

Texas Military Forces Counseling Department

Consent for Treatment

Overview: The Texas Military Forces (TXMF) Counseling Department provides clinical services to National Guard service member/family member/staff (SM/FM/staff). The TXMF Counseling Department staff is independently licensed by state licensure boards to provide professional behavioral health services. They establish a professional relationship between themselves and the SM/FM/staff by providing clinical services that may include counseling, assessment, crisis management, referral, case management and/or consultation. These services may be offered in an office, public venue or by Telemental Health. Telemental Health services include video conferencing, telephone calls, emails, and texts.

Client Rights & Responsibility

Rights

- 1. To be treated fairly and with respect**
- 2. To withhold or withdraw consent at any time**
- 3. To stop therapy services at any time**
- 4. To request referral to another counselor**
- 5. To review my chart (following agency procedures)**

Responsibility

- 1. To attend all scheduled sessions**
- 2. To participate in counseling sessions**
- 3. To treat the counselor fairly and with respect**

Release of Information:

The TXMF Counseling Department is committed to keeping medical, mental health, and substance abuse records protected and confidential under state and federal laws, regulations, and ethical mandates.* Disclosure of records shall be prohibited except with the written consent of the SM/FM/staff or as otherwise authorized by law. When the SM/FM/staff gives prior written consent to release information, this release specifically indicates the nature and scope of topics to be released, to whom information is to be released, the purpose of the disclosure, the date on which the consent terminates, and prohibition of secondary release.

Possible exceptions that mandate release of information are as follows:

- 1. SM/FM/staff poses a danger to self or others.**
- 2. Suspicion of child, vulnerable adult or elder abuse or neglect**
- 3. The disclosure of information is allowed by a valid court order.**
- 4. The disclosure is made to medical personnel in a medical emergency.**
- 5. Case Consultation with another licensed professional in the department**
- 6. TXARNG Counseling Dept Behavioral Health Lead or COA Accreditation program for audit or program evaluation only.**

SM Requirement for Self-Reporting Issues: SMs may be required or mandated to self-report medical information to a military health care provider or commander. This may include medical issues, domestic violence, alcohol and substance abuse, and sexual assault. The SM is responsible for determining his/her need to self-report. The TXMF Counseling Department will not report on the SMs behalf without a signed Release of Information (ROI), or if one of the aforementioned exceptions to confidentiality exists. The counselor may assist with reporting if the SM/FM/staff requests assistance.

The Counseling Process: Benefits and Risks: Effective counseling can improve your ability to handle or cope with marital, family, and other interpersonal concerns. Counseling can also enhance your own awareness of personal needs, feelings, goals, and other individual concerns. Some of the benefits of counseling may include, but are not limited to, increased maturity, improved self-esteem, and increased personal happiness. Additional benefits of counseling may be seen when specific problems are resolved. In working to achieve these potential benefits however, counseling will require you to make efforts to change, and may at times lead to significant emotional discomfort. Remembering and resolving unpleasant events can arouse intense feelings of fear, anger, depression, frustration, and the like. Seeking to resolve interpersonal or relationship problems between family members, marital partners, and other persons can similarly lead to some discomfort, as well as changes in the relationships that were not originally intended. It is important to realize that sometimes relieving anxiety or pain means temporarily increasing the anxiety and pain. It is important to inform your counselor of such experiences so that he or she is aware and can help you to manage the process.

Telemental Health Service Considerations:

1. There can be partial or complete failure of equipment
2. No permanent video or voice recording is kept of the Telemental Health Services session
3. Email and text services are not guaranteed to be secure
4. Video conferencing can only be initiated by the BHCounselor
5. Email and text may be considered part of your medical record
6. Telemental health Services may not be as complete as face -to - face services
7. If the Behavioral Health Counselor believes the SM/FM/staff would be better served by face-to-face services, SM/FM/staff will be referred to a mental health professional who can provide such services in their area.
8. Certain situations, including emergencies and crises are inappropriate for Telemental Health Services sessions.
9. Instant access to a counselor is not available by email or text services.
10. Telemental Health Services (email, text, video conferencing) are only available during normal business hours, unless other arrangements are specifically made with the BH Counselor.
11. The 24/7 TXMF Counseling Line, 512-782-5069, does not accept text.

I have read the Consent for Treatment and I understand and agree to it.

Client Name (print): _____

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

TXMF Counseling

Department

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Including, but not limited to, 5 U.S.C. 7361, 7362, 7901, and 7904, 44 U.S.C. 3101, Privacy Act of 1974, 42 CFR, Part 2, HIPAA, and NGB Directives and Instructions*

If you have a question about the professional performance of a social worker licensed by the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners or a counselor licensed by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors, please use one of the contacts below: 1-800-942-5540 (Complaint Hotline)

Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners
P.O. Box 149347
Mail Code 1982
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

VISIT: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork>

Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors
P.O. Box 141369
Mail Code 1982
Austin, Texas 78714-1369

VISIT: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/counselor>