



Counseling Services

Policy & Procedure Manual

It is the policy of BridgeValley Community and Technical College to provide equal opportunities to all prospective and current members of the student body, faculty and staff on the basis of individual qualifications and merit without regard to race, gender, color, religion, sex, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, age, or any other protected status. For more information: Michelle Bissell, [Title IX](#) Coordinator (304) 205-6600.

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BRIDGEVALLEY STATEMENTS

Mission Statement

BridgeValley Community and Technical College promotes student success, prepares a skilled workforce, and builds tomorrow's leaders by providing access to quality education.

Vision Statement

BridgeValley Community and Technical College will be the college of opportunity for a diverse learner population, offering leading-edge technology, innovative ideas, and dynamic service to our students and our communities.

Value Statements

Faculty, staff, and administrators share a common set of values that guides the College in fulfilling its mission. These values influence our actions, guide our decisions, mold our policies, and determine our strategic planning.

Excellence in Education. We are dedicated to excellence in education by providing a highly competent, innovative, and supportive faculty and staff; facilities equipped with current technology; quality academic and occupational programs; and integrity and high standards in teaching, learning, and service.

Accessibility and Achievement. We are committed to access and affordability of higher education for all students and the delivery of education and support services that will enable students to achieve their individual educational goals in course, skill set, or program completion.

Respect for Diversity. We value intellectual and cultural diversity. We believe that all individuals should have an opportunity to learn and succeed in the classroom, in the workplace, and in the community and encourage a diverse student body through open admission and delivery of educational services that support student success.

Accountability. We are committed to efficient and effective management of human and financial resources that will maintain public trust and ensure a fiscally responsible, sustainable environment for the institution.

Quality of Work Environment. We value each member of our community; promote free, open and responsible exchange of ideas; foster respect, trust, and support among faculty, staff, and students through shared governance; encourage ethical risk-taking and innovation; recognize exceptional performance and contributions made to our dynamic learning environment.

Contribution to Community and Economic Development. We are committed to serving the academic, occupational, and enrichment needs of our communities; enhancing quality of life; and supporting economic development through effective business and industry partnerships and collaborations.

Commitment to the Future. We are dedicated to continuous evaluation of the institution in order to address the needs of the present and the challenges of the future.

Goals of the Counseling Center

- Provide quality, professionally-delivered, individual counseling to BridgeValley students.
- Promote adjustment to college and, consequently, contribute to student retention.
- Be available to students and the BridgeValley campus community in the time of a crisis.
- Collaborate with faculty to promote student well-being through outreach, prevention and educational efforts.
- Promote an environment of personal safety and respect.

Program Accessibility

The goal of BridgeValley Counseling services is to provide helpful and effective counseling to currently enrolled students. The Counseling Center works collaboratively with students, academic divisions, departments, faculty members, enrollment services, and other pertinent departments of the institution to enhance academic, personal, and career success. Counseling services are free of charge to BridgeValley students. Counseling sessions consist of a short-term basis (*9 sessions per semester*). If it is determined that long-term mental health counseling services are more appropriate to address your need(s), the BridgeValley counselor will provide a list of community resources to better assist you. Counseling appointments are made in one-hour increments.

The actual length of time for a counseling appointment is 45 minutes. This allows the counselor time for documentation of the previous appointment, and for centering before the next appointment. Counseling services are available to all students at BridgeValley. Referrals for BridgeValley students are available at the Counseling Center website.

Making Counseling Appointments

BridgeValley students may make appointments to see the counselor by going to the Counseling Services' home Web page, <http://www.bridgevalley.edu/counseling-services> and click on the link that says request counseling appointment and follow instructions. Students may also email the counselor at Kayli.Carter@bridgevalley.edu or visit the office. Students are required to give a name, contact phone number, and contact email address.

Hours of Operation

Generally, Counseling Services are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM at the South Charleston Campus and by appointment for the Montgomery campus during the fall semester beginning in August, until the end of the spring term in May. Summer hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00am to 6:00pm. Evening hours may be available depending on staffing. Hours are limited during breaks such as fall, winter and spring break.

