

# Auburn University Marriage and Family Therapy Teletherapy Guidelines

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THE RELEASE OF A NEW EDITION OF THE HANDBOOK WILL OCCUR WHEN  
SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN POLICIES OR PROCEDUES ARE INSTITUTED

THE AUBURN UNIVERSITY MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PROGRAM AND THE AUBURN  
UNIVERSITY MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY CENTER PROVIDE EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND  
CLINICAL SERVICES WITHOUT REGARD TO AGE, ETHNICITY, GENDER, DISABILITY, RACE, RELIGION, AND  
SPIRITUAL BELIEFS AND/OR AFFILIATION, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, SOCIOECONOMIC  
STATUS, HEALTH STATUS, RELATIONSHIP STATUS, AND/OR NATIONAL ORIGIN.

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## Informed Consent Form

### In-person therapy and TAFTS consent

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#### **Informed Consent Including Technology-Assisted Family Therapy Services (TAFTS)**

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**Initialing each page and specific sections, along with signing this document, provides consent to each aspect of the clinical service described in this informed consent document.**

Welcome to the Auburn University Marriage and Family Therapy Center (MFT Center). We serve couples, families, and individuals throughout East Alabama. Services are provided by graduate students receiving training in marriage and family therapy. All are professionals-in-training and are under the direct supervision of the clinical faculty in the Marriage and Family Therapy Program. The clinical faculty are Approved Supervisors of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT).

The MFT Center altered operations to accommodate client needs during COVID-19, to continue serving your mental and relational health needs throughout this process. For this purpose, we provide both in-person and Technology-Assisted Family Therapy Services (TAFTS) to promote services that maintain client and therapist health and safety. Operating procedures and protocols connected with therapy services are located at: <https://www.mftcenter.auburn.edu/>

Because our primary functions are to train clinicians in their chosen specialty, we require permission to audio and video record interviews and to observe the treatment sessions either live or recorded. The use of observation, taping, and supervision is crucial to your treatment and allows for instruction and supervisory input, ensuring the highest quality services possible. Please discuss any questions about this practice with your therapists. Signing your name at the end of this Informed Consent means that you have entirely read, understand, and have inquired as necessary, about all aspects of the consent.

TAFTS is therapy delivered through electronic communications and used for individual, couple, family therapy, and clinical supervision. There are some barriers to TAFTS compared to sitting with a therapist in the same room, and it could be less appropriate for some populations. Some limitations can be addressed and are minor depending on the quality of sound and video, the level of care needed by the client(s), and the comfort level in using teleconferencing platforms.

**Zoom – The Digital Platform for TAFTS:** The AU MFT Program uses Zoom Teleconferencing (Zoom) to conduct all TAFTS. Zoom is a secure application for video conferencing that works across mobile devices and desktops. Before your TAFTS sessions, you will receive an individualized Zoom link and meeting ID number through email, which will enable download and installation. Additionally, you will need access to a webcam, microphone, and a private room to participate. A supervisor may join the session to supervise the therapist-in-training.

**Titanium – Electronic Medical Records (EMR):** The AU MFT Program uses Titanium Schedule, an electronic medical records (EMR) system, to schedule clients and store treatment notes and assessments. You will be emailed a link to complete assessments protected by encryption.

**Email:** Email is required for TAFTS because we will need to coordinate scheduling, sending web links, surveys, and other materials related to services. The AU MFT Program uses Outlook 365 email. These messages are not encrypted and are thus NOT CONFIDENTIAL. Please note that email is not a platform used by therapists or staff at the AU MFT Center to answer questions or conduct therapy sessions. If you are uncomfortable with the unsecured email communication for scheduling TAFTS, we can establish an alternate communication method.

By **initialing** below, you consent to communicate with you via email according to the limits described.

\_\_\_ 1. I consent to have AU MFT Center, and my therapist communicates with me via email.

My email address is (possibly multiple): \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell Phone:** Contacting therapists through their phones is a temporary policy shift to facilitate TAFTS for technological disruption and scheduling. Once Auburn University emergency response to COVID-19 is completed, therapists will no longer communicate with clients by cell phones but will return to contact through the MFT Center number (334-844-4478). Therapists will not store client numbers nor communicate via text. Therapists' phones are password-protected, but we cannot guarantee there will be a breach of confidentiality. If a therapist has not returned a phone call within 24 hours, please contact the MFT Center number.

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## **PATIENTS RIGHTS**

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**Confidentiality:** To protect client confidentiality, we adhere to the following procedures:

1. Written, telephone, or verbal inquiries about clients will not be acknowledged without your consent. Signed consent is required to release information about you is shared with anyone outside the Center. Even then, we may advise you to withhold information if we feel it is in your best interest.
2. All records, tapes, or other identifying materials are kept confidential.

There are, however, some exceptions to the confidentiality policy.

1. By law, there are specific limits to confidentiality. By the Laws and Regulations of the State of Alabama, your confidentiality does not apply when: There is clear and imminent danger to you or others, by court order, if you plan to commit a violent crime, or when there is suspected child abuse or neglect. Your therapist will take reasonable steps to protect those at risk, including, but not limited to, warning any identified victims, and informing the responsible authorities.
2. The therapist-in-training will testify in any court proceeding if ordered by the judge.

**Clinical Change and Research:** The primary purpose of assessing clients is to help clinicians make informed treatment decisions. Assessments are completed throughout therapy to track client progress and therapist effectiveness. You can access the forms on the AU MFT web page. The secondary purpose of the assessments is to publish about treatment. We track biographical data, clinical assessments, and coding of therapist behaviors to assess effectiveness. All identifying client information is removed to ensure confidentiality, and only aggregated client data is evaluated. Initialing and signing the document provides approval to use assessment information for research, which will not be conducted without Auburn University IRB approval.

**Expected Benefits and Possible Risks of TAFTS:** When Auburn University's on-site services are temporarily shut down based on COVID outbreak, or therapist or client illness, TAFTS is an option to continue providing client care. TAFTS enables individuals to receive treatment at their home or office. TAFTS is similar to in-person therapy in addressing client needs, developing a professional relationship, and treating mental illness.

There are potential risks associated with TAFTS. They include, but may not be limited to:

- Information transmitted may not be sufficient (e.g., low resolution of images and weak broadband) to allow for appropriate treatment.
- Delays in treatment could occur due to deficiencies or failures of equipment.
- Security protocols could fail. However, data encryption makes this risk highly unlikely.
- A client chooses a non-private location in which to participate in the TAFTS session.

If TAFTS are unacceptable or do not meet your therapy needs, you can postpone services, or we can provide you with referrals for other clinicians in the area.

**Additional Points for Client Understanding:**

1. I understand that TAFTS is temporarily offered at the AU MFT Program to continue services during the COVID-19 outbreak.
2. I understand that TAFTS is voluntary and that I can choose not to participate.
3. **If I experience an emergency during a TAFT session, my therapist will call emergency services and my emergency contacts.**
4. My therapist explained to me how TAFTS will be used. I understand that TAFT sessions will not be precisely as in-person sessions, as I will not be in the same room as my therapist.
5. I understand my therapist or myself can discontinue the TAFT sessions for technological difficulties or personal discomfort with the service format.
6. I understand that I may experience benefits from the use of therapy, but that no results can be guaranteed or assured.
7. If I am experiencing an emergency, I will call 911 or proceed to the nearest hospital emergency room.
8. I understand that both my therapist and I will exchange phone information at the beginning of the session so that contact can occur if the TAFTS connection drops.
9. **I know that I will be asked to create a safety plan with my therapist for emergencies.**
10. I acknowledge that TAFTS cannot occur if I am outside the state of Alabama.
11. It is my responsibility to ensure that I participate in all TAFT sessions in a secure location
12. Those who have not signed the Informed Consent are not allowed to be present in therapy.
13. Because the therapeutic services are a professional relationship, neither interns nor staff at the AU MFT Center give or receive gifts from clients.

