Statement of Policy and Services

Individual counseling and other services at Counseling Services are free of charge to current Kent State University at Stark students. A student must be currently enrolled (in the Fall or Spring) and have at least half of their classes registered at the Kent State University at Stark campus to be eligible for services. During Summer, students must be enrolled in Summer classes or be a current student enrolled from both Spring and the coming Fall semester. Counseling services are provided by counselors licensed by the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board of Ohio.

Counseling Services offers face-to-face and teletherapy (via phone or Microsoft Teams). The appropriateness of a student for teletherapy is determined on an individual basis with consideration to individual and campus-related circumstances. Teletherapy also requires additional consents and paperwork to be initiated.

Medications are not available to be provided nor prescribed by any staff in Counseling Services.

Phone calls and emails to Counseling Services are responded to within two (2) business days. Phone calls and emails are not responded to after the close of the office each day, weekends, and holidays in which the campus is closed. Emergency and crisis support contact information is listed on the Counseling Services voicemail and website and are appropriate resources for immediate and emergent needs.

All clinical records are maintained as confidential according to the provisions of state and federal laws and ethical guidelines of the counseling profession. Clinical information will not be shared with any third party without written consent. Exceptions to this include: 1. release of records from a court order, 2. suspected child/elder abuse and/or neglect, 3. the student is at or has expressed imminent risk of physically harming him or herself, other identified person, or an identified structure by the clinical judgment of the counselor. Clinical records are maintained separately from student and academic records.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if another person other than Counseling Services staff is present during the counseling session.

At the time of intake, all new students will be provided with a copy of this statement, Consumer’s Bill of Rights, and Personal Health Information to review. Copies and additional information are available to review and per request.

If you are unable to attend your appointment, it is requested that you contact the office in advance of your scheduled appointment. Frequent or repeated last-minute cancelations may be addressed with you by the counselor.

If services cannot be adequately and/or appropriately provided to the student, Counseling Services staff will assist with necessary referrals to a more appropriate treatment setting off campus.

Rev. 5/2020
Privacy and Your Records at Kent State University at Stark Counseling Services

The privacy of health-related information, including your records at Counseling Services, is governed by federal and state laws.

- Your health information with providers outside of Counseling Services is regulated by the federal Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- As a student at Kent State University, access to your academic records is regulated by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Both HIPAA and FERPA view medical and mental health treatment records of students as a unique category of records, and consider them “treatment records” protected by specific guidelines defined by FERPA.
- Finally, as mental health providers, Counseling Services clinical staff is bound by Ohio state laws regarding the privacy of information you share at Counseling Services.

What does all of this mean?

At Counseling Services:

- Your records are confidential and we are responsible for maintaining the privacy of your information.
- Your treatment records are not part of your educational record at Kent State University.
- Your health care information may be discussed and records reviewed by Counseling Services clinical staff and Counseling Services administrators for consultation and quality assurance purposes.
- Aggregate unidentified information may be used for agency and research purposes.
- If you want Counseling to provide documentation or communicate with someone outside of Counseling Services, we must have your written authorization, except in specific circumstances. You may revoke this authorization in writing at any time.
- Counseling Services may disclose limited relevant information without written consent for the following reasons: emergency treatment, threat of harm to self, threat of serious physical harm to others, child abuse or neglect, billing-collections, legal defense of the agency, trial for homicide, court order, and specific circumstances defined by the Patriot Act.
- In cases where Counseling Services clinical staff believe a child may be the victim of abuse or neglect, a report must be filed with the Child Protective Services of the appropriate Ohio county.
- You may access the information in your Counseling Services file, however, the physical and electronic records are the property of Counseling Services.

Counseling Services prioritizes the privacy of your health care information and strives to comply with all related federal and state laws and professional ethical codes. When laws and codes conflict, Counseling Services will generally apply the more restrictive of policies and consider the health, safety, and well-being of all involved.

If you feel that a violation of your privacy has occurred, this may be addressed by Counseling Services or by filing a complaint with the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board of Ohio (614-466-0912).
A Consumer's Bill of Rights

All consumers of services offered by licensed professionals of the State of Ohio Counselor, Social Worker & Marriage and Family Therapist Board (CSWMFT Board) have the legal right to... 

Receive competent professional services.

Verify the credentials of licensed professionals and to know the names and titles of licensed professionals who provide service.

Services that are respectful and sensitive to your cultural background.

Clear explanations of the services being offered or provided and how much they cost.

Refuse any services offered.

Know what client records will be maintained and how to obtain copies; personally identifiable information normally cannot be revealed without the consumer's consent.

File a complaint with the CSWMFT Board about a licensed professional or an unlicensed practitioner.

Request and be provided reasonable accommodations to access professional services if you are a person with a disability.

You are encouraged to choose professionals who uphold the rights listed above and who also:

- Treat you with courtesy and respect.
- Explain your service options, including their consequences and any follow-up services which may be required or recommended.

For answers to questions about these rights and for more information about what services licensed professionals may provide, contact:

Counselor, Social Worker & Marriage and Family Therapist Board
77 S High St., 24th Flr, Rm 2468
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6171
Telephone: (614) 466-0912 - Fax: (614) 728-7790
Email: cswmft.info@cswb.state.oh.us

Professional Misconduct Complaints: Call 614-466-0912 and ask for the Investigation Department.