



Washington DC | Maryland | Virginia
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OFFICE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Appointments

The initial appointment is a 60 minutes consultation during which the provider performs a comprehensive evaluation, provides a diagnosis or tentative diagnosis and recommended treatment plan. During this time, both provider and patient also determine if they are a good fit for each other, which is important in order for a good therapeutic relationship to be established over time. If it is, then the provider becomes the patient's treating psychiatrist. During subsequent follow up appointments, we provide medication management and monitor your progress; the diagnoses may be refined and treatment adjusted as needed. In some cases, the provider or patient may determine at any given point that the patient would be better served by seeing a different provider. In such instance, suggestions and a referral could be made to another provider. It is our hope that we can continue to work together to help you achieve optimal wellness.

Billing & Payments

We accept CareFirst Blue Cross Blue Shield and CIGNA insurance. For all other insurance, we are an out-of-network provider. Patients using an accepted insurance are responsible for paying their co-pays (and/or deductible if applicable) at the time of visit. We file claim to your insurance on your behalf, however please note that if your insurance does not make payment, you are responsible for the full cost of the visit. We encourage you to contact your insurance prior to your first visit to learn about your benefits, coverage and what charges you are responsible for.

Self-pay patients or patients with other non-accepted insurance are required to make payment in full at time of service via credit card, cash, money order or cashier's check. We accept Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover cards. We provide a billing statement/invoice that you can submit with claims to your insurance for out of network reimbursement if applicable. In some circumstances, we may be able to assist with filing claims with your insurance for you, however you would still have to remit payment at time of visit. We encourage you to check with your insurance about your out-of-network benefits.

No Shows/Late Cancellations

When you schedule an appointment, that time slot is reserved just for you. We do not double or triple book patients in a time slot, to ensure that we have adequate time to provide our patients with quality care that is uninterrupted and unrushed. When you cancel less than 1 business day in advance or don't show up for your appointment, we are unable to schedule another patient in that appointment time. This has a financial impact on our practice and also affects other people seeking psychiatric care who could have been seen during that time. We often have patients on our waiting list looking for appointment.

Therefore, our policy is as follows:

If you need to cancel or reschedule an appointment, please do so at least 1 business day in advance (excluding weekends and holidays), to avoid a late cancellation/no-show fee. We would appreciate if you cancel earlier, as soon as you know you cannot make it to your appointment.

Any cancellations made after this time or if you don't show up for the appointment, will be subject to a charge for late cancellation/no show fee:

**\$250 for 1 hour initial evaluation appointment (new patients) or
\$125 for 30 mins follow-up appointment (existing patients).**

If you arrive late for your appointment, you will still be charged for the full session. New patients arriving late with less than 30 minutes remaining for the appointment will not be seen. A new appointment will have to be scheduled.

Existing patients arriving late with less than 15 minutes remaining for the appointment will not be seen. A new appointment will have to be scheduled. Refills may be provided if needed to last until your next scheduled appointment.

Please note that insurance do not reimburse for missed appointments. Patients will be financially responsible for all late cancellation/no-show fees associated with services scheduled with Pieur Wellness.

We understand that things happen such that a patient may be unable to cancel. We will waive one late cancellation/no-show fee as a courtesy to our patients.

Repeated late cancellations, no shows or late arrival may necessitate discharge from the practice.

Medication Refill

To request medication refill, first ensure that you have no refills left, you can check your medication bottle or call your pharmacy. If you have no refills, you can send a message through the patient portal. Please allow up to 72 hours for a refill. We advise against waiting until you are almost out of medications to request a refill or schedule a follow up appointment. We recommend doing so in advance when you still have enough medications to last for a week. When requesting refill via message in the portal, please include name of medication, dosage, name and desired location of pharmacy.

Please note that refills are typically provided during follow up appointments. Routine visits are necessary in order to monitor your progress towards improvement, assess your response to medication, tolerance of the medication, its effectiveness and identify any adverse side effects or medical problem if any.