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**PAYMENT AGREEMENT**

I understand that payment is expected before the therapist-in-training renders services. **By initialing items #1-12, you indicate that you have read, understand, and agree to the following:**

- \_\_\_ 1. The AU MFT Center payment for therapy services will be **\$60.00 per 50-minute hour**. Any time spent in treatment beyond the clinical hour will be billed accordingly.
- \_\_\_ 2. Engaging therapists-in-training in verbal (including phone contact), written (including reports, court reports, or letters), or face-to-face meetings, will be billed \$60.00 per 50-minute hour.

- \_\_\_ 3. Any client who pays with a check that does not have sufficient funds (i.e., bounced check) will be billed a \$25.00 additional fee. The form of payment might also be changed.
- \_\_\_ 4. The AU MFT Center **strictly provides a fee for service practice. We do not bill insurance.**
- \_\_\_ 5. All clients will be billed for the full \$60.00 rate for a session if (1) they do not call to cancel within 24 hours of your scheduled appointment (334) 844-4478; or (2) they no-show an appointment.
- \_\_\_ 6. Your therapist will wait on Zoom for **15 minutes** before leaving the therapy session. If you are late, then you must contact the therapist to let them know you are late. If you do not make it within 15 minutes, you will be charged a late fee.
- \_\_\_ 7. You agree that you will be billed for late cancellations and non-attendance.

**You may petition to receive a reduced payment obligation. To qualify, you accept that the payment reduction is a service that can be revoked if abused, and you agree to the following:**

- \_\_\_ 8. If a client cancels or reschedules appointments on three different occasions within two months, the reduced fee will be voided (exceptions include hospitalization or tragedies).
- \_\_\_ 9. To be eligible for reduced fees, clients are required to attend weekly.
- \_\_\_ 10. The reduced fee is guaranteed for 20 sessions. Following 20 sessions, the fee reduction is eliminated, and the client pays the flat rate of \$60.00.
- \_\_\_ 11. All clients will be billed for the \$60.00 session rate if (1) you no-show; or (2) you do not call (334) 844-4478 to cancel within 24 hours of your scheduled appointment start time.
- \_\_\_ 12. The AU MFT Center intern therapists and faculty do not perform court-related evaluations for child custody, nor do we testify in hearings involving child custody issues. Also, we do not appear voluntarily at any court or administrative hearing.
- \_\_\_ 13. If you, or your attorney, choose to subpoena an MFT Center therapist or other personnel for court testimony, including depositions or administrative hearings, you will be charged \$100 per hour for any MFT Center personnel preparation time and \$500 per 4-hour block of time our personnel spend being “on-call” to testify, traveling to and from the court, waiting to appear, and testifying. These charges will apply even if MFT Center personnel are excused from testifying. The minimum charge will be for 4 hours, and subsequent time will be billed in 4-hour blocks. By signing this agreement, you agree to pay these charges, and pay the attorney’s fees and costs of collection incurred.

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## **SAFETY PLAN**

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Please identify the names and phone numbers of three emergency contact people, as well as the contact information for your local emergency services provider. **These individuals/entities can be contacted in the event of an emergency or crisis.**

### ***Emergency Contact People***

- 1) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Local Emergency Services Provider: (e.g., hospital)***

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Police: \_\_\_\_\_ Paramedics: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Additional Resources***

If you are not in immediate danger but would like someone to speak with, you can access the following resources. Both are free, confidential, and open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Resource: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Phone #: 1-800-273-8255

Resource: Crisis Text Line Contact Info: Text HOME to 741741

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## **CONSENT TO CLINICAL SERVICES**

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By **initialing** items #1-13, you indicate that you understand and agree to the following:

- \_\_\_ 1. I understand that the AU MFT Center services will be supervised by core faculty and program supervisors, including case consultation by audio/video recording or direct observation and review of treatment notes.
- \_\_\_ 2. I understand the confidentiality policies of the AU MFT Center and agree to them.
- \_\_\_ 3. I understand my rights/responsibilities as an AU MFT Center client and agree to them.
- \_\_\_ 4. I understand the fee agreement and agree to all client payment responsibilities.
- \_\_\_ 5. I understand that assessments are part of the treatment process and agree to answer the assessments honestly and thoroughly.
- \_\_\_ 6. I am willing to allow client assessments to be used for research purposes, as outlined in the agreement above, and as conditioned by the Auburn University IRB.
- \_\_\_ 7. I understand that the therapists' sharing of the cell phone will end after COVID-19.
- \_\_\_ 8. I understand and agree that if there is an emergency during one of my sessions, my therapist has permission to contact my emergency contacts and emergency services.
- \_\_\_ 9. I understand that my therapist will verify my location before the start of TAFTS.
- \_\_\_ 10. I affirm that I have provided the MFT Center with a working telephone number to reach me if the TAFTS connection fails during my session.
- \_\_\_ 11. I affirm that the MFT Center has provided me with a contact number to reach my therapist-in-training should the TAFTS connection fail during my session. If this occurs, I will call the number provided if my therapist/the MFT Center does not call me back within five minutes.
- \_\_\_ 12. I understand and agree that my sessions will be carried out in-person at the MFT Center or via the HIPAA compliant Zoom videoconferencing program.
- \_\_\_ 13. I affirm that I have been offered a copy of this consent form.

**I have read and understand the information provided above, have, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I hereby give my informed consent for clinical services.**

**Signature of Client(s) (or person authorized to sign for the client):**

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Client

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Client

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Client

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Client

*If Authorized Signer, relationship to client:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Witness(es) (reserved for therapists):** \_\_\_\_\_

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Witness #1

Date

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Witness #2

Date

## Appendix TAFTS

### Technology-Assisted Family Therapy Services (TAFTS) Policies, Procedures, and Forms

Version 1  
March 31, 2020

Developed by Drs. Scott A. Ketring, Lauren M. Ruhlmann, & Joshua R. Novak

*Subject to revision as changes occur*

#### PHASE ONE: MARCH 16TH – 30TH, 2020

In response to the closure of Auburn University due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Marriage and Family Therapy Center (AU MFT Center) will transition to a modified operations model until the University re-opens. Best practice recommendations from state, federal, and university authorities have informed the development of these interim policies and procedures.

To facilitate therapy services, the AU MFT Center will offer technology-assisted family therapy services (TAFTS) to all clients in the state of Alabama (at the time-of-service delivery). TAFTS will be used for individual, couple, and family therapy, as well as clinical supervision. These services will be provided in the form of teletherapy and telesupervision via Zoom, a secure, HIPAA-compliant videoconferencing platform, with telephone meetings as a back-up.

#### PHASE ONE ACTION STEPS:

Therapists must complete all required training before scheduling a TAFT session (see below). All clients participating in TAFTS must be in the state of Alabama at the time-of-service delivery. Clients who are not in the state of Alabama but would like to receive clinical services should be referred to Therapistlocator.net, Psychology Today's therapist search tool and BetterHelp.com to locate in-person and/or teletherapy providers in their state.

