



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
W A S H I N G T O N , D C

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COUNSELING CENTER

March 18, 2020

Dear American University,

The American University Counseling Center (AUCC) is committed to the health and safety of the American University Community. As a result of the changes that are occurring related to the potential spread of COVID-19, the AUCC is moving to a telemental health (TMH) model, which we believe will put us in the best position to support the mental health needs of the University. TMH will begin on Monday 3/16/2020 and end when the University resumes normal operating status. The move to TMH will result in several changes that are outlined below:

1. **Crisis Intervention will be available 24 hours a day via AUProtoCall Services at 202-885-7979.** All students will be able to access this number from any location and receive crisis intervention services.
2. Clinicians have contacted current clients and informed them of the TMH procedures.
3. AUCC staff must abide by state licensing laws. As a result of state licensing laws, Counseling Center staff are **unable** (by law) to provide **ongoing** services to students who are **not physically in the District of Columbia** (Virginia and Maryland are not considered part of DC).
  - a. Students who are currently receiving services at the AUCC but are unable to return to the District received an email and a phone call from their clinician outlining treatment options and referral resources.
  - b. Treatment for students who are outside of the District of Columbia will be suspended until the University resumes normal operating status.
    - During this time cancellations and no-shows will not be counted towards session limits.
  - c. As stated above, all students will be able to access AUProtoCall Services for crisis intervention regardless of their current location.
4. Starting at 10:00 am on Monday 3/16/2020, students who wish to access services may do so by using the following link: <https://AUCC.doxy.me/americanuniversitycounselingcenter>. This link will bring students to a virtual waiting room. Clinicians will meet virtually with students through a secure HIPAA compliant video conference platform.
  - a. This service will work with smart phones as well as laptops and tablets.
  - b. Should a student not have the necessary technology, they can contact the main Counseling Center number 202-885-3500 and speak with a clinician on the telephone.
    - Calls will be returned within 24 business hours.
  - c. The AUCC will only be conducting triage appointments for students who are not currently in treatment at this time. **All students are eligible for a triage appointment.** Triage appointments are generally 15-30-minute meetings.
    - Triage hours are currently 10am-12pm and 1:00pm-4pm Monday through Friday.

5. Until normal University operations resume:
  - a. All Initial Consultations that are scheduled on or after Monday 3/16/2020 will be canceled.
    - All students who had their IC appointments canceled have been contacted by clinicians who offered to provide them with referral resources and options for future treatment.
  - b. All group therapy has been suspended.

The American University Counseling Center understands that there are many mental health challenges associated with the impact that COVID-19 is having on American University and the world at large. It is our hope to ethically and lawfully support the mental health needs of the American University community. Please see our website for additional updates and changes in the services we can provide, as states are making rapid changes to TMH regulations.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeffrey Volkmann, ABPP  
Executive Director  
American University Counseling Center