Even if you are stable on your medication, an evaluation of your progress is still required. Therefore you would still need to be seen regularly and will receive refills during your appointment. Refills are generally given to current patients who maintain their regularly scheduled appointments. We are unable to refill medication to last a long time if you have not been seen for 3-4 months. We may provide refill to last until your next scheduled appointment. Note that your medication dosages may change or in some cases medication may need to be discontinued or changed when evaluated during appointments.

Note that only very stable patients can be seen every 3-4 months. Some patients require more frequent visits such as every 2 weeks, monthly or every 2 months. The frequency of your visits depends on the severity of your symptoms, your progress as well as need for routine monitoring and lab testing. It is determined during your visits with your psychiatrist.

It is the responsibility of the patient to schedule follow-up appointments at the recommended interval, to ensure smooth continuity of care and that you don't run out of medications. Please keep in mind that some medications may cause side effects or withdrawal symptoms if abruptly stopped. We cannot always accommodate emergent refilling of medications to prevent discontinuation, such as on weekends and holidays. Therefore you should plan well and schedule appointments accordingly.

If you are traveling or anticipate being away for a long time such as up to 6 months or more, or moving away from the area, please let us know and provide documentation. We can prescribe a 90 day supply of medication with 1 refill to last you for 6 months, until you're able to establish care with a new psychiatrist at your new location.

Prescription Law and Medication Disclosure

Medications that require a prescription from a doctor are governed by federal and state laws, as well as monitored by different agencies including the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Department of Health and Human Services and Medical Boards. There is a prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP) that allows us to see all the controlled medications that have been dispensed to a patient anywhere in the state and by any provider, regardless of how they were paid for, whether covered by insurance or paid for by cash. Physicians are required to check PDMP prior to prescribing any controlled substance to prevent possible misuse or abuse of prescription drugs.

It is dangerous and a felony to share, sell, or exchange your medication with another individual for any reason. It is also a felony to alter, forge or falsify a prescription. These are punishable and individuals who violate these laws could face significant prison sentence. We are obligated to report any such matter to the proper authorities and this would result in your termination from the practice.

It is strongly recommended that you inform your psychiatrist and any doctor you see about **every** medication you are taking, in order to prevent possible harm to yourself. These include over-the-counter (OTC) medications such as herbal supplements, vitamins, cough syrup, anti-inflammatory, etc. as they can have potentially toxic interactions with your prescription medications, affect their effectiveness and can impact your health.

Controlled Substance Policy

You must fill controlled substances within 7 days of the prescription date on the script. Though most pharmacies will now take an electronic prescription, some will require you to present the prescription at your pharmacy. Some of these prescriptions will not have refills and require you to be seen monthly. If you are not seen, no refill will be given. It is your responsibility to schedule an appointment early enough so that you will have enough to last you until you are seen. Controlled substances should only be filled in the state it was prescribed. If you take the prescription to another state, it is unlikely that the medication will be filled.

Patients on Clozapine must be seen at least every thirty days, even though Clozapine is not a controlled substance.

We will not replace lost or stolen prescriptions of controlled substances without a police report. You may be asked to bring your prescribed controlled medications to your appointment for a pill-count to ensure compliance. We may occasionally perform random urine or saliva drug screens, as this is the standard of care. It serves to verify that you are taking your medications or not taking other non-prescribed drugs that could alter your mood and interfere with treatment. If you are prescribed controlled substances and do not comply with a pill count or drug screen request within 48 hours without good reason, it may result in termination from our practice. Note that it is a felony to accept a controlled substance prescription from the same (or similar) class from any other prescriber without both prescriber's notification and consent. This is referred to as “**doctor shopping**” and can be detrimental to your health, safety and well-being. If it is the case that you receive the same class of controlled substances from another prescriber and do not notify us, you will be terminated from the practice.

Primary Care Integration

We care about your overall health, and therefore all patients should be under the routine care of a primary care physician. Even if you are seeing a psychiatrist regularly, it does not ensure that your routine health maintenance is being addressed. If you do not have a primary care physician, we are happy to give you references.