High Risk Client Systems: Clients reporting suicidal ideation, self-injurious behaviors, intimate partner violence, and psychotic episodes, should be directed to emergency services and subsequent in-person services at the clinic or other mental health service providers. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that healthcare facilities should screen patients and visitors for symptoms of acute respiratory illness before they enter the facility. Therapists should assess their clients' health and illness-risk BEFORE scheduling an in-person session. Assessment questions include:

- **Today or in the past 7 days, have you had any cold or flu symptoms, such as fever, chills, cough, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath?**
- **In the past 7 days, have you had contact with anyone known to be infected with COVID-19?**

If clients report being sick or possibly exposed to COVID-19, therapists can suggest a transition to TAFTS services if the client when the client is physically able to participate. Consistent with CDC

guidance, we will err on the side of caution when scheduling in-person sessions in order to protect our students, faculty, and staff.

**Complete all required training modules.**

All AU MFT Center therapists-in-training must complete all required TAFTS training modules in order to be eligible to provide teletherapy services. Training requirements include, but may not be limited to, a 15-hour teletherapy practice module, the AU MFT Center TAFTS policies and procedures training module, and the Titanium electronic health records system training module. The fifteen hours of training specifically focused on the practice of teletherapy will be made available to students, supervisors-in-training, and faculty who wish to fulfill Alabama's teletherapy requirements in December and January of the first year in the program. See Appendix A for additional information about this training.

**Therapists-in-training will adopt and test all technology needed to provide TAFTS.**

Therapists-in-training who will be providing TAFTS will adopt and test all technology, tools, and policies needed to provide these services. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Zoom (Appendix B)**
- **VPN (Appendix B)**
- **DUO 2-factor authentication (Appendix B)**
- **Encrypted flash drive – Remember that you have an encrypted flash drive with a password given to you. Please do not change the password.**
- **Sound machine**
- **Headphones, webcam, microphone**
- **Personal cellphone voicemail greeting script (Appendix C)**

## PHASE TWO: FROM MARCH 31ST, 2020 ONWARD

Until the university resumes normal operations:

- Student therapists who are sick or health compromised will maintain individual, dyadic, and group supervision with their assigned supervisor via Zoom.
- Students must receive the TAFTS basic training, AU MFT Center policies and procedures training, and Titanium training BEFORE they are permitted to provide these services.
- Students offering TAFTS must sign the TAFTS Student Agreement, complete the TAFTS training documentation form, and email both files to the Office Administrator before they are eligible to provide TAFTS.

## SCHEDULING IN TITANIUM: (See HDFS 7601 Training, fall of first semester).

**Students will receive live training on Titanium by the Office Administrator and complete the necessary training videos concerning Titanium.**

The HDFS 7601 MFT Lab 1 requirement that students demonstrate proficiency with a second-year buddy and the office administrator in using Titanium.

## TAFT SESSION SCHEDULING CHECKLIST:

**Review critical policies in the informed consent with your client over the phone.**

When scheduling, talk to your client about critical policies in the informed consent for teletherapy sessions including, but not limited to, payment procedures, 15-minute grace period for late log-ons, risks and benefits of teletherapy, etc. Remember to emphasize the boundaries and expectations surrounding these revised AU MFT Center policies and remind clients that these adapted protocols will cease once Auburn University is re-opened.

**Get your client's email address.**

Review the security limitations of email communication and explain how the client's email address will be used and stored. Get verbal consent to email your client the session link. Record the client's email address in Titanium.

**Provide your client with step-by-step instructions for completing assessments.**

Walk your client through each step of accessing, completing, and submitting their assessment paperwork. Explain that you are legally required to have up-to-date risk assessments (which are collected through the assessment paperwork) before you can perform teletherapy.

**Prepare your client for their TAFT session.**

Inform your client about what they should expect during their teletherapy session. Tell them what platform you will be using to conduct your sessions – Zoom – and inform them ahead of time of their need to download the platform application. Talk them through what equipment they will need to participate in their teletherapy session and how to maximize their experience (e.g., testing their webcam and microphone ahead of time, conducting their session in a secure location, shutting down all background applications on their device, etc.). Also, let them know that they will need to find a private place to do the session, free from the presence or interruption of anyone else.

**Provide your client with step-by-step instructions for joining their teletherapy session.**

Walk your client through each step of accessing their teletherapy session, beginning with how they will receive the access information. Remind your client that they will receive written instructions in an email attachment with their Zoom meeting log-in information.

**Establish a code word and sign for your TAFT session.**

Explain the rationale behind a safety code word and sign in TAFTS and what will happen if the client uses their code word or sign. Work with the client to identify a code word and physical sign and document both in the case file on Titanium.

**Establish back-up phone numbers.**

Make sure you have a back-up phone number you can use to contact your client and that they have a back-up phone number they can use to reach you, in case of any technical difficulties.

□ **Schedule the Zoom meeting for your teletherapy session.**

1. Navigate to <https://ausecure.zoom.us/>, click “Sign In” in the top-right corner, and login using your Auburn University credentials.
2. From the “My Meetings” tab, click “Schedule a New Meeting”
3. Fill out the information for your meeting.
  - o **Topic:** Case Number – Session Number (e.g., 0123456789-5)
  - o **Description (Optional):** Do not provide a description.
  - o **When:** Enter session date and start time (make sure you double check these to ensure they are correct).
  - o **Duration:** 1 hour 0 min (Note: your session will only be 50 minutes long, unless your supervisor has specified otherwise)
  - o **Time Zone:** Central (Note: all sessions will be scheduled and conducted according to central time, even if you are not currently living in the central time zone)
  - o **Recurring meeting:** Do not click this box, even if you will be having regular sessions with your client.
  - o **Meeting ID:** Click “Personal Meeting ID.”
  - o **Meeting Password:** Click “Require meeting password.”
  - o **Video:** Click Host “on” and Participant “on.”
  - o **Audio:** Leave as default selection (i.e., “Both”).
  - o **Meeting Options:** Click “Enable join before host” and “Record the meeting automatically.” Leave the default recording selection (i.e., “On the local computer”).
  - o **Alternative Hosts:** Type in your supervisor (if they are observing your session) and co-therapist’s email addresses, if applicable.
4. Choose “Save” when you are finished.
5. Click “copy the invitation” to copy and email the invitation to your attendees.

□ **Email your client.**

Login to the AU MFT Center Outlook account and draft an email to your client. The email subject should be: The time and date of your appointment is: [Date] @ [Time] (e.g., The time and date of your appointment is: 03/30/2021 @ 4 PM). Paste the Zoom meeting invitation into the body of the email. Attach the Step-By-Step Zoom Instructions (Appendix B) and TAFTS Informed Consent (pages 4-9) documents. Send the email.

## TAFT VIDEO SESSION PROTOCOL

### TAFT VIDEO SESSION GENERAL POLICIES & REMINDERS:

- No new parties (i.e., clients that are not already on the existing file/informed consent) may participate or join sessions without supervisor approval.
- TAFT sessions should last no longer than 50-minutes unless a client is in crisis, or you have received permission from your supervisor for an extended session length.

