

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING/THERAPY

Definition	Maintaining a professional relationship between a qualified, licensed professional and a client (individual, family, or group) that utilizes therapeutic modalities to address one or more issues presented by the client
Goal	To empower the client to accomplish mental health, wellness, interpersonal, relational, educational, and/or vocational goals
Minimum Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, individual service planning, therapeutic intervention, and evaluation provided by a qualified, licensed professional • Interventions utilizing best practices/evidence-based practices regarding sexual violence and trauma • Incorporation of all elements of a Trauma-Responsive and Trauma-Informed Care System • Recognition that coercive interventions cause re-traumatization • All counselors/therapists are aware and trained in co-occurring disorders such as mental health and substance abuse disorders, eating disorders, self-harming behaviors, and PTSD • All counselors/therapists are trained in assessment and therapeutic interventions for poly-victimizations of the survivor • Application of knowledge about the stages of trauma recovery, vicarious traumatization, and self-care strategies, including adequate supervision • Providers are trained on Ohio's Core Competencies of Sexual Violence for Helping Professions • Following Legal and Ethical Guidelines according to professional licensure requirements in Ohio • Programs that do not offer Professional Counseling/Therapy seek, when possible, to establish memoranda of understanding, contracts, or other formal partnerships with qualified professionals or organizations in the community that are equipped to provide therapeutic services to survivors of sexual violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Programs that do offer in-house counseling/therapy establish these agreements as well, as survivors should be given options for their care • Programs aim to provide a therapist who speaks the survivor's primary language

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Program Checklist

1. Staffing

- Individuals providing professional counseling/therapy services must possess one of the following qualifications:
 - Licensed Professional Counselor (PC, PCC, or PCC-S)
 - Licensed Social Worker (LSW, LISW, or LISW-S)
 - Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist (MFT or IMFT)
 - Counselor or Social Worker Trainee, under the appropriate supervision
- All individuals meeting the above qualifications must complete 30 hours of continuing education every 2-year renewal period, including at least 3 hours in Ethics
 - All individuals meeting the above qualifications must maintain licensure in good standing with the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage & Family Therapist Board and must provide copies of licensure to employer
- All individuals providing professional counseling/therapy must maintain professional liability insurance coverage
- Those who do not possess supervisory status/independent licensure must comply with applicable regulations regarding supervision of contact with clients
- All individuals providing professional counseling/therapy to sexual violence survivors possess knowledge of sexual violence; trauma resulting from sexual violence; co-occurring issues such as mental illness, PTSD, and chemical dependency; and training/competency in Trauma-Sensitive Interventions and Trauma Informed Care
- All individuals providing professional counseling/therapy to sexual violence survivors possess knowledge of anti-oppression practices

2. Policies

- All professional counseling/therapy services must abide by ethical requirements as mandated by the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker and Marriage & Family Therapist Board and other authoritative bodies, which include:
 - Professional conduct regarding relationships and interactions between counselors/therapists and clients during and outside of sessions
 - Disclosure/informed consent regarding relevant program/agency policies, costs and billing procedures, and client rights/grievance process

- Confidentiality of client information, in accordance with appropriate regulations as dictated by law and licensure requirements
 - Discontinuation of counseling/therapy services and referral to other agencies if the client is dissatisfied, uncomfortable, or not benefitting from services
 - Termination and transfer of services when the clinician leaves the agency
 - The Program reasonably accommodates the unique needs of individual clients, including accessibility and cultural needs
- b. The Program has a policy that ensures survivors are informed of their option for a referral or change of therapist
- The Program has a policy outlining the safe storage and removal of client files, case notes, and other documentation
 - The Program has a policy regarding clients who miss appointments or arrive late
 - The Program may refuse to provide counseling/therapy services to clients who are harassing or offensive; instead, referrals to other agencies are made as appropriate
 - Clinical group notes are stored properly with no identifiable client information of other survivors in the group listed in other client files (i.e. stored separately)
 - Rape crisis Qualified Advocates must not coerce survivors or co-survivors into receiving professional counseling/therapy services at the program or agency
 - The Program has a policy clearly defining and differentiating between the roles of rape crisis advocates and licensed counselors/therapists in interacting with survivors
 - The Program has a policy regarding mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect, and of other mandated reporting situations
 - The Program has a policy and protocol regarding response to clients at risk of harming self and/or others, including active risk and involuntary hospitalization
 - The Program has a policy regarding the self-care of counselors/therapists, including information about vicarious trauma; resources; and protocol for supervision, time off, and caseload
 - If professional counseling/therapy is not offered by the Program, the Program establishes memoranda of understanding, contracts, or other formal partnerships with qualified professionals or organizations in the community that are equipped to provide therapeutic services to survivors of sexual violence

3. Evaluation

- All counselors/therapists provide a report of the numbers served on a

regular basis, per program, funding, and licensing requirements

- Client feedback surveys are provided to clients upon discharge from services; surveys should be anonymous, unless the client chooses to self-identify
- The Counseling/Therapy Supervisor reviews surveys and other client input on a regular basis and provides constructive feedback to individual counselors/therapists
- Case notes/documentation are reviewed by the Counseling/Therapy Supervisor on a regular basis to ensure proper documentation
- The quality/efficacy of counseling/therapy services is evaluated on a regular basis (in accordance with individualized service plans/goals set with the input of clients, and at least annually) by the Counseling/Therapy Supervisor, and adjustments are made to service structure and delivery as needed and feasible