Policy on Non-Covered Services

Some services are not paid for or reimbursed by insurance companies, but patients or their representatives may occasionally request the psychiatrist to provide these services to coordinate care with other organizations to help ensure you are receiving integrated comprehensive healthcare. However, these services may take up a significant amount of the psychiatrist's time. Because of this, the following services are billed at the hourly rate of \$300.

- Preparing reports for other providers, organizations, or landlords.
- Completing documents for disability claims, insurance reviews, worker's compensation. Please note that I can only complete supportive documentation on your behalf for medical leave, disability, excused absence from school, or other reasons if you have been my patient for **at least six (6) months** and I have seen you a **minimum of 5 times** (including initial evaluation and routine follow up appointments) as well as managed your psychiatric care during the applicable period of illness. Completion of any paperwork is still at the discretion of the physician.
- Telephone calls lasting more than 5 minutes.
- Evaluation, testing, or treatment services not covered by insurance.

- Court-ordered and legal related services, including assessments, preparing for depositions, travel time, court time, and writing reports are considered forensic-type services. These are billed at a higher rate. For more information, please contact us.

Confidentiality

All information shared with Pieur Wellness will be kept completely confidential as mandated by HIPAA. Providers may share certain information to a third party only with the expressed written agreement and consent of the patient AND if the provider deems that doing so is in line with the patient's treatment plan. There are some situations in which providers at Pieur Wellness may be legally required to take action that could include revealing some information about the patient's treatment. Examples of such situations include imminent risk/threat of self-harm (patient), imminent risk/threat of harm to others, and child or elder abuse. Please refer to Pieur Wellness Notice of Privacy Practices document for full details on all privacy practices. A copy of privacy practices is given to all new patients and is also available upon request.

Client Etiquette

Disrespectful, abusive behavior or harassment towards our providers and/or office staff will not be tolerated. Patient should be aware they could be terminated from the practice for this sort of demeanor.

Unattended Children

The practice does not allow and is not responsible for unattended children in the waiting area. We truly apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Telephone Policy/Electronic Communication

In case of an urgent matter, please call us at **202-902-7324**. If after hours, please leave a voicemail and inform about the nature of the urgency in your message. We will respond as soon as possible, usually within the same day. If your urgency is very acute and requires immediate attention, please do not wait for a response from us, instead call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. Please note that all communications will be added to your medical records.

In case of a life-threatening emergency such as having thoughts or plan of hurting yourself or others, current or recent self-injury/self-harm, hearing

voices telling you to hurt yourself or others, experiencing unusual severe side effects, drug overdose or withdrawal symptoms, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

If you are in emotional distress and need to speak to someone immediately but are otherwise safe and not in danger of harm to self or others, please call the national suicide prevention lifeline at 1-800-273-8255, they provide 24/7 free confidential support and crisis resources. Information about available community resources and hotlines are posted on our website at www.pieurwellness.com.

For non-urgent and non-emergent matters, please send us a message within the patient portal or call our office during normal office hours, leave a message if no answer. We will respond at our earliest convenience, usually within one business day. After-hours, non-urgent and non-emergency calls are routed to a voicemail and are checked the next business day. Brief calls are generally returned at our earliest convenience, within one business day. Phone calls that require more than a quick response will be charged at our prorated hourly rate. Please note that some issues may need to be addressed or resolved during an appointment.

Providers at Pieur Wellness cannot use e-mail to communicate, as it is not a secure information platform. Occasionally we may use a secure SMS text message platform to reach some patients.

Office Closures

We will strive to notify you about the office closure and every attempt will be made to reschedule you if necessary to the earliest available time. Our holiday closures will be posted on the dashboard in the patient portal. In the event of inclement weather, the office will typically be closed. We offer Telehealth online visit, which would be a great option during this time.

Feedback

Our practice strives to provide quality psychiatric care and ensure that our patients have a positive experience. We would love to hear from you if you have any issues, questions, concerns or recommendation.