- Children ages 12 and under will ONLY be seen when the consenting parent or legal guardian is present throughout the entirety of the session.
- Adolescents ages 13 to 17 may be seen individually ONLY when the parent or legal guardian is present at the beginning of the session to provide consent and at the end of the session to schedule the next appointment.
- Students are only permitted to use their personal cell phones for scheduling purposes. Conducting sessions via direct cell phone call is prohibited. Students must change the voicemail greeting of their cell phone to the required AU MFT Center clinical intern voicemail greeting (see Appendix C). Texting with clients is not permitted.
- Students must maintain a detailed contact log for all clients in Titanium. All communications (e.g., phone, email, text message, Zoom, etc.) should be documented in a comprehensive log of all contact with your clients.
- TAFT sessions may be conducted at the AU MFT Center. All persons must practice good hygiene and social distancing while in the MFT Center.
  - o TAFT sessions conducted at the AU MFT Center must take place in a therapy room or the back office, and spaces should be reserved in the Titanium calendar in advance.
  - o Students may use the telephone in room 274 or 276 (The Graduate Student Office or Directors Office) as their back-up mode of communication if they prefer not to give their personal phone number with clients. To guarantee access to this room for a TAFT session, students must reserve this space in the Titanium calendar in advance.
- Be mindful that video sessions and telephone sessions could easily be recorded by clients and so be cognizant of how you conduct and navigate sessions.
- Students are required to abide by the AU MFT Center dress code during all TAFT sessions.
- The following phone numbers should be provided/confirmed with all TAFT clients.
  - o AU MFT Center main line for general questions: (334) 844-4478.
  - o Voicemail number for clients to reach you: your own cell phone number (for scheduling purposes only).
  - o Emergency contact numbers Resource: 911, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255), Crisis Text Line (Text HOME to 741741).

#### TAFT VIDEO PRE-SESSION CHECKLIST: (Required for all TAFT video sessions)

**Dress appropriately.**

Make sure you are dressed in accordance with the Auburn MFT clinic dress code, regardless of whether you are providing this session from the AU MFT Center or your personal residence. We recommend wearing clothing that is in contrast with your background but try to avoid patterns because they can be visually distracting and cause eye strain for your clients. Remember, presenting a professional appearance will reinforce that the virtual session is just as professional an interaction as if the client had come into the MFT Center.

**Identify a quiet, confidential space to conduct the session.**

Whether you are set-up in the MFT Center or your personal residence, make sure the space you plan to use for your session is quiet and confidential. There should be at least one door separating you from others in the building or residence. Eliminating distractions and ensuring client privacy is crucial to the ethical practice of teletherapy.

**Post all “Do Not Disturb” sign(s) on your door(s).**

Make sure you are not likely to get interrupted in the space you plan to use for your session. Regardless of whether you are conducting your session in the MFT Center, a residence you share with others, or a private residence in which you are the sole occupant, you should place a “Do Not Disturb” sign on your door. If you are conducting the session from a residence you share with others, you should put one sign on your front door and one sign on the door to the room in which you are facilitating the session. Imagine how unprofessional it would be for someone to ring your doorbell or knock on your door during the session?

**Make arrangements for children and pets.**

When conducting a virtual session from your residence, you should ensure that all children and pets are kept outside the room (with appropriate supervision) in which you are conducting the session. You should take all measures possible to ensure that your children and/or pets do not make noise during your session. If you have the ability to do so, it is a good idea to have a friend or loved one take any children or pets for whom it may be difficult to stay quiet during your session on a walk, drive, etc. during that time.

**Minimize noise and distractions in the environment.**

Make sure that you minimize background noise that may cause distractions during your session. This may include, but is not limited to, the washer and dryer, dishwasher, lawn mowers, etc.

**Place a sound machine outside your door and turn it on high.**

Make sure that you have a sound machine placed outside the door of the room in which you are conducting your virtual session (regardless of the location at which you are conducting therapy). The sound machine volume should be set on high.

**Test out your webcam.**

Open the webcam via your control panel or a video app like Zoom to test it out.

**Make sure your camera is at eye-level.**

Whether you are using an integrated or external camera, try to set things up so that the camera is approximately eye-level. This will make it easier to make eye contact with the client and ensure they feel that you’re engaging with them.

**Make sure your volume is on and test your audio.**

Check your sound to make sure it is not muted. You can also quickly open a video online, or a song on a music player to test out your audio. Zoom has a guide on how to check your hardware.

**Make sure you have a pair of headphones and that they work.**

Identify a pair of headphones that are comfortable enough for you to wear for a 50-minute session (headphones that completely cover your ears are preferable, though not required). Plug the headphones into your computer and check your sound to make sure it works.

**Test your microphone.**

With your headphones plugged in, try out your microphone. Open a recording program to test or look for the microphone device in your control panel.

**Plug in your computer.**

The last thing you want is for your power to die in the middle of the session. Make sure your computer is plugged in before the session starts. You may also need to edit your computer's display/power and sleep settings to ensure that your screen will not turn off after a period of perceived inactivity.

**Check your internet connection.**

Make sure that you have a strong internet connection. It is fine to do a virtual session over a Wi-Fi connection, but your computer is less likely to lose connection if it's plugged directly into the internet with an ethernet cable. You can use Google's speed test to test the quality of your internet. If either your download or upload speed is below 3 Mbps, you should consider upgrading your internet connection or relocating to a secure location with a stronger connection.

**Close unnecessary programs.**

Having too many other programs running on your computer can strain its memory and reduce the quality of your video chat. Before starting a virtual session, close as many unnecessary programs as possible.

**Open the Zoom meeting app.**

Make sure that you can access Zoom on your device. Log-in to Zoom well before the start of your virtual session to ensure the platform is working for you. To access Zoom, visit <https://ausecure.zoom.us/>.

**Adjust the lighting.**

Before you start a virtual session, open a practice Zoom meeting session and test out the lighting. Is your image clear? Is the picture too fuzzy and dark? You want to try to maintain a consistent light source throughout your virtual therapy session. Avoid having light sources behind you as this can cause your face to be shadowed. Make sure your face is fully lit and in the frame during your session. We

recommend placing lights around the room or ensuring you have good natural light in your space. Try to keep windows and curtains closed if they are behind you, both to ensure you have consistent lighting and also to protect the privacy of your clients. Check out this lighting guide for more details.

**Modify your background, if necessary.**

Before you start a virtual session, make sure your video background is professional and clean. Do not conduct a session in front of a messy closet, sink full of dishes, poster of your favorite singer, etc. Imagine you were visiting your doctor via tele-health, what kind of image would you expect to see in his/her/their background? We recommend having a neutral-colored wall, so it does not distract your client.

**Monitor your contact phone number.**

Make sure that your phone volume is loud and that you are periodically checking this device to ensure that your client has not called to cancel or receive assistance with technical difficulties.

**TAFT VIDEO IN-SESSION CHECKLIST: (Required for all TAFT video sessions)**

**Join the Zoom meeting.**

1. Navigate to <https://ausecure.zoom.us/>, click “Sign In” in the top-right corner, and login using your Auburn University credentials.
2. From the “Meetings” tab (which should be your welcome page), locate your session from the list of pre-scheduled meetings.
3. Click “Start.”
4. Confirm that your session is recording.

**Confirm the identity of your client(s).**

After identifying yourself to your client(s), ask your client(s) to give you their full name; do this for all persons present. You will complete this step at the beginning of every teletherapy session and provide this information in each teletherapy case note. In the first session, you will ask the clients to produce personal identification (e.g., Drivers License or Passport) to demonstrate properly identify the client.

Note. As of March 30, 2020, Auburn University’s Office of Risk Management and Safety will not permit us to conduct audio-only TAFT sessions. We are only permitted to provide teletherapy via videoconferencing. All participants are required to enable both their audio and video functions in Zoom in order to participate in teletherapy and telesupervision.

**Confirm the geographic location of your client(s).**

Next, ask your client to give you the location and physical address of where they are at that moment in time (i.e., when you begin the teletherapy session). You will do this at the beginning of every teletherapy session and provide this information in each teletherapy case note. In the case of couple/family therapy, all parties must be in the state of Alabama.