Walk-ins are welcome, however, the counselor may or may not be able to see students depending on availability and the nature of the visit (i.e. students in crisis). Appointments are recommended for all counseling sessions to ensure a counselor is available. Students with appointments take precedence over walk-in clients. Appointments can be made in person, over the phone or through the counselors email, Kayli.Carter@bridgevalley.edu. If it is your first time seeing the counselor you may fill out a referral form on the BridgeValley Counseling website. The counselor will contact you within 24 hours of receipt.

After Hours Emergencies

If you experience a mental health crisis after 4:30 p.m. on a weekday or over the weekend you may contact:

Thomas Behavioral Health Connections (304) 766-3553 or 1-800-992-3010

National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Help 4 WV: 1-844-HELP4WV (435-7498)

REACH, The Counseling Connection 24HR Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

Ethical Standards and Confidentiality

BridgeValley Community and Technical College counselors adhere to the Ethical Standards of the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (2014). As professionals, we are trained to help individuals with academic, emotional, psychological, social and behavioral issues. It is the BridgeValley counselor's role to assist the student in clarifying the nature of the concern, offer support, encourage a deeper understanding of the issue at hand, and provide guidance to help students cope with, or resolve problems that create distress in daily living and are interfering with academic success at BridgeValley. The information discussed is confidential between the student and the BridgeValley Counselor. We will not release any information to any party without the student's written consent, within the limits of the law. There are some exceptions to confidentiality these include: suspected abuse or neglect, situations involving potential threat to harm self, others or the campus community.

Mandated Counseling

Counseling Services only accepts mandated evaluation cases from the Dean of Students or as a result of a ruling through the College's judicial proceedings. Mandated Counseling Services may consist of more than nine sessions, this is to be determined by both the Dean and Director of Counseling.

Psychiatric Referrals in the Community and Psychiatric Hospitalization

Students who need more intense services: Students who need more intense services will be assisted by the counselor in finding the appropriate community mental health provider. Counselors will make every effort to match the student with an appropriate community provider, and will provide any assistance needed to set up an initial appointment, although students are encouraged to make the initial contact. Students who secure services in the community are responsible for paying for those services. Most community providers accept insurance. Some have a sliding scale fee schedule for students who do not have insurance for mental health services. A list of community mental health providers is available from the BridgeValley Counselor. Students may use these lists to self-refer if they prefer not to see a BridgeValley counselor for a referral.

Students who are in crisis: Students typically will be transported to the local hospital emergency room by local ambulance for safety and liability reasons. If the treating emergency room physician determines that immediate hospitalization is needed, the student will be encouraged to agree to a voluntary hospitalization.

Termination of Services

Counseling is completely voluntary and services may be terminated at any point by the student. In some instances, counseling may be terminated by the counselor when it is therapeutically appropriate to do so. Instances in which a counselor may terminate therapy with a student may include the following: a student's lack of commitment to their treatment, therapy is not deemed as beneficial for the client, or other reasons which the counselor sees fit.

Counseling may be terminated when the student has:

- A) Achieved stated goals
- B) Left BridgeValley (graduated, transfer, withdrawal)
- C) Been referred to another provider
- D) Repeatedly misses appointments or makes several cancellations

Evaluation of Services

In an effort to assess the effectiveness of counseling services, a counseling Satisfaction Survey will be distributed to the students who have received counseling services at BridgeValley. This survey will be emailed to students who have sought counseling services at least once per semester. Students are asked to complete the survey via an online survey engine. The surveys will be reviewed by Counseling Center Staff & the Dean of Students. Areas of improvement will be noted and a plan of action will be developed to ensure students receive optimal care. The survey will be confidential.

