

# Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center

## Patient Guidelines for Telehealth Services

### Introduction

Telehealth allows you to meet with your mental health provider through secure video or phone sessions. These services are designed to make treatment more accessible while keeping your care safe, private, and effective.

Psychiatric medical appointments may be cancelled if you are not attending therapy services regularly. If you are unsure whether this applies to you, please speak with your therapist.

### Services Available

Through telehealth, you may receive:

- Individual therapy
- Family therapy
- Assessments
- Psychiatric medical assessments (initial or follow-up, when appropriate)

### Preparation Before Your Appointment

To ensure your telehealth visit goes smoothly:

- Have a **fully charged device** (phone, tablet, or computer).
- Make sure your device has a **working camera and microphone**.
- Use a **reliable internet connection** (wired preferred).
- Use the correct browser: **Chrome, Firefox, or Safari**.
- Have your appointment link ready (provided by CDMHC).
- Test your equipment before the session using the on-screen directions.
- Clean your device regularly with disinfectant wipes safe for electronics.

### Creating an Appropriate Environment

- Choose a **quiet, private space** free from interruptions.
- Only those participating in the appointment should be present.
- Sit in a well-lit area where you can be seen clearly.
- Keep distractions away — do not drive, eat meals, or multitask during your session.
- Have water, tissues, or a notebook nearby if needed.

## Infection Control Guidelines

Even though telehealth reduces the need for in-person visits, infection control is still important:

- Wash your hands before and after using shared equipment.
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Clean your personal device regularly.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- If you feel sick, notify your provider before your appointment.

## Check-In Instructions

1. At your scheduled time, type your provider's room address into your web browser or click the link provided.
2. Enter your name and click "**Check-In.**"
3. Be **prompt** — your provider will connect during your scheduled time.
4. Be **patient** — your provider may be finishing with another patient.
5. Be prepared to provide your **height and weight** if asked.
6. It is required that you are physically located in **South Carolina** during your session.

## During the Visit

- Stay alert and dressed appropriately.
- Speak clearly and remain visible on screen.
- Treat the session as you would an in-person appointment.
- Pause the session if you need a restroom break.
- Provide your provider with an **emergency contact name and phone number**. Notify your provider if this information changes.

## Troubleshooting & Technology Problems

- If disconnected, re-enter the appointment link.
- If you are more than **10 minutes late**, call the office — you may need to reschedule.
- If problems persist, contact the clinic:
  - Charleston: **843-852-4100**
  - Dorchester: **843-873-5063**
- If the session cannot be restored, your provider will reschedule or switch to in-person care.
- Your provider will call you at the phone number you provided if the connection drops.

## Safety Considerations

- Sessions must take place in a safe and private environment.
- Your provider will verify your location at each session.

- If your environment is unsafe or inappropriate, your provider may reschedule.
- For psychiatric emergencies:
  - Call the clinic at **843-414-2350**
  - Call **911**
  - Or go to the nearest emergency room.

## **Summary**

Telehealth is a safe and effective way to receive mental health services. By preparing your technology, creating a private environment, following infection control practices, and working with your provider, you can make the most of your sessions.