**Confirm that only the client(s) is present for session.**

Ask your client who is present in the room from which they are participating in teletherapy. In order to conduct teletherapy, you must confirm that only your client(s) is present for the session. Many therapists will also maneuver their webcam to show a 360-degree view of the room from which they are conducting the session to similarly affirm that they are alone.

**Confirm the back-up protocol, safe word/sign and safe session shutdown protocol.**

Affirm that you and the client know the back-up protocol in the event that technology fails. Make sure that you both remember the safe word and safe sign, as well as the safe session shutdown protocol you established over the phone. Remind your client that the notion of “safety” does not only apply to personal danger, but also to threats to session security. Threats to safety can range from domestic violence to an unidentified person entering the room.

**Review the client’s TAFTS safety plan at the end of the session.**

At the conclusion of the session, even if the client is not suicidal or in crisis, review their TAFTS safety plan in Titanium and make any adjustments, as needed.

**Help the client complete online payment on the University web page.**

[https://secure.touchnet.net/C20021\\_ustores/web/product\\_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=4089&SINGLESTORE=true](https://secure.touchnet.net/C20021_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=4089&SINGLESTORE=true)

Walk the client through the payment process the first time. (1) the client enters the payment amount and list the quantity as 1. The next page asks for client’s name, date of service, invoice number and service. The therapist provides the invoice number to the client. The client selects service.

**Schedule your next session and direct client to the post-session paperwork.**

Confirm the day and time of your next video session with the client. Send the client the web address of the AU MFT Center Titanium client home page. Walk them through step-by-step instructions for accessing the post-session paperwork. **Stay online until the client has the correct paperwork.** Let the client know that after you hang up, you will send them an email with the Zoom meeting information for the next appointment. Tell the client that you will be checking your voicemail regularly for messages, and that the clinic phones are also being monitored regularly. Verify they have your cell phone number (to be used only for scheduling), as well as the AU MFT Center phone number. Remind the client that voicemail is not for emergency services.

**TAFT VIDEO POST-SESSION CHECKLIST: (Required for all TAFT video sessions)**

*Note: You should not neutralize your secure environment until after you have completed all of the following steps.*

**Download and save the Zoom recording of your session.**

Download the Zoom recording of your session to your encrypted flash drive.

1. After you've ended the meeting, Zoom will convert the recording to MP4 so you can access the files.
2. Once the conversion process is complete, the folder containing the recording files will open. By default, the audio/video file (MP4) will be named Zoom\_0.mp4. The audio only file (M4A) will be named audio\_only.m4a. It doesn't automatically open when complete when you end the meeting.
3. A window will open stating, "Save my recording." You will select "choose new location," and then select your encrypted flash drive. The files will download once you select save.
4. You will upload the file to VALT, the Auburn University, MFT recording program. You open the link: <https://mftvalt.auburn.edu> One the left side of the program window you have an upload button. You will provide: Therapist ID, client number, therapist name, supervisor, session type and number. Then select file, which will allow you to choose a file from the encrypted flash drive. Once the file is uploaded, delete the file from the encrypted flash drive.

**Note:** If the meeting unexpectedly shuts down or if the conversion process is interrupted, the recording files could become corrupted and non-recoverable. Restarting or shutting down your computer, putting the hard disk to sleep, or closing your laptop will interrupt the conversion process. If the conversion process is not successful after the meeting has ended, you can try to convert the files again by navigating to the recording location and double clicking the recording files.

By default, all recordings will be placed in a Zoom folder found in the following file path on these devices:

**PC:** C:\Users\User Name\Documents\Zoom

**Mac:** /Users/User Name/Documents/Zoom

*You must move all Zoom recording files from your computer to your encrypted flash drive. You should never keep confidential information on your personal computer. You will upload the file to [mftvalt.auburn.edu](https://mftvalt.auburn.edu) which is a HIPAA secure cloud recording program used by the Auburn MFT Center.*

Zoom recordings use the following file formats:

- **MP4:** Audio/Video file that is named zoom\_0.mp4 by default. Each subsequent recording is in sequential order: zoom\_0, zoom\_1, zoom\_2, etc.
- **M4A:** Audio-only file that is named audio\_only.m4a by default. Each subsequent recording is in sequential order: audio\_only\_0, audio\_only\_1, etc.
- **M3U:** Playlist file to play all individual MP4 files (Windows only). Named playback.m3u by default.

- **TXT:** Text file that is named chat.txt by default. This file contains the in-meeting chat messages.

**Note:** Screen sharing recording uses about 20MB of storage per hour while video recording uses about 200MB of storage an hour. This is an approximation, since the resolution and types of video or screen sharing content could change the amount of storage used.

To access recording files:

1. Navigate to <https://ausecure.zoom.us/>, click “Sign In” in the top-right corner, and login using your Auburn University credentials.
2. Click the “Recordings” tab in the left-hand menu. Select your session (it should have a local file address).

**Note.** If you have a local recording that hasn't been converted to a video file yet, click “Convert” to convert the recording to a video file and display the options below. If you only see the “Open” option, it means the recording is a cloud recording. No sessions should be recorded to the cloud. If there are issues opening or playing the file, check the default recording location and ensure the files are in the correct place.

**Process client payment and shred their credit card information.**

Call the clinic and work with one of the office administrators to process the client’s payment. Immediately after doing this, shred your record of the client’s credit card information. Under no circumstances are you permitted to retain or store clients’ payment information. This system is temporary; an online payment platform is in development.

**Schedule your next session in Titanium.**

Schedule your next appointment in the Titanium calendar and make arrangements to send clients all relevant SMS reminders, emails, and or assessment paperwork notifications.

**Complete the teletherapy case note and additional paperwork in Titanium.**

Teletherapy sessions have a distinctive case note format. You should log into Titanium within 24 hours of your session and complete the teletherapy session case note. There is not a distinctive treatment plan format for teletherapy sessions. You should follow the usual routine for completing treatment plans (i.e., sessions 2, 6, 10, etc.).

**Schedule a Zoom meeting for your next session and email details to your client.**

Schedule the Zoom meeting for your next session and send the details, along with any additional needed information, to your client via email using the AU MFT Center Outlook account. In case your client was unable to complete the post-session paperwork immediately after your session, you should include a link to the AU MFT Center Titanium client landing page with detailed, step-by-step instructions for accessing the post-session paperwork, in your email.

**ADDITIONAL TAFT VIDEO SESSION PROTOCOLS FOR SPECIFIC SESSION/CLIENT TYPES:**

*In addition to the items outlined in the “Pre-Session,” “In-Session,” and “Post-Session” checklists above, some session/client types require additional tasks. These tasks are specified below and should be completed in addition to the checklists above.*

#### Intake/First TAFT Video Session Checklist:

**Review the informed consent and answer client questions.**

Prior to beginning the first TAFT video session, you must review the TAFTS Informed Consent in its entirety and answer all client questions. Even if you were providing in-person therapy to clients at the AU MFT Center prior to the University closure, you are still required to do a thorough review of the TAFTS Informed Consent with your clients. Clients must consent to TAFTS before you can begin providing therapy; clients consent by electronically signing the TAFTS Informed Consent document on Titanium. You must remember to sign the informed consent document as the treating therapist. The informed consent is legally invalid without your signature.

**Remember:** If, with supervisor permission, you have a new person join 1+ sessions over the course of therapy, that individual must sign the informed consent document.

