

VIRGINIA BEACH COUNSELING SERVICES

Client Information Booklet

5505 Indian River Road, Suite 100
Virginia Beach, VA 23464
Phone: (757) 472 - 4982
Fax: (757) 282 - 5929

Virginia Beach Counseling Services is a multidisciplinary mental health practice in which licensed professional counselors, certified professional life coaches, therapeutic mentors, residents in counseling, and other mental health professionals provide a wide range of services to individuals, families, and groups. Treatment is provided for clients of all ages, and services include individual, family and marital therapy, supervised visitation, mentoring, life coaching, and groups in specialty areas such as substance abuse or batterer's intervention.

Seeking the services of a mental health professional is not always an easy step to take. Our staff will work hard to make this process as smooth as possible, working with primary care physicians or referring agencies to address particular needs with sensitivity and efficiency.

Services usually involve talking with a client or a family to get some understanding of the problem and developing a treatment plan with the client. This plan may involve elements such as talking therapy, coaching, or mentoring, but this process should be a collaborative effort with the client assisting in providing important information and working as an active partner in the treatment process. This is especially true in work with children because parent/guardian input and involvement is essential.

All of the clinicians at Virginia Beach Counseling Services are experienced practitioners with specialized training in their areas of expertise. Every clinician is independently licensed by the State of Virginia, or supervised by a licensed clinician.

Many of our clinicians are credentialed by managed care companies and some are able to accept many different insurances. Our staff will be happy to clarify your particular insurance benefit for mental health services.

Many services are provided that behavioral health insurance benefits do not cover (life coaching, supervised visitation, etc.) Services can be provided on a self-pay basis for those without insurance or those who do not choose to use insurance benefits for a reduced rate.

Office Hours

Our office is open for appointments Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. and on Friday 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Individual clinician schedules vary. Our business office is open to help you with questions about billing or authorizations Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Friday 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Saturday hours are available by appointment only.

Appointment Scheduling

Staff is available to schedule your appointments during the regular business office hours. We ask that you call to cancel or reschedule an appointment with 24 hours advance notice. Failure to cancel with proper notice will result in a \$50.00 charge to your account. Your insurance will not cover this charge.

Please call us during normal business hours. If you need to call after hours, you can leave a message.

Emergencies

If you feel that you are in a situation that requires immediate attention, please call our office at 757-472-4982. After the office is closed, this phone is answered by our answering service or receptionist. They will get in touch with a clinician if it is an emergency, and the clinician on call will return your call.

If you are in a life-threatening emergency, call 911 for the assistance of police and rescue.

Notice of Privacy Practices

Uses and disclosures

Treatment. Your health information may be used by staff members or disclosed to other health care professionals for the purpose of evaluating your health, diagnosing medical conditions, and providing treatment. For example, results of laboratory tests and procedures will be available in your medical record to all health professionals who may provide treatment or who may be consulted by staff members.

Payment. Your health information may be used to seek payment from your health plan, for other sources of coverage such as an automobile insurer, or from credit card companies that you may use to pay for services. For example, your health plan may request and receive information on dates of service, the services provided, and the medical condition being treated.

Healthcare operations. Your information may be used as necessary to support the day-to-day activities and management of Virginia Beach Counseling Services. For example, information on the services you received may be used to support budgeting and financial reporting, and activities to evaluate and promote quality.

Law enforcement. Your health information may be disclosed to law enforcement agencies, without your permission, to support government audits and inspections, to facilitate law enforcement investigations, and to comply with government mandated reporting.

Public health reporting. Your health information may be disclosed to public health agencies as required by law. For example, we are required to report certain communicable diseases to the state's public health department.

Right to Revise Privacy Practices

As permitted by law, we reserve the right to amend or modify our privacy policies and practices. These changes in our policies and practices may be required changes in federal and state laws and regulations. Whatever the reason for these revisions, we will provide you with a revised notice on your next office visit. The revised policies and practices will be applied to all protected health information that we maintain.

