

Robert Morris University Counseling Center

Information and Consent Form

Services Provided

The Robert Morris University (RMU) Counseling Center offers a variety of individual and group therapy, as well as psychiatric medication management.

Counseling and psychotherapy can have both risks and benefits. The counseling process may include discussions of your personal challenges and difficulties which can elicit uncomfortable feelings such as sadness, guilt, anger and frustration. However, counseling has also been shown to have many benefits. It can often lead to better interpersonal relationships, improved academic performance, solutions to specific problems and reductions in your feelings of distress. But, there is no assurance of these benefits.

Confidentiality

In keeping with the ethical standards of the American Psychological Association, American Psychiatric Association, National Association of Social Workers, the American Counseling Association, and state and federal law, all services provided by the staff of the Robert Morris University Counseling Center are kept confidential except as noted below. As required by state and federal law and current ethical standards, we keep records of your counseling appointments. These records are stored electronically in an encrypted database. Only Counseling Center staff has access to your records. Neither the fact that you seek counseling or any information disclosed in counseling sessions will appear in your student record unless you specifically direct us to communicate with other staff and faculty at the University.

Counseling Center staff members have a legal responsibility to disclose student information to designated personnel without prior consent in certain situations. Exceptions to confidentiality may be made in the following circumstances:

- Serious immediate threat to your life or welfare
- Serious immediate threat to the life or welfare of another person or the community at large
- Suspicion or report of abuse or neglect of a child currently under the age of 18, or of a dependent older adult
- When required by a court of law
- Counseling staff consultation and supervision
- To professionals actively engaged in your treatment

Consult with your therapist or doctor if you have any questions about confidentiality. Please read and sign the [consent agreement](#) listed on the following page.

Counseling Policies

Although we try to arrange initial counseling appointments promptly, a waiting list is common during busy periods of the year. If you consider your situation an emergency that will not allow a delay, please inform the staff. For after-hours emergency services, contact Re:Solve (1-888-796-8226) or the University Police (412-397-2424), or go to the nearest emergency room.

Many issues typically encountered by students can be addressed with the short term counseling we provide. Your initial session is an assessment session, devoted to defining your concerns, developing a treatment plan and determining whether the RMU Counseling Center can meet your needs. If at any point it is determined that other services are more suitable, we will help you obtain assistance from appropriate community providers. Non-compliance with the plan we develop to assist you could result in the termination of services.

Please arrive on time for your appointments. Missed appointments reduce our capacity to provide services to other students. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please cancel as far in advance as possible. Repeated cancellations or missed appointments may result in the termination of counseling at the RMU Counseling Center.

Use of electronic mail

Please be aware that e-mail may not be private or confidential and may not be read by the recipient in a timely fashion. As a result, email communications will be limited to non-clinical issues only (appointment scheduling, etc.).

(Over)

Psychiatry

The RMU Counseling Center also offers time-limited medication assessment and management services provided by psychiatrists through an agreement with the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic. Eligibility for psychiatric medication services is contingent upon concurrent active treatment with an RMU therapist. Your current therapist may refer you for psychiatric medication evaluation and/or treatment when that is the best option. If you do not attend your scheduled initial psychiatric evaluation session you will then be referred to a community psychiatrist for the necessary evaluation and/or treatment, unless this would pose a serious threat to your safety and wellbeing.

Psychiatric Medications

New medications will be prescribed only during psychiatry medication office visits. This is done so that your psychiatrist can perform a current assessment of your condition and discuss with you the risks and benefits that may be associated with a new medication and its alternatives.

It is your responsibility to request medication refills in a timely manner. If you need a prescription to be refilled, it is strongly preferred that you request a new prescription from your psychiatrist during a scheduled office visit. This will allow your psychiatrist to re-evaluate your condition and address any of your concerns. If you run out of medication prior to your scheduled psychiatry visit, contact your psychiatrist. The psychiatrist will only authorize a refill in the exact amount necessary to provide treatment continuity until the soonest possible medication follow-up appointment. Please allow 7 business days for refill requests to be processed, and be aware that some medications cannot be legally refilled via telephone. To safeguard student health, refills for medications will not be authorized if you have not been evaluated by your psychiatrist within the past 90 days. Routine medication refills are authorized only during regular business hours.

Client Rights and Responsibilities

Counseling Center clients have a right to be treated with respect, to know their therapist's name and qualifications, to ask questions about services provided to them, to participate in making decisions about their treatment, to request that their therapist inform them of their progress, and to refuse a particular type of treatment or end treatment without any obligation or penalty.

Counseling Center clients have a responsibility to describe their concerns/issues clearly and completely; to work toward their counseling goals; to be on time and keep all appointments for scheduled services at the Counseling Center, and/or to do their best to call or email no less than 24 hours in advance to cancel or reschedule appointments.

Consent Agreement

I hereby specifically give consent to my therapist to contact any person who is in a position to prevent harm to me or another, including, but not limited to, the person in danger. In the event that the university administration, faculty, or staff have concerns regarding my safety/wellbeing and need to consult due to risk of my safety or the safety of others, I grant my therapist consent to advocate on my behalf. I also give the RMU Counseling Center staff permission to communicate with the emergency contact I have designated, or other appropriate personnel, if, in their professional judgment, they believe I am at risk of serious bodily harm or death, or that others are risk of serious bodily harm or death.

Please sign below to indicate that you understand and agree to participate in counseling in accord with the policies stated herein.

Name
(please print)

Signature

Date