



Northeastern Judicial Circuit Treatment Services

Dear Participant,

March 20, 2020

Treatment Services has decided that it is in the best interest of our participants and staff that we temporarily cease in-person treatment groups and in-person counseling sessions due to the latest updates on the Coronavirus (COVID- 19).

In efforts to keep all accountability court participants compliant with the requirements outlined by the Council of Accountability Court Judges (CACJ), we will be temporarily changing our group, individual, & evaluation settings over to an online, HIPAA-compliant collaboration tool called **Zoom**. This application will be easily accessible from any mobile device, desktop computer, laptop, or personal handheld tablet, iPad or smart device. There will be no additional required fees to the participant for the use of this service.

We have attached a detailed instruction guide for each participant to follow for installation. We ask that all participants complete these steps in preparation for their next group meeting time. We anticipate that we will begin using this application on Wednesday, March 25th, 2020. You will also receive instructions via text/email from the Connexis case management system. It is your responsibility to provide staff with a working phone number and/or email for communication purposes. Please allow plenty of time for the initial setup and installation of this program in order to be checked into your group on time and ready to participate.

Participants are expected to attend ALL groups assigned by counselor. All absences due to sickness or emergency must be prearranged and documentation must be provided. The absence policies and late policies of your accountability court program will remain the same during this time of transition.

Please keep these tips in mind as you prepare for your Zoom Telecommunication Session:

BEFORE THE SESSION:

1. Inform family members, roommates or other individuals that you are going to be in-session. This way, they know ahead of time to not disturb you.
2. Find a quiet room where you can be alone. This helps minimize distractions and also ensures you are protecting confidentiality for you & others in your session.
3. Ideally, position yourself at a desk, couch or kitchen island. Avoid sitting or laying on a bed.
4. Ensure you are not in front of a window, as the backlight will make it difficult for other attendees to see you.
5. Minimize distractions by turning off the TV or music and logging out of any open windows, such as email, social media, or any apps that send notifications.
6. Set your phone to "Do Not Disturb" or turn off your ringer.
7. Be sure you are appropriately dressed.
8. Consider having a snack or going to the restroom ahead of time so you can be fully present during the treatment meeting.
9. Log-in to at least 5-10 minutes early to ensure you are ready to begin at the scheduled time.
10. Check your internet connection, speakers, volume and video to ensure all is in working order.

DURING THE SESSION:

1. Don't eat a meal or smoke during a session.
2. Do not use a green-screen or digital background as it can be distracting to others.
3. Remain attentive to whoever is speaking by maintaining eye contact, leaning into the screen and engaging in the conversation.
4. If you are in a group, be sure to allow time for other members to share. Provide your insight and respond to requests for comments or questions, but don't dominate the conversation.

5. Be respectful of others when asking questions. Keep your contributions helpful and considerate of the group facilitator and other participants.
6. All normal group rules will apply. No eating, drinking, or leaving the session without permission will be allowed. Only speak when recognized by your group facilitator.

MOST IMPORTANTLY:

1. Don't arrive late or leave early as you will not receive credit for the group.
2. Don't attend a video telecommunication session from your car while driving or using public transportation.
3. Don't attend a video telecommunication session while in any public setting such as a coffee shop or restaurant.
4. Don't join a video telecommunication session in pajamas, a camisole, or other loungewear.
5. Don't allow others to be in the same room while you are in a treatment meeting – this includes children.

If you have any questions or technical difficulties with the Zoom platform, it is your responsibility to communicate with your program counselor for technical assistance or possible alternative arrangements.

It is the goal and mission of the Northeastern Judicial Circuit Treatment Services agency to provide support to all of our program participants during these uncertain times. Thank you all for your flexibility and willingness to adapt to change. We hope that we will be able to resume normal operations soon.

Thank you,

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