Request to Inspect Protected Health Information

As permitted by federal regulation, we require that requests to inspect or copy protected health information be submitted in writing. You may obtain a form to request access to your records by contacting the receptionist or the Privacy Officer.

Complaints

If you would like to submit a comment or complaint about our privacy practices, you can do so by sending a letter outlining your concerns to:

Privacy Officer
Virginia Beach Counseling Services
5505 Indian River Road, Suite 100
Virginia Beach VA 23464

If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated, you should call the matter to our attention by sending a letter describing the cause of your concern to the same address.

You will not be penalized or otherwise retaliated against for filing a complaint.

Other uses and disclosures require your authorization.

Disclosure of your health information or its use for any purpose other than those listed above requires your specific authorization. If you change your mind after authorizing a use of disclosure of your information, you may submit a written revocation in the authorization. However, your decision to revoke the authorization will not affect or undo any use or disclosure of information that occurred before you notified us of your decision.

Individual Rights

You have certain rights under the federal privacy standards. These include:

The right to request restrictions on the use and disclosure of your protected health information.

The right to request confidential communications concerning your medical condition and treatment.

The right to request to inspect and copy your protected health information upon review with your doctor or clinician.

The right to request amends or submit corrections to your protected health information.

The right to receive an accounting of how and to whom your protected health information has been disclosed.

The right to receive a printed copy of this notice.

Virginia Beach Counseling Services Duties

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of your protected health information and to provide you with this notice of privacy practices.

We are also required to abide by the privacy policies and practices that are outlined in this notice.

Billing and Insurance

Payment is expected at the time of services. If you should have any questions regarding your account, you may contact us during our regular business hours, Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Friday 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Please feel free to discuss any difficulties with timely payment with our staff.

We accept payment by cash or credit card.

Due to the complexity of insurance and manage care requirements for preauthorization, please carefully discuss with our staff and with your insurance company the requirements of your particular insurance. We will make every effort to make sure that services are authorized at the time that they are delivered. The final responsibility, however, belongs to the client.

Co-pays and deductibles also vary by insurance company. Our staff will help you establish what your co-payment is, but the ultimate determination of your personal share of the charges is made by your insurance company. You will want to contact your insurance company directly to be certain of your co-payment and deductibles.

If it is an eligible services, we will file your primary insurance for you. We must depend on you to provide us with accurate information, and with immediate notice of any changes in coverage or in your carrier. Without accurate information, the possibility exists that the insurance provider will not cover services.

If you insurance company denies charges, you will be held responsible for the denied charges. Changes made to your insurance coverage, even without your knowledge, do not excuse your responsibility for services rendered. This can be especially important in divorce situations where your coverage may be provided by a relative living out of the area. Military dependents should also be aware that insurance coverage under Tricare or Champus is contingent upon having an up-to-date ID card.

Please be sure to notify us of any changes in address, phone number, or insurance coverage.

Services not Covered by your Insurance Provider

Your insurance company will be billed for services that are determined to be medically necessary and are appropriately documented and authorized. You may have requirements imposed upon you by a third party, such as the court, an employer, or a school for evaluations, letters, or reports about your progress in treatment, that will not be paid for by your insurance company. Separate charges will be made which will be your responsibility to pay out of pocket. Your clinician will make every effort to inform you of any such charges when the request for non-covered service is made. Please feel free to inquire about any charges that may be involved in any letter or report that you might request.

The following services that are not considered medically necessary and are therefore not paid by your insurance provider:

Court Appearance/Subpoenas – \$250.00 per hour with \$750.00 minimum to be paid prior to court date.

Preparation time for court appearances - \$125.00 per hour

Letters - \$125.00 per hour prorated for actual time spent

Medical Records - \$.50 a page up to 50 pages
\$.25 a page after 50 pages
All postage and shipping costs
Search and handling fee not to exceed \$10.00

No show/late cancellation fee - \$50.00

General Clinical Services

Mental health services are provided on a personalized basis at Virginia Beach Counseling Services. You are assured that you will always see the same clinician for every visit at this practice. This consistency is important to forming a positive therapeutic alliance that is at the center of good mental health services.