

## INFORMED CONSENT/ POLICIES and PROCEDURES

The purpose of this document is to provide you with important information regarding the UTSA PEACE center and will help us better serve you. The information may be used as aggregate data for statistical purposes however information will be non-identifiable. By signing, you agree to receive advocacy services at UTSA PEACE Center. Please know that we do not provide emergency services. For emergencies and after hours care your safety is our priority. You may seek help by calling 911 or by going to the nearest hospital emergency room. In case of emotional crisis, you may also contact our 24-hour helpline at (210)458-4140, opt 3 for assistance.

### Goal

Our services goal is to provide comprehensive supportive services to survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence to include stalking and exploitation situations. Our goal is to help them overcome challenges stemming from the trauma of sexual violence. The main objectives of our services are to help our clients cope with the immediate crisis, support their healing process, and help them regain a sense of control and hope over their lives.

### Services

Advocacy services provided by The PEACE Center may include: crisis intervention, prevention education, case management and ongoing emotional support and referrals accordingly. Services provided are determined by your needs assessment and current demand for services. If the assessment determines that you require needs beyond our scope of practice than we will assist you with a referral. **Service Plan:** your advocate will help you identify short to medium term goals based on your needs and resources available.

### Staff

Services provided by the PEACE Center are delivered by professional licensed counselors and trained advocates who have been trained in best practices to support survivors of sexual and relationship violence. Services are provided under the supervision of Melissa F. Hernandez, DSW, LCSW-S, Interim Assoc. Dean.

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important and sensitive issue to our clients and our staff. Information pertaining to you cannot be shared with another person, professional, or agency outside of the PEACE Center without your written permission. A caveat to this rule may be the case of a Social Work Practicum student discussing a case with their supervisor or case consultation review with other licensed professionals. In these cases, **to protect your confidentiality, no identifying information will be used.** Exceptions for disclosure required by law include: reasonable suspicion of child or elder abuse or it has been determined that you may be at serious risk of trying to kill or harm yourself or others. According to Chap 26, section 261.101 of the Family Code, requires professionals to report instances of abuse or neglect of a child. The term "child" refers to the individual's age at the present time and does not extend to an individual who is now an adult but was a child when the abuse occurred.

### Electronic Communication

Email, text, and other forms of electronic messages provide convenient methods of communication. Please be advised that these methods, in their typical form, are not confidential means of communication. Therefore, The PEACE Center will use email communication and voicemail messaging only with your permission. If you authorize these methods to communicate with The PEACE Center, the Center cannot guarantee secure or error-free communication. You can revoke your authorization in writing at any time.

### Client Records

We are required to maintain accurate records of services received and keep those records secure; these records will not be part of your permanent University records. Records are stored on an electronic database called Maxient and/or Point & Click and will be maintained for a period of ten years. Although rare, there are also instances when client records may be subpoenaed for legal proceedings.

### Contact Information

Once a referral is made The PEACE Center strives to make contact to set an appointment as soon as possible. Appointments are made during office hours Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00pm, by calling (210)458-4077 or by walk-in during regular business hours. Please note that voicemail is not monitored over weekends and holidays.

### Your Rights as a Client

The professional relationship requires high standards of moral, ethical, and appropriate conduct on the part of your provider. Boundaries must be upheld and the relationship is confined to providing advocacy and education services on behalf of the PEACE Center mission. The PEACE center staff cannot be expected to be involved in any social relationship or friendship outside our services. Staff cannot connect with you on social media, this is to protect the professional relationship and your confidentiality. If you have concerns about your rights as a client you are encouraged to speak with the Director of Counseling & Mental Health Services at (210)458-4140.

My signature verifies that I agree to be seen for advocacy services under the guideline described above. I understand that this meeting is for advocacy and support purposes only. I understand the legal and ethical guidelines presented here remain intact after termination of advocacy services.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Banner ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

### PRIVACY NOTICE

With a few exceptions, you are entitled to be informed about the information U.T. San Antonio collects about you. Under Sections 552.021 and 552.023 of the Texas Government Code, you are entitled to receive and review this information. Under Section 559.004 of the Texas Government Code, you are entitled to have U.T. San Antonio correct information about you that is held by us and that is incorrect, in accordance with the procedures set forth in the University of Texas System Business Procedures Memorandum 32. The information that U.T. San Antonio collects will be retained and maintained as required by Texas records retention laws (Section 441.180 et seq. of the Texas Government Code) and rules. Different types of information are kept for different periods of time.