notice is given in order to respect the time of the biblical counselor. If a 24 hours notice is not given then the counselee may be required to pay a cancellation fee before sessions can be resumed.

The counselor assigned to your case will directly contact you to set up your first counseling session.

Because the Scriptures teach that growth in Christ requires all the resources of the Body of Christ (not only biblical counseling, but also discipleship, worship, fellowship, and stewardship), we believe that it is essential that those seeking biblical counseling at our church commit themselves to the following: (as it pertains to your church)

- We encourage regular church attendance (at your church or New Vision) while being counseled.
- We encourage regular participation in a small group, care group, service group, or other discipleship group in the life of the church.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process. We carefully guard the information you entrust to us to the fullest extent possible. However, we do not promise confidentiality. Your counselor reserves the right to consult with other counselors or pastors at New Vision for the purpose of providing the highest level of care.

Additionally, there are times when counseling information may be shared outside the New Vision context. Those exceptions would include, but are not limited to the following:

- When there is concern that someone is being or may be harmed unless other persons or protective services intervene (Romans 13:1-7).
- When Counselee expresses clear and specific suicidal intent, Counselor may take reasonable measures for the safety of Counselee. Reasonable measures may include notifying police if the Counselee will not cooperate to involve him or herself in a watch-care program or facility.
- If Counselor has reasonable cause to believe that an adult is in need of protective services, Counselor may take reasonable measures to prevent harm. Reasonable measures may include directly advising the potential victim of a threat or intent and/or informing the appropriate protective and/or law enforcement agencies.
- When Counselor is uncertain how to address a problem and needs to seek the advice from a pastor, supervising counselor, or educator (Proverbs 11:14; 24:6).
- If there is a claim of, the observance of, or clear reasonable cause to suspect the physical or sexual abuse of a child with whom Counselor comes into contact or who is associated with someone to whom Counselor is in contact with, reasonable measures may be taken to ensure the child's protection and/or to fulfill the legal mandate to report such harm to the appropriate governmental protection agencies.
- Counselors reserve the right and discretion to contact any and all appropriate entities when, as a result of the counseling, it is clear that a crime has been committed or is about to be committed or the safety and welfare of any person (including the counselee) is in jeopardy. The counselor is not required to notify the counselee in advance of any such contact with the appropriate entities.
- If a legal subpoena or other court order is received directing the disclosure of certain information.
- When counseling someone who is under familial authority (e.g., wife to husband, child to parent) and if deemed safe by Counselor, Counselor may encourage Counselee to inform Counselee's familial authority of critical issues and/or Counselor may inform the familial authority (Ephesians 5:22, 6:4).
- When a person refuses to renounce a particular sin and/or refuses to confess it to those impacted, Counselor may, in Counselor's discretion, seek the assistance of a trusted member or leader of any involved church to encourage repentance and/or reconciliation (Proverbs 15:22; 24:11; Matthew 18:15-20).
- If/when your counselor participates in case consultation with their counseling supervisor or the director of counseling.
- When Counselor deems it appropriate or necessary to discuss information with a training observer or an assisting advocate who is involved or observing counseling.
- In matters of church discipline. If a person persistently refuses to renounce a particular sin (habitual unrepentant rebellion against the Word of God) and it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance, restoration, and reconciliation (see Matthew 18:15-20).

Please be aware that your counselor is not a licensed psychologist, licensed Marital or family therapist, or licensed counselor under the authority of any state or national certifying board or organization. Consequently, communications between you and your counselor are considered privileged communications as defined by state law. This means that, in a legal proceeding, a judge may be compelled to disclose any statements you make to your counselor.

The Cost of Counseling

While there is no set fee for our counseling services, we do request you to prayerfully consider a minimum suggested donation of \$35 per session. Please know your care is of primary importance to us and we will neither refuse nor stop counseling on the basis of your ability to make a donation. We simply ask you to consider this donation prayerfully as a means of investing in your care and the New Vision Counseling Ministry. Donations to the New Vision Counseling Ministry can be made easily at nvbccare.com.

Release of Liability

My electronic signature below indicates my informed consent to the above guidelines. Additionally, by signing this document, I am, of my own free will knowingly authorizing New Vision to render Biblical counseling and/or referral services to me. I declare that I am fully capable of discerning good and bad advice, and release my counselor, New Vision, its Leadership, staff, employees, or any other associated ministry or organization from any legal liability, claim, or litigation arising from my participation in this voluntary ministry. I affirm that no guarantee or assurance of any kind has been made to me with respect to the expected results of counseling. I have been informed of the nature and purposes of Biblical counseling and that my consent can be revoked orally or in writing prior to and/or during the counseling session.

Furthermore, I understand that the counselor to which I am assigned is not licensed, nor is required to be licensed, by the State of Tennessee or any national certifying organization, as a professional counselor, fee-based counselor, social worker or therapist. I understand that I will not be given a psychological diagnosis based on the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. I also understand that those who provide care are not trained as and do not counsel as licensed psychologists, licensed psychiatrists, state certified therapists, or any other type of professional mental health care provider. I understand that I will receive Biblical guidance based on the teachings and authority of God's Word.

I have read the conditions for counseling set forth in this Informed Consent Form and agree to release New Vision, its leadership, staff, counselors, and employees from any legal liability, claim, or litigation arising from my participation in this voluntary ministry. If you agree, please enter your name below which the parties agree will be your electronic signature: