Privacy and Your Records at 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).