Documentation of Services and Files

- All counseling services provided to BridgeValley students will be documented in student counseling files. "Hard" paper copies of such documents will be placed in the students files as soon as such documentation is available. There are no electronic files kept by Counseling Services.
- All "hard copy" documentation of services and other confidential information will be kept in locking file cabinets, in the counselor's office. No student files will be removed from the premises, unless required by a court or some other extraordinary circumstance.
- Students will complete the Student Intake Information form at the time of their first session each academic year.
- Students will read the Client Rights and Office Information form and if in agreement, will sign and date the form at the time of their first session.
- Progress notes will be completed within 24 hours of services. Progress notes will include subjective and objective observations, assessment of need, and plan for future services.
- Missed, canceled or rescheduled appointments require a brief note by the counselor indicating what occurred. If the counselor sends a student a letter or e-mail relating to the appointment, a copy of the correspondence may substitute for the note documenting the missed, canceled or rescheduled appointment.
- Documentation of emergency or other services provided after regular working hours (including any services or consultations accessed by means of the emergency cell phone) will be completed as soon as practically possible, using the "Counselor Note" form. The original form will be kept in the student's counseling file.
- Copies of any correspondence (including e-mail messages with or about the clients will be included in student counseling files.

- Documentation of services will be shredded approximately seven years after the student in question graduates or otherwise leaves BridgeValley.

Maintaining of Records

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provide an exception for counseling records. If a student has a session with a campus counselor records that would be created by the BridgeValley counselor would be created and maintained by counseling services. Counseling records are not included in the definition of education records and, are not subject to the same rules and regulations as education records. A student would not have the right to inspect his treatment records, though he/she does have the right to inspect his/her education records. Counseling records should only be shared with those providing the counseling or “other appropriate professionals of the student’s choice.”

BRIDGEVALLEY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

CAMPUS REGULATION

| Effective Date | Subject | Number | Page |
|-----------------------|---|---------------|-------------|
| February 15, 2015 | Dealing with Suicide: Prevention, Intervention, and Post-vention | CR-D-15-2 | 1 of 4 |

STATEMENT

Suicide is the second leading cause of death of college students. The stress of the college experience and the normal developmental issues of young adulthood place some students under emotional pressures that occasionally manifests itself in a threat or attempt by the student to take his or her own life. The college will treat all threats or attempted suicides as serious regardless of the degree of lethality involved. When a student threatens or attempts suicide, the college will take the steps necessary to ensure the safety of that student and any other individuals in the college setting. Suicide, attempted suicide, and suicidal gestures have detrimental effects on both the involved student and other students in the community campus environment.

DEFINITION

Suicide is defined as, the purposeful act of causing one’s own death. Attempted suicide is considered to be a person engaging in life threatening behavior(s) intended to jeopardize his/her life through an act, threat, or gesture.

GUIDELINES

The following processes/procedures are to be followed for suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention:

Prevention

Students will receive information via Suicide Prevention/ information sharing activities and events. New students will be provided information via new student orientation. The communication plan will also include Freshman Experience Classes, Student Email listserv, (Digital Messaging System (DMS), and the campus student newsletter. The goal of the educational/communication plan offered by Student Services is to promote understanding concerning the dynamics of suicide and to recognize behaviors that may signal suicidal intent. Brochures and flyers will be distributed and provided regarding depression, general principles about mental health, stress, related topics to student’s concerns, and where students can find programs that are readily available including the Suicide Prevention Hotline.

Information will also be made available to faculty and staff regarding how to recognize behaviors that may signal suicidal intent. Guidelines on intervention via education and this policy will also be shared with staff to provide them with the necessary information in relation to intervention.

Intervention

The following are guidelines for immediate and non-immediate intervention in the case of a suicide threat or attempt. It is recognized that special circumstances may arise which require deviation from these guidelines, and that administrative discretion must be exercised in these circumstances.

1. The Dean of Students (or designee) will be notified immediately. If the Dean of Students is not available the BridgeValley Chief of Police (or designee) should be contacted immediately.
2. The Dean (or designee) or Chief of Police (or designee) will notify:
 - a. Medical emergency personnel (as needed)
 - b. BridgeValley Counseling Services (during office hours)
 - c. Director of Counseling Services (after hours)
3. Medical emergency personnel will transport the student to the hospital for medical evaluation and mental health assessment upon arrival on campus.
4. The Dean (or designee) will contact the family of the student (once the situation is stable i.e. the student is no longer in danger) who threatened or attempted suicide, when appropriate, and will render support to family members and significant others as needed.

