

MONADNOCK FAMILY SERVICES
64 Main Street, Keene, NH 03431

Telehealth Information for Informed Consent

During the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency, MFS has moved most client services to telephone or telehealth platforms to protect everyone's safety. This document expands on information verbally relayed to you about Telehealth (video/voice conferencing and/or telephonic) and how telehealth sessions differ from in-person office sessions.

On March 18, 2020, Governor Sununu ordered all health insurance payers to cover medical and behavioral health services provided by telephone and telehealth video/voice platforms to people in their homes for the duration of this public health emergency. The Federal government has now approved coverage for telephone and telehealth services for Medicare members as well.

The laws that protect privacy and confidentiality still apply and nobody will record or photograph a Telehealth session without the permission from the other person/s.

At this time, MFS may utilize a non-HIPAA-compliant video conferencing platform (Zoom) for your or for your child's telehealth sessions with a MFS case manager or therapist or prescriber or nurse. Some MFS providers may be utilizing Doxy.me, a HIPAA-compliant video-conferencing platform for individual therapy sessions or for psychiatry and medication management contacts.

MFS is working to implement **Zoom for Healthcare**, a HIPAA-compliant video-conferencing platform, for individual and group sessions. **Zoom for Healthcare** is more secure than Zoom, and includes a Business Associates Agreement (BAA) with MFS.

We recommend that, whenever possible, you use a secure internet connection rather than a public internet connection in order to better protect your confidentiality during Telehealth video sessions.

Your or your child's MFS therapist or case manager or prescriber will explain how to use this video conferencing platform prior to the initial Telehealth session. MFS will need a personal email address from you in order to send your or your child's invitation to our Telehealth sessions.

There are potential risks to using this technology, such as poor sound or resolution of images, technical difficulties and/or power outages. You will need to identify a back-up plan, such as use of a cell phone so that your MFS provider can call back should technical issues occur, and the session can transition to a telephonic session.

If you do not have a computer or smartphone for video-conferencing sessions, or prefer not to have video sessions, you can have telephone sessions during the Covid-19 Emergency.

It is recommended that both your computer and cell phone be fully charged prior to telehealth sessions, and that a quiet and private space free of distractions is available for telehealth sessions.

MFS asks that you agree to start sessions on time and provide 24 hours' notice if unable to keep a scheduled Telehealth session.

In very rare instances, security protocols could fail and cause a breach of privacy of personal information. However, your provider takes precautionary measures by using a private internet connection and privacy

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protections including password protected telehealth sessions and the 'waiting room' feature to admit you or your child to the session and block others from accessing the session.

MFS recommends making an emergency plan with your or your family member's MFS Telehealth providers. This includes designating an emergency contact person and providing their contact information should a clinical or medical emergency take place during a Telehealth session. Emergency information will be entered in the clinical record and be available to your or your child's providers.

By consenting to Telehealth Services, you authorize MFS provider(s) to contact the identified emergency contact person and/or 911, should a clinical or medical emergency take place during a telehealth session. Parent(s) or guardians or other family members are typically the emergency contact for a child or teen.

MFS will document your verbal consent to telehealth services for you or for your child during the Intake Assessment process, or for current clients, by renewing an amended Consent for Treatment that is typically completed annually.

Although Telehealth sessions provide therapeutic benefits and allow access to care during this public health emergency, no results can be guaranteed. MFS Telehealth sessions are voluntary and clients can decline to meet or have your child meet with MFS providers via telehealth.

Please contact your MFS provider or the MFS Privacy Officer with any questions or concerns about telehealth and MFS privacy practices by calling 603-357-4400 or emailing Privacy.Officer@mfs.org.