

## ADDITIONAL REFERRAL ASSISTANCE

If the referrals you were given don't work out, contact the CAPS staff person who provided them or our main office for help. **Your health insurance company** can provide a list of therapists covered by your plan: Call the number on your insurance card for assistance. The following are additional sources for therapy referrals:

- **American Psychological Association Psychologist Locator:** <http://locator.apa.org>
- **CAPS Searchable Therapist Database:** [http://caps.ucsc.edu/counseling/off\\_campus\\_therapy.html](http://caps.ucsc.edu/counseling/off_campus_therapy.html)
- **Psychology Today's "Find a Therapist":** [https://therapists.psychologytoday.com/rms/prof\\_search.php](https://therapists.psychologytoday.com/rms/prof_search.php)

## PERSONAL REFERRAL LIST

Below is a space for the names and numbers of the referrals provided by CAPS:

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*Note: CAPS can assist you in finding an appropriate clinician based on the clinician's self-report. CAPS does not endorse any referred-to clinician.*

## SELF-HELP RESOURCES

- **CAPS website ([caps.ucsc.edu](http://caps.ucsc.edu)):** Self-help resources and info about our services
- **WellTrack (<http://caps.ucsc.edu/resources/welltrack.html>):** Self-help tools for anxiety, stress, depression—free with CAPS access code: UCSCCAPS

## CRISIS RESOURCES

- **CAPS Crisis Services:** Professional counselors available to UCSC community 24/7 at (831) 459-2628
- **Emergency:** Call 911 (on campus, reaches UCSC police; off campus, reaches local police/emergency services)
- **Family Service Agency 24-hour crisis line:** (877) 663-5433 (ONE LIFE; toll free)
- **National Suicide Hotline:** (800) 784-2433 (SUICIDE)
- **Santa Cruz County Chapter, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):** (831) 427-8020 (information and support for people with mental illness and their loved ones)
- **Santa Cruz County Crisis Stabilization Program:** (831) 600-2801 (for psychiatric emergencies)
- **Santa Cruz County 24-hour mental health services:** (800) 925-2335 or (831) 454-4170 (for local mental health information, services, and non-life-threatening crises)
- **Women's Crisis Support/Defensa de Mujeres 24-hour sexual assault and domestic violence crisis line:** (888) 900-4232



Counseling  
& Psychological  
Services | UCSC

## A GUIDE TO SEEKING COUNSELING OFF CAMPUS



Information on finding and choosing a therapist, answers to common questions about the process, and additional resources

**Counseling and Psychological Services**  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
Student Health Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
(831) 459-2628  
[caps.ucsc.edu](http://caps.ucsc.edu)

You were probably given this brochure because off-campus therapy was recommended by CAPS or you are seeking off-campus services on your own. Many students feel intimidated by finding and choosing a therapist off campus. This is understandable and a common concern. This brochure will help answer your questions and offer tips and resources to guide the process.

## BENEFITS OF THERAPY

Therapy can help you understand yourself, teach ways to deal with emotions and handle stress, and improve quality of life. It can also help reduce symptoms of mental disorders on its own or in conjunction with medication. Off-campus therapy has some benefits compared with brief therapy at CAPS: You have more flexibility with whom you see and for how long, and evening or weekend hours may be available. Also, there may be a shorter wait for a first appointment.

## HOW TO CHOOSE

CAPS recommends and refers to clinicians who are *licensed in the State of California* to provide mental health services. All licensed therapists have experience helping clients with a variety of issues, including anxiety and stress, depression, and life transitions. In some cases (e.g., treatment for eating disorders or a substance addiction), you may be best served by a clinician or agency that specializes in your area of concern. Research shows that the most important factor in a positive therapy experience is “fit,” meaning how comfortable you feel with the therapist. Therefore, it’s important to consider their personality and style.

## HOW TO GET STARTED

When calling potential therapists, you will often get their voicemail. Leave a brief message with your name, number, reason for calling, and best times to reach you. *Repeat it twice, especially from a cell phone, to make sure your message is clear.* Some people

prefer to call one clinician at a time; others leave messages for all the referrals. Expect responses in 1 to 3 business days. If you don’t hear back by then, you may wish to leave another message.

Most therapists will answer questions before you make an appointment to help you get a sense of who might be a good match in terms of style, personality, location, and hours. It’s OK to tell a potential therapist you’re calling a few others and will get back to them if you decide to schedule an appointment.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Do you have openings? What is your availability (e.g., days/times)?
- Do you take my insurance? (CAPS refers you to clinicians listed as taking your insurance, but double check.)
- What is the cost per session? Is it set or flexible? How do you handle payment?
- What is your counseling style? How do you typically run a session?
- What is your experience with my issues of concern/reasons for seeking therapy?

## HEALTH INSURANCE

With the **UCSC Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP)**, there is a \$20 copay per visit, and you need a referral form from CAPS. (See [ucop.edu/ucship](http://ucop.edu/ucship) for more info.) If you have other insurance, contact the company to learn what your plan covers and whether you need pre-authorization or a referral before making a therapy appointment. With most plans, you pay a copay or percentage of the cost per session.

Note that if you have **Kaiser** insurance, services are only covered at a Kaiser facility. If you have **Medi-Cal**, local services may only be covered if your Medi-Cal plan is for Santa Cruz County. Call **Beacon Health** at (855) 765-9700 for local Medi-Cal info and referrals.

If you don’t have insurance or don’t want to use it for therapy, CAPS can talk to you about your options and resources.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Why am I being referred off campus?** CAPS provides *brief* therapy only: Some concerns are best addressed with open-ended therapy, giving you the option of seeing a therapist longer. Also, due to high demand, there may be delays for therapy at CAPS—we may recommend other services, like a group, or an off-campus referral so you won’t have to wait as long to get started. Also, there are some services CAPS does not offer.
- **What sorts of clinicians provide therapy?** These include licensed therapists with a masters (MFT, LCSW) or doctoral (PhD, PsyD, EdD) degree and medical doctors (MD) who specialize in mental health (psychiatrists). Psychiatrists, like other medical doctors, can prescribe medication. Some psychiatrists offer medication services but not therapy, and others offer both kinds of services.
- **Why doesn’t CAPS offer more sessions?** CAPS must limit the number of sessions so we can serve a greater number of students. Because of high demand for therapy, we can’t see students long term while also providing timely services to new clients.
- **What if I can’t afford off-campus therapy?** If you can’t afford your insurance copay or don’t have insurance, CAPS will help you explore your options and resources.
- **What if I have trouble finding a therapist?** If your referrals don’t work out, don’t get discouraged. It can take time to find the right therapist. If needed, return to CAPS or call us: We can provide additional referrals that better match your needs or provide more help with the process.