

Mandatory Reporting & Duty of Care (Important Information)

What is duty of care?

Duty of care means that your counsellor has a professional responsibility to take reasonable steps to protect your wellbeing and safety, and to act responsibly when risk is identified. This includes creating a safe space for sessions and responding appropriately if serious concerns come up.

What is mandatory reporting?

Mandatory reporting refers to situations where a counsellor is legally required to report certain information to the appropriate authorities or organizations. This is not the same as “breaking confidentiality for any reason”—it is limited to specific legal criteria.

When can counselling confidentiality be limited?

Confidentiality may be limited when there is a serious concern such as:

- Risk of harm to yourself (e.g., imminent self-harm or suicide risk)
- Risk of harm to others (e.g., credible threats or imminent danger)
- Child or vulnerable adult protection issues (where required by law)
- Some legal processes (e.g., court orders, subpoenas, or specific legal requests)

What does this mean for you?

- Your counsellor will normally explain confidentiality and its limits at the start of therapy.
- If a reporting obligation applies, the counsellor will generally take steps to support you and, where possible, discuss the situation with you before reporting (though immediate action may be required in urgent situations).

If you're unsure

If you have questions about what is reportable or how confidentiality works in your specific location and service, ask your counsellor directly—this is a normal and important question to clarify.