**Complete the TAFTS safety plan with the client.**

Prior to beginning the first TAFT video session, you must complete the TAFTS safety plan. We are legally required to have a safety and risk management plan on file for all clients participating in teletherapy, regardless of the client or therapist’s perceived need for this crisis-oriented intervention.

**Note:** It may take you most of the first session to review the TAFTS Informed Consent, answer all client questions, and complete the required safety plan. Remember, your 50-minute session includes the time you spend on these tasks. Prepare your clients for this possibility at the beginning of the session.

#### Adolescent (Ages 13 – 17) TAFT Video Session Checklist:

**Obtain parent/guardian consent at the beginning of the session.**

Meet your adolescent (ages 13 – 17) client’s parent or legal guardian on the Zoom video call on the day and time you have mutually arranged for the session. An adult must be visually present in the Zoom meeting to provide consent at the beginning of every session, even if the adult then opts to “leave” the session so that the adolescent can have an individual therapy session. You will do this at the beginning of all TAFT sessions with adolescents (ages 13 – 17) and should document it in detail in your teletherapy case note.

**Confirm the client’s geographic location.**

Ask the client and consenting adult or legal guardian to give you the location and physical address of where they are at that moment in time (i.e., when you begin the teletherapy session). You will do this at the beginning of every teletherapy session and provide this information in each teletherapy case note. In the case of family therapy, all parties must be in the state of Alabama in order for you to proceed with teletherapy services.

**Set ground rules with the adolescent and parent(s)/guardian(s).**

If you will be having an individual session with the adolescent, briefly review each person's (i.e., adolescent, parent/guardian, and therapist) expectations for privacy (e.g., Is it okay for the parent/guardian to be in the room during the session, but not participate? Is it okay for the parent/guardian to listen to the session from the other side of the door? Etc.). You will do this at the beginning of all TAFT sessions with adolescents (ages 13 – 17) and should document it in detail in your teletherapy case note.

**Schedule the next TAFTS appointment with the adolescent's parent/legal guardian.**

Ask the adolescent's parent/legal guardian to re-join the Zoom meeting so that you can schedule the next appointment. You must do this step "live" with the parent/legal guardian on Zoom (i.e., you need to see the parent/legal guardian on Zoom; scheduling cannot go through the child as a mediator).

Child(ren) Ages 12 and Under TAFT Video Session Checklist:

**Obtain parent/guardian consent at the beginning of the session.**

Meet your child (ages 12 and under) client with their parent or legal guardian on the Zoom video call on the day and time you have mutually arranged for the session. An adult must be visually present at the beginning of the session to provide consent and is required to remain present throughout the duration of the session. TAFT sessions with a child(ren) ages 12 and under are prohibited unless the adult or legal guardian is present at every session and for the duration of the entire session. You will verify these requirements at the beginning of all TAFT sessions with adolescents (ages 12 and under) and should document it in detail in your teletherapy case note.

**Confirm the clients' geographic location.**

Ask the client and consenting adult or legal guardian to give you the location and physical address of where they are at that moment in time (i.e., when you begin the teletherapy session). You will do this at the beginning of every teletherapy session and provide this information in each teletherapy case note. In the case of family therapy, all parties must be in the state of Alabama in order for you to proceed with teletherapy services.

## TAFTS BACK-UP PROTOCOL

### TAFTS BACK-UP GENERAL POLICIES & REMINDERS:

- No new parties (i.e., clients that are not already on the existing file) may participate or join sessions without supervisor approval.
- TAFT sessions should last no longer than 50-minutes unless a client is in crisis, or you have received permission from your supervisor for an extended session length.
- Children ages 12 and under will **ONLY** be seen when the consenting parent or legal guardian is present throughout the entirety of the session.

- Adolescents ages 13 to 17 may be seen individually **ONLY** when the parent or legal guardian is present at the beginning of the session to provide consent and at the end of the session to schedule the next appointment.
- Students are only permitted to use their personal cell phones for scheduling purposes. Conducting sessions via direct cell phone call is prohibited. Students must change the voicemail greeting of their cell phone to the required AU MFT Center clinical intern voicemail greeting (see Appendix C). Texting with clients is not permitted.
- Students must maintain a detailed contact log for all clients in Titanium. All communications (e.g., phone, email, text message, Zoom, etc.) should be documented in a comprehensive log of all contact with your clients.
- TAFT sessions may be conducted at the AU MFT Center. See the In-Person Session Checklist for a description of the CDC’s guidelines on good hygiene and social distancing.
  - o TAFT sessions conducted at the AU MFT Center must take place in a therapy room or the back office, and spaces should be reserved in the Titanium calendar in advance.
  - o Students may use the telephone in Room 274 or 276 as their back-up mode of communication if they prefer not to give their personal phone number to clients. To guarantee access to this room for a TAFT session, students must reserve this space with the Office Administrator.
- Be mindful that video sessions and telephone sessions could easily be recorded by clients and so be cognizant of how you conduct and navigate sessions.
- Students are required to abide by the AU MFT Center dress code during all TAFT sessions.
- The following phone numbers should be provided/confirmed with all TAFT clients.
  - o AU MFT Center main line for general questions: (334) 844-4478.
  - o Voicemail number for clients to reach you: your own cell phone number (for scheduling purposes only).
  - o Emergency contact numbers Resource: 911, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255), Crisis Text Line (Text HOME to 741741).

#### BACK-UP TAFT SESSION CHECKLIST:

##### **Call client via Zoom.**

If technical difficulties result in the unexpected termination of your TAFT session, you should attempt to reinitiate and complete the remainder of the session by phone. In the event of an unexpected termination of a session, both the therapist and client should call one of the contact numbers provided in the Zoom meeting invitation to re-join the meeting by phone.

##### **Confirm the safety and appropriateness of continuing the session before resuming.**

Before continuing the session via Zoom audio call, confirm that the client is safe, and that the context is appropriate for resuming treatment.

##### **Call the client directly.**

If the client has not called into the Zoom meeting within 15 minutes of the session’s unexpected termination, you should contact them directly via phone to assist with any challenges and affirm their safety.

**Note:** Make sure that any and all security updates have been completed on your cell phone and that you are employing all available security protections (e.g., passcode). If you have a land line, it is the preferable mode of communication when direct communication with clients via phone is required.

## IN-PERSON SESSION PROTOCOL

- No new parties (i.e., clients that are not already on the existing file) may participate or join sessions without supervisor approval.
- Sessions should last no longer than 50-minutes unless a client is in crisis, or you have received permission from your supervisor for an extended session length.
- Students are only permitted to use their personal cell phones for scheduling purposes. Conducting sessions via direct cell phone call is prohibited. Students must change the voicemail greeting of their cell phone to the required AU MFT Center clinical intern voicemail greeting (see Appendix C). Texting with clients is not permitted.
- Students must maintain a detailed contact log for all clients in Titanium. All communications (e.g., phone, email, text message, Zoom, etc.) should be documented in a comprehensive log of all contact with your clients.
- Students are required to abide by the AU MFT Center dress code during all in-person sessions.
- The following phone numbers should be provided/confirmed with all clients.
  - o AU MFT Center main line for general questions: (334) 844-4478.
  - o Voicemail number for clients to reach you: your own cell phone number (for scheduling purposes only).
  - o Emergency contact numbers Resource: 911, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255), Crisis Text Line (Text HOME to 741741).

## IN-PERSON SESSION CHECKLIST:

### **Conduct a verbal health and illness-risk screen before scheduling an in-person session.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that healthcare facilities should screen patients and visitors for symptoms of acute respiratory illness before they enter the facility. Following this guidance, therapists should assess their clients' health and illness-risk BEFORE scheduling an in-person session. Assessment questions include:

- Today or in the past 7 days, have you had any cold or flu symptoms, such as fever, chills, cough, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath?
- In the past 7 days, have you had contact with anyone known to be infected with COVID-19?