When the threat is not immediate, but suggested, the student will be referred to counseling services that same day. The counselor will attempt to make a written “no suicide” safety contract with the student. The contract could state, “I will not make any attempt to harm myself”. The contract should also include a mutually agreed upon date by which the person will seek professional help (See Safety Contract) If the student refuses then it becomes an immediate threat and should be treated as such.

Post-Vention/Clearance to return to school

1. The student must provide documentation supporting the need for an excused absence the day prior to or day of their return to campus.
2. The student may be asked to fill out a release of information to the profession who is currently treating the student if they desire additional counseling services via the school.
3. The same waiver of absence policy that is addressed in the Disability Services Handbook will be applied.

Post-Vention/Communication plan for dealing with students, staff and parents after the loss of a student to suicide.

1. In the unfortunate event of loss of a student to suicide, BridgeValley Community and Technical College will provide an email notification to Students, Staff and Faculty.

2. The Dean of Students and Director of Counseling will notify the Registrar and Financial Affairs in order to cease mailings that may go to the student's permanent residence.
3. The Dean of Students and Director of Counseling will identify the instructors of the student who passed and work with Human Resources to provide a debriefing to faculty as well as provide personal counseling resources available..
4. The Dean of Students and Director of Counseling will reach out to students who may have had direct contact with the student reminding them of counseling services offered at BridgeValley as well as working with instructors to allow time for the students with direct contact to grieve.
5. The Dean of Students and Director of Counseling will work together in determining if it is pertinent to work with a community agency in order to bring in additional counseling support.

Intervening with a Suicide Threat:

General Employee Procedure Check List

If a student has threatened suicide directly or indirectly, the following procedures are to be followed. Take all suicide threats seriously! A suicide threat is to be handled as a crisis intervention and potential medical emergency.

1. Stay with the student or designate another BridgeValley employee to supervise the student constantly and without exception until help arrives.
2. Under no circumstances should you allow the student to leave the school alone or with non-family members.
3. Do not agree to keep a student's suicidal intentions a secret.
4. If the student has the means to carry out the threatened suicide on his or her person, determine if he or she will voluntarily relinquish it. Do not force the student to do so. Do not place yourself in danger.
5. Take the suicidal student to an area away from others.
6. Notify the Dean of Students immediately. If the Dean of Students is not available the BridgeValley Chief of Police (or designee) should be contacted immediately.
7. Inform the suicidal student that outside help has been called and describe what the next steps will be.

Appendices

Appendix A: Client Rights and Office Information

Appendix B: Student Information

Appendix C: Progress Note Form

Appendix D: Safety Contract

Appendix A

Client Rights and Office Information

BridgeValley Community and Technical College is pleased to provide currently enrolled students with short-term counseling and referral services while enrolled at the college. Counseling services are free of charge to BridgeValley students. Counseling sessions consist of a short-term basis (*9 sessions per semester*). If it is determined that long-term mental health counseling services are more appropriate to address your need (s), the BridgeValley counselor will work with you to provide a referral to a qualified mental health professional in the community. If you are referred to a qualified mental health professional in the community, you may be charged for services by the agency you choose to go to for services. The counseling process is voluntary. It provides students an opportunity to explore solutions to personal, educational and career concerns impacting their educational experience and personal development. As a student receiving counseling, it is important that we provide you with information about services, confidentiality and our office procedures.

As professionals, we are trained to help individuals with academic, emotional, psychological, social and behavioral issues. It is the BridgeValley counselor's role to assist the student in clarifying the nature of the concern, offer support, encourage a deeper understanding of the issue at hand, and provide guidance to help students cope with, or resolve problems that create distress in daily living and are interfering with academic success at BridgeValley. The information you discuss is confidential between you and the BridgeValley Counselor. We will not release any information to any party without your written consent, within the limits of the law. There are some exceptions to confidentiality of which you need to be aware. These include: suspected abuse or neglect, situations involving potential threat to harm yourself or others.

