

TELEPSYCHOLOGY IN LIGHT OF COVID-19

This is the Board's guidance on telepsychology services for the near future. Please note, as far as we can tell, the government's edicts on telemedicine do not apply to psychology.

1. **Telepsychotherapy and/or Testing [Clinical Interview and MSE] Via Internet or Cell-Phone** – In order to provide these services, the psychologist is required to acquire a telehealth HIPAA compliant computer program from an appropriate company. The key words are “HIPAA Compliant.” These companies will route your communication through HIPAA compliant secure servers. Some names of such companies are listed below. The board is not endorsing them. We learned about them from psychologists who have or are using them.

[a] **Ethan Paxon, First Choice Services** – 304-344-2113

email: Ethan@1stchs.com web: <https://www.adaptivetelehealth.com/index.php/>

[b] **WeCounsel** web: <https://www.wecounsel.com/>

Scroll down to “WeCounsel” and click on “Get Started.”

[c] **Theraplatform** web: <https://www.theraplatform.com/>

[d] **Thera-link** web: <https://www.thera-link.com/>

2. **Land Line to Land Line** – This appears to be HIPAA compliant and would safeguard the confidentiality of patients. The Board recommends that you obtain a confidentiality agreement signed by the patient that he or she acknowledges that there may be some possibility of a confidentiality breach in the patient's surroundings. They should be advised to be alone when receiving such telepsychotherapy.
3. **Accommodation of Face to Face Supervision** - During this limited time of the COVID-19 crisis, supervision provided via telehealth is approved if the telehealth system is HIPAA compliant. Please see the section 1.
4. **Provision of Services by Supervised Psychologists via Telehealth** - This is approved if the criteria of section 1 are met.
5. **Telepsychology Provided by Psychologists Licensed in Other States** – The Board may grant a temporary permit to those holding an active license in another state. It allows up to 80 hours of psychotherapy for one year. This is approved if the out-of-state psychologists provide proof that [a] section 1 criteria are met, [b] their license is current, and [c] it is without restrictions.

Below is information on obtaining a temporary permit. Usually there is a fee for this, but the fee will be waived until the crisis has resolved itself.

In order to be granted 10-day temporary privileges during a calendar year in WV, please send a letter requesting the privilege that states what you plan to do within the State, when approximately you plan to perform psychological services in WV, your license number(s), the state(s) in which you are licensed and proof of HIPAA compliant means of communication.

The WV Board will verify your license(s) with the state boards and if all is in order a letter granting temporary privileges will be issued. Please note again this privilege is good for 10 days per calendar year or approximately 80 hours. This must be requested each year.