

# **REINSTATEMENT OF COUNSELLING SESSIONS WITH COLCHESTER INSTITUTE COUNSELLING SERVICE**

## **(CICS)**

Colchester Institute is fully prepared to welcome students, staff and visitors back to campus and we are pleased to confirm this means our counselling service can reopen to clients.

The safety and wellbeing of our student counsellors and our clients is paramount and our dedicated health and safety staff ensure regular and continued guidance is adhered to according to the Department of Health. The conditions implemented by Colchester Institute and in turn the counselling service are consistent with guidance from the government for colleges and public spaces.

As we begin to reinstate our counselling sessions we are managing the risks related to Coronavirus. This statement provides some key information about our service, changes we have made and how we will be operating with physical distancing in and around campus and the counselling room, face shields and management of hygiene.

We hope you feel welcomed, comfortable and safe when attending your sessions.

## **ARRIVING TO CAMPUS (COLCHESTER AND BRAINTREE)**

We must insist that you **do not attend your session or visit our campus if you are unwell or experiencing symptoms of Coronavirus.**

You must wear a face covering when visiting our campuses and this should be worn as you arrive, report to Reception and whilst you are moving around campus. If you are medically exempt from wearing a face covering you may have already have a way of communicating this through an exemption card or lanyard. Please communicate this to the service office before agreeing your session to ensure appropriate and safe arrangements are made. You may also be expected to communicate this to our security and reception staff.

Good hand hygiene is encouraged and all visitors, staff and students are reminded to clean their hands thoroughly and make use of the sanitiser stations located around campus. You may also wish to bring your own sanitiser for personal use.

Our security team will be given details of who is expected for their weekly sessions and you will be asked to confirm your name and the name of your student counsellor on arrival.

You should only visit campus if you have a pre-arrange session planned with our service. Please do not attend in person with queries or to seek information. You will be declined access if you do not have an appointment. On some occasions, to reduce unnecessary risk, our office staff may be working remotely and not be able to meet with you. You should direct any queries via telephone or email. Contact details for CICS can be found below.

## **YOUR COUNSELLING CONTRACT**

Our contracts provide an agreement between you and your counsellor and detail the terms of our service. We previously used a written contract that was verbally agreed and then signed in person within initial sessions. To reduce the handling of paperwork and therefore the risk of spread, your contract will now be agreed in the first instance via email with the counselling service coordinator or admin staff. Within your first session your student counsellor will cover all the details of the contract and you will have the opportunity to discuss and agree verbally. Part of your contract relates to your attendance to sessions. The absence notification process will be detailed in the contract.

If you need to cancel your session, please provide 24 hrs notice where possible, by contacting CICS. We will also be asking our counsellors to adhere to these guidelines.

## **OUR COUNSELLING ROOMS**

Our dedicated facilities and health and safety staff have completed room assessments and prepared public spaces to ensure appropriate social distancing, ventilation and cleanliness. We will be limiting communal touch points and as such our counselling rooms will no longer have tissue boxes and any communal drinking water facilities have been removed. You are welcome to bring your own bottled water. We would respectfully ask that you take your bottles/rubbish away with you when you leave your session.

You will be required to wear a face covering to and from the counselling room but this may be removed within the session. Spaces have been set out to ensure the government guided distances are adhered to and in most cases a minimum of 2-meter distances can be maintained. Please do not move furniture in these spaces and do not face chairs towards each other. You should be positioned at a side on angle to other people.

Where unavoidable and in spaces where only a 1 meter minimum can be provided our student counsellors will be required to wear clear visors within the sessions. We welcome you to use these if you have your own also to provide further protection.

Windows will be open to ensure ventilation and as we approach to colder months we ask you to bear this in mind and ensure you dress suitably for your own comfort.

## **CASHLESS CAMPUS**

Our Colchester and Braintree campuses now operate with a no cash policy. Details regarding the payment of your sessions will be shared with you in our specific guide.

## **CAMPUS FACILITIES**

We encourage you to arrive promptly for your sessions and leave the campus immediately after signing out at reception. If, however you do need to use the facilities such as toilets or refectory services please adhere to the guidelines in these spaces.

Thank you for your cooperation.