Consistent with CDC guidance, we will err on the side of caution when scheduling in-person sessions in order to protect our students, faculty, and staff.

### **Practices and guidelines to protect clinic staff and clients.**

The AU MFT Center will take all steps possible to practice the CDC's guidance for healthcare facilities on mitigating community spread of COVID-19. All students and staff who enter the MFT Center must practice and contribute to the following practices and guidelines; students should notify clients of these new procedures by phone before their session.

- Visual alerts (signs, posters) should be posted at entrances and in strategic places providing instruction on hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette.
- The bathroom should be fully stocked with antibacterial hand soap and paper towels.
- Therapists and employees should wash their hands regularly and use disinfectant wipes.
- Ensure supplies are available (tissues, waste receptacles, alcohol-based hand sanitizer) in the waiting room and in all therapy rooms.
- Practice social distancing of 6+ feet at all times. Congregating in any rooms or spaces should be avoided at all costs (this includes hovering behind, over, or near the front desk and business office computer desks).
- Therapists will wear a mask at the client's request. If a client is wearing a mask, it is professional practice to also wear a mask.

## CLINICAL DOCUMENTATION & STORAGE POLICIES

### GENERAL CLINICAL DOCUMENTATION & STORAGE POLICIES:

- You will use the following forms in Titanium to document your TAFT sessions:
  - o TAFTS Informed Consent
  - o TAFTS Progress Note
  - o AU MFT Center Treatment Plan
  - o Client Contact Log
- You are required to record all TAFT sessions. Sessions should be downloaded from Zoom and saved on your encrypted flash drive.

***Important: Maintaining the confidentiality of your client(s) is your responsibility and should be handled with forethought and great care. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Program Director or Faculty Supervisor for assistance.***

Student Intern Acknowledgement of TAFTS Policies & Procedures

1. I agree that I will not participate in any TAFTS Services until completing all required TAFTS training.
2. I agree to adhere strictly to the TAFTS procedures as outlined in the Scheduling Procedures and all protocol provided to me for arranging and implementing services.
3. I agree that all TAFT sessions will be done in a private place. This means being in a closed room without any interruptions. No sessions will be conducted in front of others (e.g., roommates, spouses, children) nor will they be conducted in a public place, or while driving.
4. I will complete all required documentation for TAFT sessions (i.e., TAFT Progress Notes, Treatment Plans, BEFORE and AFTER assessments, and Client Contact Log) within a timely manner and store documents securely until they may be included in the client’s clinical file.
5. I will complete both Individual and Group supervision during their regularly scheduled times using Zoom Video Conferencing Technology.
6. I will continue to track my clinical and supervision hours as previously done.
7. I will continue checking the clinic voicemail regularly and call the AU MFT Center least twice a week to inquire about potential client communications with the Office Admin.
8. I will make sure all clients are aware that they can call the office or email the MFT Center and that I will check in regularly for email.
9. I agree to not meet with a client face-to-face outside of my current, existing, approved site.

**I HAVE READ, FULLY UNDERSTAND, AND AGREE TO THESE CONDITIONS OF TAFT SESSIONS AS A MFT STUDENT INTERN. I UNDERSTAND THAT FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE REQUIREMENTS MAY RESULT IN MY FAILURE TO SUCCESSFULLY PASS CLINICAL INTERNSHIP AND/OR WILL RESULT IN REMOVAL FROM THE AU MFT PROGRAM.**

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Internship/Practicum Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I certify that I completed the following required TAFTS trainings on the dates listed below:**

Teletherapy Training NBCC Certificate (15 hours) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

AU MFT TAFTS Policies & Procedures Training (2 hours) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Titanium Electronic Health Records System Training (2 hours) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Office Administrator and Staff need to remain safe. Because of this concern I will conduct myself professionally while visiting the MFT Center.**

1. I will assess my level of risk. I will not come to the Center if I am sick.
2. I will wash my hands thoroughly when arriving to the MFT Center and after each visit with a client (e.g., shaking hands and touching surfaces).
3. I will use Clorox wipes to disinfect all phones, light switches, and door handles (outside handle).
4. I will wash my hands before entering the building and before exiting the building.
8. I will take a COVID test if I believe that I might have been exposed and wear a mask until I have tested negative.
9. I won't put the Office Administrator on the spot by asking them if they have a problem with me ignoring these guidelines or pushing boundaries. I acknowledge that staff might not verbalize when they are uncomfortable.

**I HAVE READ, FULLY UNDERSTAND, AND AGREE TO ACT WITH CARE AND COURTEOUS BEHAVIOR WHILE VISITING THE MFT CENTER**

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A: Additional TAFTS Training

To fulfill the State of Alabama’s continuing education requirements for the practice of teletherapy, Dr. Ketring will make a total of 15 hours of training available to all students, staff, and supervisors in the AU MFT Program. Note: Students are required to complete all 15 hours of teletherapy training before providing TAFTS to their current clients.

**Alabama Board of Examiners in Marriage and Family Therapy Administrative Code:**  
*536-X-8-.09. Technology-Assisted Training/Education Requirements of Profession.*

- (6) *In order for a Licensed MFT Intern to practice teletherapy, the Intern must be actively supervised for one (1) hour for every five (5) face-to-face clinical hours, by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate, or by an ABEMFT Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate trained in teletherapy while the therapist is practicing teletherapy and has not completed the 500 hours of supervised therapy required for an LMFT intern.*
- (7) *In order for a Licensed MFT Associate to practice teletherapy, the LMFT Associate must have completed a minimum of 15 supervision hours training. This requirement is met for LMFT's who completed the 15 supervision training hours as an LMFT Intern and receive continuous supervision by a supervisor trained in teletherapy and telesupervision.*
- (8) *In order for a Licensed MFT to practice teletherapy, the licensee must have completed a minimum of 15 hours initial training.*
- (9) *In order for an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, AAMFT Supervisor Candidate, ABEMFT Approved Supervisor, or ABEMFT Supervisor Candidate to be considered trained to provide telesupervision or telesupervision training, the Supervisor must have nine (9) continuing education hours or a one (1) credit course (15 classroom hours) in teletherapy dealing with supervision conducted via electronic communication (e.g., encryption of data, HIPAA compliant connections, telesupervision therapy and practice, telephone and video conferencing, legal/ethical issues, handling online emergencies, and best practices and informed consent).*

**Documentation of Completion for Additional TAFTS Training Modules:**

Dr. Scott Ketring will keep a copy of certificates completed for AU MFT Program records.

## Appendix B: TAFTS Software

### Zoom

For information and step-by-step tutorials on using Zoom videoconferencing software, visit <http://wp.auburn.edu/biggio/zoom/>.

### DUO 2-Factor Authentication

By having an additional authentication check on your login, your password alone is not enough for a criminal to gain access to your account. A device is used to verify your identity when you attempt to login. You may already use 2-factor with other services such as online banking, retail, or social media sites. With recent high-profile data breaches like Equifax, this additional security helps safeguard your sensitive information at Auburn including your gradebook, course content, tax information, bank information, and email.

To use Duo, you will need to register a device at [auburn.edu/2factor](http://auburn.edu/2factor). The most common authentication method is using a smart phone, however there are other alternatives such as a phone call, text message or a security token purchased from OIT. The Office of Information Technology has a complete guide to setting up 2-factor with Duo. If you have any questions on configuring Duo, the OIT Helpdesk at 334-844-4944 will be glad to assist you.

