

Guide for Finding a Counselor at Home

Finding A Counselor

Visit Psychology Today at <http://www.psychologytoday.com>

Select the location you are looking for and hit search. You can see that on the left there are a number of options to filter the search. Make sure to select your insurance company, any gender preferences, the issue you are looking for support on, etc. If you are looking for a fully remote counselor, it is recommended that you select the state you are seeking services in rather than limiting yourself to a specific town or county. For example, type in "New York" or "Pennsylvania". Almost all counselors are offering tele options, as noted on the bottom right of their profile blurb. You must open the actual profile to determine if they are offering in-person and virtual services.

Make Sure They Accept Your Insurance

Once you review some profiles and find a few clinicians that you like, double check them with your insurance website below. We recommend this because not all plans through all insurance companies offer the same list of approved providers. This means that you could select Blue Cross Blue Shield as your insurance, but your *specific* plan might not cover every provider listed.

To check your plan, go to the homepage of your insurance website. The steps from here will vary slightly from one insurance company to another. Most companies will provide an option to "find a doctor" that will be visible from the home page, start here. Next, follow the prompts it provides you and select the appropriate option you are looking for. Options might include: select your individual insurance plan, select behavioral/mental health care, select your location, etc. You may have to input your member ID or create an account on the insurance website to access your list of accepted provider options based on your plan. Pay very close attention to any plan name that is listed on your card. Plan names are often simple words tied together that wouldn't make sense in a sentence such as "Choice Plus", "Open Access", or "Platinum Blue". If you do not see a plan name on your card, look for acronyms such as "PPO" or "HMO". Additionally, you may be asked if your insurance is employer-based, through Medicaid or purchased through the NYS marketplace. Some Medicaid plans have their own provider lists, so if you know you have Medicaid it is recommended that instead of searching "United Healthcare" you search "United Healthcare Medicaid" for the proper home page to begin this process. Should you run into any barriers you can always call the number on the back of your card and customer service can assist you.

We recommend starting with Psychology Today (https://www.psychologytoday.com) as a starting point for finding providers that accept their insurance online. This means that insurance website will list all mental health providers who work in local nursing homes, high schools, hospitals, clinics, etc., but they are not necessarily available to provide services to you. The insurance company list will not differentiate between who actually works as a private therapist and who does not, which means you would have to individually look up each provider

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