



CENTERSTONE

VIRTUAL CLINIC OF TENNESSEE GROUP THERAPY PARTICIPATION POLICIES

Prior to participating in any Centerstone Tennessee - Virtual Clinic telehealth therapy group, please read this entire document to help you understand online groups, confidentiality, the risks and benefits of these services in order to help safeguard you and your fellow participants.

Not all people find online group treatment helpful so if you or your therapist has a concern, it is expected that you will communicate that concern with each other and alternative services can be explored. If another form of treatment is believed to be more appropriate for you, your therapist will work with you on referral to a more appropriate service.

Confidentiality & Privacy:

The Virtual Clinic adheres to professional, legal, and ethical guidelines of confidentiality. Information about your sessions will be released only with your signed consent, *unless otherwise authorized by applicable law including, without limitation, situations such as allegations of child or elder abuse, or risk of immediate danger or harm to self or others.*

Group leaders will typically email to make administrative arrangements for the group, such as setting up group meetings or receiving cancellation notices from group members. Email is not considered a secure method for sharing detailed clinical information. Should you need to speak with a group therapist about therapeutic concerns, it is recommended to contact them via their provided work office and/or work cell phone numbers.

Attendance:

This group therapy program is scheduled to run for twelve (12) sessions. Due to the brief nature of this group, **attendance is important to receiving the highest benefit from sessions.** More than two (2) absences from programming may result in being removed from group, to ensure sessions the highest continuity of care for all group members.

In order to ensure group therapy experiences are as beneficial to every client as possible, the following is requested of all group members. Violation of any of the following may result in temporary or permanent removal from group:

- Refrain from using mind altering substances prior to session
- Do ***not*** conduct other activities while in session, such as driving a vehicle, shopping and/or receiving other services
- Do ***not*** have weapons with you while you are engaging in your telehealth session (excluding rifles/weapons that may be on the wall for decorative purposes)
- Do ***not*** record or screenshot any portion of the session. Any materials shared within group by the therapist will be sent to all members by email after the close of the session.
- Be located within the state of Tennessee at the time of participation, where your Virtual Clinic provider(s) is licensed. If you are in another state, please inform the provider of your absence due to being out-of-state at the time of the group session.
- Use a secure Wi-Fi/internet/data connection, rather than a public or free Wi-Fi.



- Limit any potential distractions such as children, email, pets etc. during the group session.
- Be in a private setting, alone, and with the door closed. Headphones/earbuds are recommended so that what group members are sharing is further protected. If your privacy is disrupted, please exit the group until you are alone, again. If you are unable to return to group before close, please email your group leader to inform them of the reason you were not able to return to group.
- **Do *not* disclose to anyone outside of the group any information that may help to identify another member.** This includes, but is not limited to, names, physical descriptions, biological information, and specifics to the content of interactions with other group members. *This also includes posting on social media any details, such as quotes, images, videos, or personal commentary, about individuals or events in IOP.*
- Your camera/screen are to be “on” throughout the session; blacked out/hidden screens will ***not*** be permitted, and any use of this may result in removal from the group. **Please test your audio & video prior to session start, as the group leader will *not* be able to support technical troubleshooting during session times.** If you are facing issues, contact your leader *in-advance* or contact Zoom’s Technical Support Line at (888) 799 – 9666.
- Dress and prepare for the group similarly to an in-person group. Please do ***not*** present to group in swimwear, intimate wear, shirtless, with offensive statements/images on clothing, and so forth.
- Refrain from using the chat feature on the platform and communicate directly with your group. **Group leaders have access to all chats, even those labeled “private,” so be aware that no chat features are fully private.**
- By being a virtual service, we may lose things taken for granted in an in-person format, such as non-verbal cues. There is room for misinterpretation by group leaders and group members. Please clarify with group leaders and peers if you feel misunderstood.

If there are technological issues that disconnect you from the group session, please try to re-join the group. If you are unsuccessful in re-joining, please email the group leader to inform them of the reason that you had left the group.

Contact Information/Emergency Contact Information:

If you do ***not*** have an active emergency contact on file with Centerstone, please notify any of your Centerstone treatment staff members. Should there be concern for your wellbeing, your Emergency Contact person may be contacted by your group leader. In cases of Emergency, group leaders may also request a welfare check by your local safety department.

If you find yourself in crisis in-between sessions, please utilize the Centerstone Mobile Crisis at 1-800-681-7444 or 988, text 988, or chat at <http://988lifeline.org/chat>. You can also access face-to-face emergency services by going to your nearest hospital emergency department or call 911.

I, _____ have received, read, and understand Centerstone Tennessee – Virtual Clinic’s Group Therapy Participation Policies.

Date: _____