



## **PRACTICE POLICIES**

All Evaluations and/or treatment will be conducted by a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner at Mente Behavioral Health, PLLC and conducted within the boundaries of Massachusetts state laws and regulations. This form is to be read prior to your visit and you will agree to it at the time of the visit. If consent is not provided the appointment cannot legally take place.

*Mente Behavioral Health, PLLC Patient Portal-* You will be able to access our integrated patient portal which will allow patients to send messages/emails to myself or Alex Gomez, Administrative Assistant. This patient portal will also allow you to pay bills, view medical documents, request appointments and access telehealth appointments.

*Insurance/Reimbursement-* It is the patient's responsibility to inform Mente Behavioral Health of any changes in their health plan. Patients are responsible for all copays at the time of their visit, as well as deductibles and any out-of-pocket expenses.

*Appointments-* I provide services by appointment only. If you feel that you need to see me sooner than our next appointment, please send me a message/email through the *Healow* portal.

The standard meeting time for an initial visit is 60 minutes, over the course of 2-3 visits. Follow up appointments will be 30 minutes or 60 minutes for medication management. It is up to you, however, to determine the length of time of your sessions. Requests to change the 50-minute session needs to be discussed with the therapist in order for time to be scheduled in advance.

A \$10.00 service charge will be charged for any checks returned for any reason for special handling.

*Cancellations:* Please remember to cancel or reschedule 24 hours in advance. You will be responsible for the entire fee if cancellation is less than 24 hours. This is necessary because a time commitment is made to you and is held exclusively for you. If you are late for a session, you may lose some of that session time.

*Confirmations:* Mente will attempt to confirm appointments via email and text upon your consent, however, it is your responsibility to know the date and time and how to access the telehealth session. The reliability of your phone or internet connection is also not a reason for a waiver of a no show or late fees.

*Telephone Accessibility:* If you need to contact me between sessions, please leave a message on my voicemail at 978-276-9722, send a portal message or email at [info@mentebh.com](mailto:info@mentebh.com). I am often not immediately available; however, I will attempt to return your call within 2 business days, Monday through Friday. If it is a weekend or State/National holiday, please allow up to 48-72 hours. Please note that face-to-face sessions are highly preferable to phone sessions. If a true emergency arises, please call 911 or any local emergency room. Email should never be used for urgent or emergency issues.

*Prescription Refills:* Prescriptions are refilled during appointments only and attendance is required. Please update the practice with new contact, pharmacy, or insurance information.

*Crisis management and intervention:* Usually, I will not engage in telehealth with clients who are currently in a crisis requiring high levels of support and intervention. If a crisis arises, we may both agree to utilize telehealth services for the initial and immediate assessment of the situation. However, if the crisis is not easily resolved, I may direct you to call 9-1-1 or to go to your nearest Emergency Department. Psychiatric services are provided by all hospitals through the Emergency Room and do not require appointments.



Telehealth Communication Platform:

Phone calls without video are not considered appropriate telehealth visits. At this time, I utilize a video service integrated into my Electronic Health Records, and which is specifically designed for healthcare, called *Healow TeleVisits*. This service is free for you to use, compliant with all healthcare privacy requirements, and web-based (there is no program or app to download). *Healow TeleVisits* can be accessed using your phone, tablet, or computer. You will receive an email and/or text message reminder 24 hours prior to your appointment which will include the telehealth link. You can also access *Healow TeleVisits* and your telehealth appointment through the patient portal. If *Healow TeleVisits* is down, I will use Doxy.me which is similar and compliant with privacy requirements.

Termination: Mente Behavioral Health has a zero-tolerance policy for workplace violence, aggression and disrespect towards staff or patients. This is a safe space for all, and a patient may be discharged from the practice if the guidelines set forth are not followed. IN example:

- a) Failure to meet financial responsibilities
- b) A higher level of care is required
- c) Violation of the zero tolerance for violence policy
- d) Patient or provider moves out of service area

I will not terminate the therapeutic relationship without first discussing and exploring the reasons and purpose of terminating. If therapy is terminated for any reason or you request another provider, I will provide you with a referral for another provider to treat you. You may also choose someone on your own or from another referral source.

Should you fail to schedule an appointment for three consecutive weeks, unless other arrangements have been made in advance, for legal and ethical reasons, I may consider the professional relationship discontinued.

Pharmacy and Controlled Substances Policy: Mente may have access to your prescription history through the electronic health record. Prescriptions are filled in session only. Mente Behavioral Health does prescribe controlled substances and does not treat patients who are prescribed controlled substances by another provider.

Legal: You may be advised to seek the services of an independent forensic mental health professional for services that may require testimony or other legal obligations.

Record Request Policy: To request records to be sent to yourself or to another provider, please complete an Authorization to Release Medical Records. The cost is \$15 minimum depending on the size of the documents. We do not email records. Processing can take up to 10 business days or longer.

Social Media: Due to the importance of your confidentiality and the importance of minimizing dual relationships, I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.). I believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk more about it.

Minors: If you are a minor, your parents may be legally entitled to some information about your therapy. I will discuss with you and your parents what information is appropriate for them to receive and which issues are more appropriately kept confidential.



By signing during the visit below, you voluntarily consent that I will participate in mental health (Psychiatric) services by providers at Mente Behavioral Health, PLLC. Services may include psychotherapy, pharmacology, laboratory testing, diagnostic procedures, and other appropriate therapies or referrals. You have the right to be informed and participate in treatment services, receive a copy of this consent form, and withdraw this consent at any time.

**I have read, understand, and agree to the contents and terms of this document. I have had the opportunity to clarify any questions regarding this document. I consent to receive psychiatric/mental health therapeutic counseling and/or psychiatric/mental health medication management from Elizabeth Gomez, FNP-BC.**