

CS: Privacy and Confidentiality

Version 3

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Privacy and Confidentiality

Confidentiality Statement:

Seneca Polytechnic's Counselling Services is committed to maintaining an environment that respects students' rights, including the right to privacy. Our team provides professional mental health and wellness support to students while ensuring that personal information is handled securely and confidentially.

We collect, use, and share your personal information (PI) and personal health information (PHI) as needed to provide counselling services that support your well-being and academic success. All information is managed in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and the *Personal Health Information Protection Act* (PHIPA).

Personal Counselling – Expressed Consent to Share and Collect Personal Health Information:

If you are accessing Counselling Services, we require your written or verbal consent before collecting or sharing your PHI with anyone outside of Counselling Services. This includes faculty, college staff outside of Counselling Services, external health care providers, and your family.

Limits to Confidentiality:

There are specific situations where confidentiality may be overridden, and information may be disclosed without your consent, including:

- If there is a significant risk of serious harm to yourself or others
- If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child under 18 is being abused or neglected
- If there are reasonable grounds to suspect sexual abuse by a regulated health professional
- If required by law, such as in response to a court order (subpoena, summons, or warrant)

Students Accessing Counselling Services from Outside of Ontario:

Seneca Polytechnic's Counselling Services team consists of registered professionals practicing under Ontario's regulations for psychotherapy, social work, and psychology. The provision of these services may differ outside of Ontario or Canada due to varying jurisdictional regulations.

If you are accessing Counselling Services from outside of Ontario, it is your responsibility to inform us so we can determine whether services can be provided based on your location's legal and professional guidelines.

By engaging with Counselling Services while located outside of Ontario, you acknowledge that our services are governed by Ontario's professional regulations. If you have concerns regarding services, privacy, or professional conduct, you may address them through the relevant Ontario regulatory bodies, including:

- The College of Psychologists of Ontario
- The College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario
- The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers

Accessing and Amending Your Record:

You have the right to request access to your counselling record, obtain a copy, or request corrections if you identify errors. Requests must be submitted in writing to senecacnas@senecapolytechnic.ca. Please allow up to 30 business days for processing.

Storage and Disposal of Your Counselling Record:

Your record will be securely stored in the college's electronic health record system, which complies with FIPPA, PHIPA, and other relevant privacy standards. Counselling professionals and authorized administrative staff involved in your care may access your record when necessary.

Your counselling record will be retained for 10 years from your last interaction with Counselling Services. After this period, it will be securely destroyed.

For any questions regarding privacy and confidentiality, please contact [Seneca Privacy Office](#).