



Frequently Asked Questions on Military and Family Life Counseling (MFLC) Telehealth services during the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic.

1. What is telehealth?

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) defines telehealth as the “use of electronic information and telecommunications technologies to support and promote long-distance clinical healthcare.”

Telehealth services provided by the MFLC program include telephonic, or counseling sessions on video platforms, ensuring continuity of care to our military community.

2. What platform is used to provide telehealth services?

To protect privacy, all Military and Family Life Counselors utilize Zoom Healthcare business accounts to conduct non-medical counseling sessions. Zoom Healthcare is approved by the Department of Health and Human Services, and is Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant.

3. The media has identified vulnerabilities with the Zoom platform. How can I be sure that Zoom is secure and confidential?

In a telehealth environment, there are many factors to consider for confidentiality, such as location, means of communication, and platform security. Due to this, confidentiality is taken seriously to protect the participant’s privacy as best possible when choosing a platform.

To protect privacy, all MFLCs use Zoom Healthcare business accounts. Zoom Healthcare is Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant and on the Health and Human Services list of compliant telehealth platforms.

Zoom Healthcare accounts are to apply any Zoom patches if vulnerabilities are identified. The accounts are encrypted for 3rd Party Endpoints (H323/SIP) and require Single Sign-On (SSO)

authentication. In addition, many features have been removed in accordance to HIPAA compliance, such as the ability to sign in before the host, a participant having any controls of the meeting room or MFLC's camera, recording on the device or Cloud, saving device/user information in login, and ability to transfer files. While participants are in the waiting room prior to a session, the MFLC host approves only authorized participants. Using the telehealth and the Zoom Healthcare platform are voluntary, and the participant can decline telehealth at any point prior to, or during the session.

4. How do I reach my MFLC or CYB-MFLC?

Most Telehealth assignments are filled by the MFLC or CYB-MFLC that was providing face to face services prior to COVID 19. The same contact number can be used to reach your MFLC or CYB-MFLC. In addition, Military OneSource has a directory of all the MFLC and CYB-MFLC counselors worldwide. Contact Military OneSource at 800-342-9647 and they can provide the name and contact information for the MFLC assigned to your installation, Unit or school.

5. Will the MFLC collect personally identifiable information during our session?

MFLCs do not share a participant's information with others or Command, unless required by law.

Prior to the telehealth session, the MFLC will collect the participant's email address to which the Zoom invitation will be emailed, and during the session, will collect location/address and contact number in case of a disconnection or in the event of a duty to warn/mandated report situation. If the participant refuses, the MFLC will inform the participant that the session will be terminated and provide a referral to Military OneSource that aligns to the desired level of anonymity.

All personally identifiable information collected by the MFLC will be immediately deleted at the conclusion of each session.

6. Can Child and Youth Behavioral MFLCS (CYB-MFLC) provide telehealth sessions to youth?

Telehealth sessions involving youth ages 6 to 17 will be conducted by video technology only. Telehealth sessions for youth ages 13 to 17 must have a parent/guardian available at the start of each video session to give parental consent and maintain line of sight for the duration of the session.

While telehealth may not appropriate for children under the age of 5, services can be provided to the parent/guardian to address any parenting issues or additional concerns.