



# PLANNING TO SUPERVISE VIA VIDEOCONFERENCING?

Proper supervision is an essential component to the development of future therapists and for consumer protection. While the legal requirements for supervision for Associate Clinical Social Workers, Associate Professional Clinical Counselors, and Marriage and Family Therapist Trainees and Associates are similar for supervising in person or supervising via videoconferencing, the law requires additional considerations when determining whether to supervise via videoconferencing.

The required individual, triadic, or group supervision must be provided via face-to-face contact, and may not be conducted via telephone. Face-to-face contact means in-person contact, contact via two-way, real-time videoconferencing, or some combination of these.

### **BEFORE BEGINNING SUPERVISION VIA VIDEOCONFERENCING, CONSIDER:**

- Do I have the necessary security-compliant software and hardware to conduct supervision via videoconferencing?
- Do I understand the different types of devices that can be used for supervision via videoconferencing, and have I assessed and understand the varying levels of risk?
- Do I have the proper training for telehealth counseling and remote supervision?
- Do I have the skills and ability to provide effective supervision via videoconferencing?

### **WHEN INITIATING SUPERVISION VIA VIDEOCONFERENCING:**

Within 60 days of commencing supervision, you must conduct a meeting with your supervisee to assess the appropriateness of allowing the supervisee to be supervised via videoconferencing. This assessment must include, but is not limited to, the abilities of the supervisee, the preferences of both the supervisee and supervisor, and the privacy of the locations of the supervisee and supervisor while supervision is conducted.

The supervisor must document the results of their assessment. If their assessment finds that supervision via two-way, real-time videoconferencing is not appropriate with that supervisee, then they shall not utilize it.

As a best practice, consider conducting one or more initial in-person meetings between the supervisor and supervisee to jump-start the relationship-building process, develop the supervision agreement, and establish protocols for use of the technology.

Establish a protocol for how to handle serious and urgent crisis situations since you will not be physically present to walk the supervisee through these challenges.

Determine how you will maintain privacy during supervisory sessions. This should include how the supervisor and supervisee will conduct supervision in a confidential space without interruptions as well as how case notes will be reviewed.

Discuss how loss of internet connections will be addressed during supervision.

### **MONITORING THE SUPERVISEE'S PROGRESS TOWARD GOALS:**

Consider incorporating at least one method to monitor the supervisee's performance, such as the supervisor reviewing video- or audio-recorded sessions of the supervisee working with a client, or on-site managers or other licensed clinicians performing ongoing documentation review and/ or direct observation of the supervisee's performance. The supervisor should be aware of the quality of the supervisee's interpersonal interactions with clients.

Establish lines of communication with any other professionals who are managing the supervisee or monitoring their practice.

Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of supervising via videoconferencing for the supervisee. Focus not only on the content of sessions and interpersonal processes but also on the adequacy of technology used.

## SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY:

You are responsible for ensuring compliance with federal and state laws relating to confidentiality of patient health information. Your supervisee should be provided with information about protected health information including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act.

Supervisors and supervisees need to monitor the location of the supervisory sessions and the auditory and visual privacy of the sessions.

When the need arises to discuss sensitive cases or when identifying information needs to be shared, the supervisor and supervisee should ideally arrange to meet in person.

Supervisors and supervisees will need to continuously monitor risks that result from technology to ensure ethically sound practice while using videoconferencing for supervision.



## RESOURCES TO ASSIST YOU IN YOUR ROLE AS A SUPERVISOR:

American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (2014): Distance Counseling, Technology, and Social Media

Association of Social Work Boards Technology and Social Work Regulations Resources

California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists Code of Ethics

National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics

HIPAA & Telehealth: A Stepwise Guide to Compliance (National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers)

HIPAA For Professionals (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