All phases of the counseling process are important. During the counseling process, you may discuss your progress and review your goals. If you have questions or concerns, you are encouraged to discuss these with the counselor. The counselor may also provide useful information through administration of career and self-assessment tests. In order for counseling to be effective it is important for students to take an active role in the process by discussing any concerns openly and honestly. It is your right to discontinue treatment any time you feel it is in your best interest to do so. It is the BridgeValley counselor's ethical responsibility to end the relationship when it is clear that the student is not benefiting from services. In that situation you will then be asked if you would like to have assistance for a referral elsewhere for continued services. If you decide to end services, we request that you first discuss this important issue with the counselor at BridgeValley.

All counseling records remain the property of BridgeValley Community and Technical College. Clients (i.e. Student) request access to their own counseling records in writing, to the counselor or the appropriate supervisor. Counseling records are kept in the counselor's office for seven years and are then destroyed per college policy.

We want to provide the best possible services to our students. It is the established policy of BridgeValley Community and Technical College not to discriminate against any individual or group of individuals for reason of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability or Veterans status. Please feel free to ask the BridgeValley counselor about any questions you may have regarding your involvement in counseling services at BridgeValley.

***YOUR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.** To indicate that you have read this Informed Consent Statement in its entirety and you understand the criteria for eligibility of service, limitations of services, and exceptions to confidentiality, please sign and date in the spaces provided below.

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

Appendix B

Date: ___/___/___

Student Information

Last Name: _____ **First Name:** _____ **MI:** _____
Student ID: _____ **Birth date:** ___/___/___ **Age:** _____
Address: _____

_____ **Cell Phone:** _____ Okay to leave a message?

_____ **Home Phone:** _____ Okay to leave a message?

Relationship status: *(check appropriate box)* **School Email:** _____ Yes / No Okay to email regarding appointments
___ Single ___ Married ___ Divorced ___ Separated ___ Widowed ___ In a relationship

Gender & Ethnicity: *(Check the boxes in the categories below that apply to you)*

- Male Female Transgender Other *(explain)*
- American Indian or Alaska Native (including all Original People of the Americas)
 - Asian (including Indian subcontinent and Philippines)
 - Black or African American (Including Africa or Caribbean)
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - White or Caucasian (Including Middle Eastern)
 - Multiracial
 - Other/unknown

Other Information: *(Check the groups below that may apply to you and answer corresponding follow-up questions)*

- Veteran
 - International Student
 - Transfer Student
 - Student with Disabilities
- Yes / No Have you been officially diagnosed by a medical or social services professional?
Yes / No Are you officially registered with the BridgeValley Disability Services Office

Are you currently employed? Yes / No If yes, number of hours worked per week.

Do you have a current judicial case with the college? Yes / No

Have you have had a judicial hearing with the college? Yes / No

Were you referred by someone on campus? Yes / No If yes list the individual:

Emergency Contact:

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Appendix D

Safety Contract

Step 1: Warning signs (thoughts, images, mood, situation, behavior) that a crisis may be developing:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Step 2: Internal coping strategies – Things I can do to take my mind off my problems without contacting another person (relaxation technique, physical activity):

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Step 3: People and social settings that provide distraction:

- 1. Name _____ Phone _____
- 2. Name _____ Phone _____
- 3. Name _____ Phone _____

Step 4: People whom I can ask for help:

- 1. Name _____ Phone _____
- 2. Name _____ Phone _____
- 3. Name _____ Phone _____

Step 5: Professionals or agencies I can contact during a crisis:

- 1. Clinician Name _____ Phone _____
Clinician Pager or Emergency Contact # _____
- 2. Clinician Name _____ Phone _____
Clinician Pager or Emergency Contact # _____
- 3. Local Urgent Care Services _____
Urgent Care Services Address _____
Urgent Care Services Phone _____
- 4. Suicide Prevention Lifeline Phone: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Step 6: Making the environment safe:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The one thing that is most important to me and worth living for is:

Student Signature

Date

Counselor

Date