Should grievance occur, please let us know and we will attempt to resolve your complaint in a professional manner as quickly as possible. We value the privacy of our patients and will keep correspondence confidential. Consumer etiquette and appropriate behavior is still expected even when a grievance arises.

If you are happy and satisfied with the care you receive, we would love to know as well!

IMPORTANT NOTICE

- We require a valid photo ID such as a driver's license or passport in order to receive treatment. We also require proof of insurance (if applicable).
- The initial appointment is a consultation and provides an opportunity to decide whether or not we are the right practice for you. There is no guarantee that we will immediately prescribe medication, continue previous treatment, or complete forms.
- Currently, we do not provide regular psychotherapy (talk therapy) such as on a weekly or biweekly basis. If it is assessed that you need therapy (with or without medications), we can provide referral to Psychologists/Therapists. You can also search for therapists within your insurance network. We collaborate and work closely with therapists to help you achieve optimal mental wellness.
- We offer our patients a secure patient portal to easily and conveniently schedule appointment, sign and complete required forms, request medication refills and send messages to the psychiatrist. However, the use of the portal to ask clinical questions or relay concerns does not eliminate the need to keep your routine follow-up appointments. We reserve the right to refuse refilling medication if we believe it is necessary to evaluate the patient before prescribing medication.
- We are unable to see patients with any form of Medicare insurance. Please inform us if you have this insurance.
- We strive to limit the use of addictive medications such as benzodiazepines. These are controlled substances that should be used infrequently and for a limited period of time due to potential risks. Therefore please note that we **do not**:
 - Prescribe high doses or high amounts of benzodiazepines (including Xanax, Klonopin, Ativan, Valium, etc).
 - Prescribe Xanax (Alprazolam) except under extremely rare circumstances and in very small quantities

If you are currently taking this medication, we will work with you to explore alternative treatment options to manage the symptoms that often lead to the use of these medications. These include non-addictive medications, lifestyle changes, therapy, coping skills and relaxation techniques.

- If you have been diagnosed with ADHD/ADD in the past and received treatment with stimulant medications (e.g. Adderall, Ritalin, Vyvanse, etc) which are controlled substances, we have to ensure that the diagnosis is correct. Therefore in addition to requiring your previous medical records which should include proof of diagnosis, testing if any and past treatments, we also perform our own evaluation and in some cases may require additional assessment such as neuropsychological testing.

For patients without prior ADHD diagnosis, we conduct a psychiatric evaluation and in some cases may require additional assessment such as a neuropsychological testing, this is usually performed by a Psychologist and a written report is provided upon completion.

- By law, controlled substances cannot be prescribed in an online visit unless the patient has been seen at least once in-person which requires an office visit. Therefore new patients taking or seeking controlled substances **should not** schedule a telepsychiatry online appointment for their initial evaluation.

Controlled substances are certain medications that are potentially addictive and abused. Examples of controlled medications include:

Benzodiazepines – used for anxiety, panic attacks, sleep disorders, tremors, and seizures: Xanax, Klonopin, Ativan, Valium, Restoril, Valium, and Librium

Hypnotics – used for insomnia: Ambien, Ambien CR, Lunesta, Sonata, Belsomra

Stimulants – used for ADHD/ADD, depression, fatigue, narcolepsy, cognitive issues: Adderall, Dextroamphetamine, Methylphenidate, Ritalin, Concerta, Focalin, Vyvanse, Dexedrine, Provigil, and Nuvigil

Opioids, used for pain control; not usually prescribed by psychiatrist, except medications used to treat opioid addiction such as Suboxone.

CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE:

We reserve the right to change this notice. We generally update all our forms once per year, and occasionally more frequently. This Agreement shall not be amended except by written instrument executed by both parties hereto. Should any provision of this Agreement be declared void or ineffective by virtue of any state or federal statute or regulation, or decision of any court or regulatory authority, such declaration shall not invalidate any of the provisions of this Agreement that otherwise remain in full force and effect.