



Welcome to the UAB Employee Assistance and Counseling Center (EACC)

We are pleased to have the opportunity to serve you!

The EACC is a voluntary confidential employee assistance and counseling program. Our service is an employee benefit designed to provide employees and their immediate household members with resources for resolving work-related and personal problems.

About Us

The EACC provides employee assistance, confidential counseling, community referral, supervisor consultation, crisis management resources, and a variety of online educational resources. Licensed and Distance Certified mental health professionals with a wide variety of expertise provide confidential individual, family, and relationship counseling (staff biography's & pictures are located on our website – www.uab.edu/eacc). Our goal is to assist you in clarifying issues, exploring options, and finding solutions. Our service is provided as an employee benefit of VIVA at no cost to our clients.

Distance Counseling

The EACC offers Distance Counseling via face-to-face video conferencing to VIVA employees and members of their immediate households who work at a clinic/location outside of Birmingham (Mobile, Montgomery, Opelika, etc.). This service is available to clients assessed as being appropriate for this form of counseling.

Prior to beginning Distance Counseling, you will have an initial video consultation with a UAB EACC staff member in order to verify your identity by matching you with your picture ID. During this initial verification you will choose a passphrase or number which you will use for all future sessions. This process protects you from another person posing as you.

Video communication may lack some visual or audio cues that on occasion may result in misunderstanding. Should this ever happen, it is important to assume that your counselor has positive regard for you, and to check out your assumptions with your counselor. This will reduce any unnecessary feelings of discomfort.

Video conferencing counseling sessions are held via Zoom. It is recommended that you sign on to your account at least 5 minutes prior to your session start time. You are responsible for initiating the connection with the UAB EACC via the provided software link at the time of your session.

Limitations of Distance Counseling

Distance counseling should not be viewed as a substitute for face-to-face counseling or medication by a physician. It is an alternative form of counseling with some differences from traditional counseling. For example:

- Due to the use of technology, video counseling may have disruptions in service and quality of service.
- If you are having a crisis, acute psychosis, or suicidal or homicidal thoughts, video counseling might not be appropriate for you needs.

Emergency Management for Distance Counseling

So that the EACC is able to get you help in the case of an emergency and for your safety, the following measures are important and necessary:

- Your EACC counselor will need to know the location/address in which you will consistently be during counseling sessions, and will need to know if this location changes.
- Your Counselor will request that you identify a person, whom you trust, to give your counselor permission to contact should a situation occur that your counselor believes you to be at risk. You, and/or your counselor, will verify that this emergency contact person is able and willing to go to your location in the event of an emergency, and if your EACC counselor deems necessary, call 911 and/or transport you to a hospital.

Backup Plan in Case of Technology Failure

- The most reliable backup is a phone. Therefore, it is recommended that you always have a phone available, and that you provide your counselor with your phone number.
- If you get disconnected from a video conferencing session, re-start the session. If you are unable to reconnect within ten minutes, please call your counselor.

Scope of Benefit and Eligibility

The EACC provides services for all eligible persons, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or veteran status. If it is determined by the clinical staff that an individual's needs exceed the scope of service or expertise available at the EACC or that your needs cannot be adequately met by participating in Distance Counseling, we will assist you to identify an appropriate referral to meet your needs. Services provided to you through EACC Distance Counseling are an employee benefit at no cost to you. The EACC does not pay the costs of therapy or community resources/treatment services to which you may be referred. VIVA employees and members of their immediate households residing outside of the Birmingham area are eligible for up to 12 Distance Counseling sessions each year.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is essential to your counseling progress. Our counselors are licensed and/or certified master's level or higher mental health professionals ethically and legally bound to maintain your confidentiality. A written and/or electronic record (date, time, nature of meeting) of your contacts with the EACC will be maintained in a secure manner. Only EACC staff members have access to your clinical record, except as required by law or as described here. Should you need to access your file please contact your counselor. Your counselor will review the file with you and provide a written summary if requested.

Video conferencing sessions in our office are provided behind a closed door.

All video conferencing correspondences will be done through Zoom, which is encrypted to the federal standard.

**To schedule a counseling appointment or for questions give us a call at:
1-877-872-2327 or 205-934-2281.**

For additional information about our service, visit us at UAB.EDU/EACC.

We look forward to working with you!