



GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CODE OF ETHICS

The Talkspace ethical principles consist of the introduction, mission statement, guiding principles and the code of ethics. Guiding Principles are aspirational goals to guide therapists toward the highest ideals of counseling. The Code of Ethics are not exhaustive. The fact that a given conduct is not specifically addressed by the Code of Ethics does not mean that it is necessarily either ethical or unethical. This Code of Ethics applies to a therapist's professional activities across a variety of contexts, such as in person, internet, telephone, and other electronic transmissions. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of an Code of Ethics is not itself a defense to a charge of unethical conduct.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of Talkspace to provide accessible therapy for the way we live today. By removing the barriers and stigma of mental health, all people are able to make proactive choices for better lives, with the help of licensed professional therapists.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE A: Beneficence and Nonmaleficence

Therapists strive to benefit those with whom they work and take care to do no harm. In their professional actions, therapists seek to safeguard the welfare and rights of those with whom they interact professionally. Because therapists' professional judgments and actions may affect the lives of others, they are alert to and guard against personal, financial, social, organizational or political factors that might lead to misuse of their influence. Therapists strive to be aware of the possible effect of their own physical and mental health on their ability to help those with whom they work.

PRINCIPLE B: Fidelity and Responsibility

Therapists establish relationships of trust with those with whom they work. They are aware of their professional responsibilities to society and to the specific communities in which they work. Therapists uphold professional standards of conduct, clarify their professional roles and obligations, accept appropriate responsibility for their behavior and seek to manage conflicts of interest that could lead to exploitation or harm.

PRINCIPLE C: Integrity

Therapists seek to promote accuracy, honesty and truthfulness in the practice of counseling. In these activities therapists do not steal, cheat or engage in fraud,

subterfuge or intentional misrepresentation of fact. Therapists strive to keep their promises and to avoid unwise or unclear commitments.

PRINCIPLE D: Justice

Therapists recognize that fairness and justice entitle all persons to access to and benefit from counseling to equal quality in the processes, procedures and services being conducted. Therapists exercise reasonable judgment and take precautions to ensure that their potential biases, the boundaries of their competence and the limitations of their expertise do not lead to or condone unjust practices.

PRINCIPLE E: Respect for People's Rights and Dignity

Therapists respect the dignity and worth of all people, and the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality, and self-determination. Therapists are aware of and respect cultural, individual and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language and socioeconomic status and consider these factors when working with members of such groups.

CODE OF ETHICS

STANDARD 1: RESPONSIBILITY TO CLIENTS

- The primary responsibility of Talkspace therapists is to promote the dignity and protect the welfare of clients.
- Talkspace therapists make every effort to ensure that ethical and professional standards of care and practice are met at the outset and throughout the duration of the services they provide.
- Talkspace therapists will provide ongoing informed consent by reminding clients of their rights, educating them about the therapy process, and the freedom to choose to enter into and continue in the relationship.
- Talkspace therapists will not discriminate or impose judgments or personal values on the client, with the intention to do no harm.
- Talkspace therapists will establish and maintain professional boundaries.
- Talkspace therapists will respond to clients in a timely fashion, assess how the client is feeling about the process, and provide hope and encouragement.
- Talkspace therapists will not abandon their clients and provide appropriate termination for continuum of care.
- Talkspace therapists will follow the Talkspace quality assurance guidelines including providing ongoing informed consent, ongoing assessment, and building an effective therapeutic alliance.

STANDARD 2: CONFIDENTIALITY

- Talkspace therapists understand that the relationship formed with clients and the trust that is fostered are vital to the success of treatment. In order to help create this trust, confidentiality is maintained as a core component.
- Talkspace therapists uphold confidentiality by limiting the sharing of personal information within the boundary of clinical supervision and will break that confidentiality only when the client is in danger of hurting him/herself or someone else.

- Talkspace therapists will respect the privacy of users when receiving reviews from clients. The therapist will ask permission of the client before sharing a review.

STANDARD 3: CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- Talkspace therapists are aware of the cultural diversity of their clients as well as the impact of cultural differences in accessing and participating in therapeutic services.
- Talkspace therapists perform a thorough and ongoing assessment and history of the client taking into consideration the client's ethnicity and cultural background.
- Talkspace therapists are sensitive to the needs of vulnerable populations, taking into account how the client perceives these services and adjusts their interaction accordingly--always deferring to the client and his or her needs.

STANDARD 4: PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY AND INTEGRITY

- Talkspace therapists are aware of the importance of updating their knowledge base on an ongoing basis.
- Talkspace therapists uphold the values of their profession and are aware of the unique relationship they form with clients.
- Talkspace therapists participate in ongoing training on the Talkspace Platform and providing service to clients.
- Talkspace therapists will practice within their scope of competence and update their knowledge base on a regular basis.
- Talkspace therapists participate in ongoing training on the Talkspace Platform and providing service to clients.

STANDARD 5: ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE, STANDARD

- Talkspace therapists shall keep themselves informed about technology updates with the Talkspace platform that will advance quality program operations and service delivery.
- Talkspace therapists shall stay connected to Talkspace administration.
- Talkspace therapists shall use a standard method for keeping effective client records for each clinical room.
- Talkspace therapists shall have a risk-management plan for all technology devices used to access the Talkspace platform.

STANDARD 6: RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS

- Talkspace therapists shall recognize that the quality of their interactions with colleagues can influence the quality of services provided to clients.
- Talkspace therapists shall develop positive working relationships and systems of communication with colleagues to enhance services to clients.
- Talkspace therapists are respectful of approaches that are grounded in theory and/or have an empirical or scientific foundation but may differ from their own.
- Talkspace therapists shall work to develop and strengthen relationships with colleagues from other disciplines to best serve clients.

- Talkspace therapists who are members of specialized task force teams shall remain focused on how to best serve clients. They participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the wellbeing of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of colleagues.
- Talkspace therapists shall take reasonable steps to ensure that they have the appropriate resources and competencies when providing services.

STANDARD 7: SUPERVISION AND TRAINING

- Talkspace therapists shall participate in ongoing training on the Talkspace Platform and providing service to clients.
- Talkspace therapists shall make use of ongoing support from their Mentors, Supervisors and the Clinical Director when needed.

STANDARD 8: RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

- Talkspace therapists who conduct research or write publications are encouraged to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession and promote a clearer understanding of the conditions that lead to a healthy society.
- When writing for publication, information obtained about clients shall remain confidential. Procedures are implemented to protect confidentiality.