### VPN

Short for Virtual Private Network, VPN software makes it appear that you are on-campus, even if you are using an off-campus computer or AU Wireless. This is useful for resources that are limited to only on-campus use. It is also convenient for resources that require off-campus authentication, such as online journals and databases.

Cisco Any Connect VPN software is available only to Auburn University faculty, students, and staff. An Auburn University User ID and OIT password are required to download and use the Cisco VPN software. If you are faculty, staff, or student, and do not have an Auburn University User-ID, contact the Technology Hotline at 844-4944. If you have forgotten your password, you will need to visit the OIT Help Desk.

#### **Installing Cisco Any Connect VPN:**

1. Log in to AU Install with your Auburn User ID and password
2. Scroll down until you come to Cisco AnyConnect VPN Client.
3. Download and install the Windows or Macintosh version of Cisco AnyConnect VPN client onto your computer. You may need to login to MyAccount before downloading the software.
4. Look for the installation and configuration instructions. The "Tutorials & Troubleshooting" link can help get you started.
5. You are now ready to establish a VPN connection.

**Using VPN from Off-Campus:**

1. Search for "Cisco AnyConnect" in your computer's Start menu or using the program search function.
2. If this is your first time using the VPN, enter "auvpn.auburn.edu" in the Domain box and click Connect.
3. Select "2FACTOR" as the Group, then type your regular Auburn username and password.
4. You should now be connected the AU network and able to access on-campus only resources. There should be a VPN connection icon in the right corner of the screen with the Cisco logo.
5. If you wish to use an Internet browser, open a new Internet browser window, or refresh any that you already have open.
6. To end the VPN session, right-click on VPN icon in the "hidden icons" section of your Windows computer, or search for "Cisco AnyConnect" again. Click "Disconnect."

## Appendix C

### Clinical Intern Cell Phone Voicemail Greeting

#### AU MFT Center Clinical Intern Cell Phone Voicemail Greeting

##### Tips for Recording a Professional Voicemail Greeting:

- **Speak clearly and slowly.**

Remember, some of your clients may have accessibility issues that can make listening to voicemails very challenging. Make sure that you do not mumble, speak too fast, or speak too slow when recording your voicemail greeting. You should speak slowly and clearly enough that listeners can easily write down the phone numbers you are providing. Remember, the way you communicate with people through your greeting sends a message about how you communicate with people in person. Put your best foot forward!

- **Speak in a professional, yet welcoming tone.**

Make sure that the volume and tone of your voice is professional, yet welcoming. Think about the type of voicemail greeting you expect from your doctor's office. How does the person's voice, tone, pacing, etc. influence your perception of your doctor's office and the professionalism and/or competence of their staff? Keep this in mind when recording your greeting.

- **Smile while recording your voicemail greeting.**

It sounds silly but smiling while recording your greeting will put some enthusiasm in your voice. Callers will pick up on it and feel more comfortable when leaving you a message. Research shows that smiling affects how we speak, and listeners are not only able to identify that people are smiling, but also the intent of the smile based on voice intonation alone. Remember, clients make inferences about you as a therapist and the AU MFT Center overall when listening to your voicemail greeting. If you want your greeting to leave a positive impression, smile when you record it!

- **Use the required voicemail greeting script.**

To meet ethical and legal standards, clinical interns must use the required voicemail greeting script in its entirety with no alterations. Spend time reading and re-reading the script to get comfortable with it before recording.

- **Rehearse your greeting several times.**

Practice saying the voicemail greeting several times. Plan your pauses and select natural places to take a breath. Even though you are using a script, try to make sure that you do not sound robotic and rehearsed. When listening to your voicemail greeting, callers should not feel like they are listening to an impersonal recording – keep it conversational.

- **Do a few practice recordings.**

Using a recording app on your phone, computer, or other device, record yourself saying the greeting. Listen to and analyze your voicemail greeting. Are you happy with it? Is it slow enough that your grandparent could understand what you are saying? Does it sound robotic or like you are reading from a script? Do you inflect your voice the same way you do when speaking in conversation or are you monotoned? Rehearse your greeting a few times before you press record. Plan your pauses and select natural places to take a breath.

- **Record your voicemail greeting in a quiet space.**

When you are ready to record, remove all background noise. Ambient noise on your recording could be sending the wrong message to your callers. The sound of traffic, pets, kids, etc. in the background of your greeting detracts from your professional image. When you record your voicemail greeting, choose a quiet spot free from interruption, so your message is the only thing callers hear. It is also good to avoid large, cavernous spaces where sound reverberates.

- **Change how you hold your phone while recording your voicemail greeting.**

If you are recording directly into your phone, do not hold it to your ear like you are talking to someone. This can produce a muffled tone. Hold the phone out in front of you a few inches from your mouth for the clearest recording. This may require some trial and error to figure out what produces the best sound on your specific device, so playback your greeting and make necessary adjustments when you re-record.

- **Be patient with yourself.**

Recording a professional voicemail can be tricky. It is okay if you have to do a few recordings to get it just right. Eventually it will sound precisely how you'd like.

**Required Clinical Intern Cell Phone Voicemail Greeting Script:**

*Hello. You've reached the voicemail of [first and last name], MFT intern at the Auburn University Marriage and Family Therapy Center. I am currently unable to take your call, so please leave a voicemail stating your name, phone number, a detailed message, and whether it is okay to leave a voicemail on your answering machine when returning your call. Our front office hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. I will return your call as soon as possible. If this is an emergency, please hang up and dial 911 or go to your local emergency room. If you are not in immediate danger, but would like someone to speak with, you can reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by calling 1-800-273-8255 or the Crisis Text Line by texting HOME to 741741. Both services are free, confidential, and open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For questions about scheduling and clinic policies, you can also contact the AU MFT Center directly by calling (334) 844-4478. Thank you for your call and have a great day.*

## Appendix H

## Affidavit of Compliance

I, \_\_\_\_\_ having fully read the Auburn University Marriage and Family Therapy Program Handbook (MFT Program Handbook) and Auburn University Marriage and Family Therapy Center Handbook [MFT Center Handbook] and the [Teletherapy Handbook], all together referred to as the MFT Handbooks. I understand that it is my responsibility to meet all academic and clinical requirements of the MFT program and to comply with all policies and procedures set forth in the MFT Handbooks.

I understand that, as a clinical graduate student in the Auburn University MFT (AU MFT) program, I will learn and abide by, both the Code of Ethics of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and the Standards of Conduct of Marriage and Family Therapists set forth by the Alabama Board of Examiners in Marriage and Family Therapy (ABEMFT). In the case of any contrary standards, I will follow the higher standard. Both ethical codes are included in the MFT Handbooks.

\_\_\_\_\_ (INITIALS)

I acknowledge having already read and signed the Auburn University Marriage and Family Therapy Center Confidentiality Agreement. \_\_\_\_\_ (INITIALS)

Furthermore, I understand that, before I begin observing, and later working, with clients at the AU MFT Center, I must review, learn and begin following all policies and procedures of the MFT Center, contained in the MFT Center Handbook. \_\_\_\_\_ (INITIALS)

Should I believe I have an academic grievance during my tenure as a student in the MFT program, I am aware that I should consult and follow the AU Student Academic Grievance Policy found at:

<https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universypolicies/Policies/StudentAcademicGrievancePolicy.pdf>

By signing this document, I am signifying that I will abide by the terms of this affidavit of compliance.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date