



**BERT NASH COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER, INC**  
**E-mail Text Messaging Overview**

**E-Mail and Text Messaging Risk Factors and Responsibilities**

**BNC Procedures:** E-mail/text messaging communication between a client and BNC staff containing information pertaining to the client's diagnosis and/or treatment may be included in the client's medical records. Clients should not use e-mail/text messaging in an emergency because BNC cannot guarantee that any particular e-mail/text message will be read and responded to within any particular period of time. BNC will treat e-mail/text messages with the same degree of confidentiality as afforded other portions of the medical record. BNC will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of e-mail/text message information. **Because of the risks outlined above, BNC cannot, however, guarantee the security and confidentiality of e-mail/text message communication.** BNC may forward e-mail/text messages within the Center as necessary for diagnosis, treatment, and reimbursement. BNC will not, however, forward the e-mail/text messages outside the Center without the consent of the client and following established consent and confidentiality procedures. The Center cannot guarantee a response to a client-initiated e-mail/text message. **Because some medical information is so sensitive that unauthorized disclosure can be very damaging, clients should not use e-mail/text messaging for communications concerning their diagnosis or treatment of AIDS/HIV infection or other transmittable or communicable diseases.** If the client consents to the use of e-mail/texting, he/she is responsible for informing the Center of the specific information the client does not want to be sent by e-mail/text message. BNC cannot guarantee that electronic communications will be private. BNC will take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of client e-mail/text messages but is not liable for improper disclosure of confidential information caused by the gross negligence or wanton misconduct of some other person not affiliated with the Center. Client is responsible for protecting their password or other means of access to e-mail/text message sent or received from BNC to protect confidentiality. BNC is not liable for breaches of confidentiality caused by the client. You may withdraw consent to the use of e-mail/text messaging at any time by writing to the attention of the BNC Health Information Manager.

**Among general e-mail/text messaging risks are the following:** E-mail/text messages can be immediately broadcast and received by many unintended recipients. Recipients can forward e-mail/text messages to other recipients without the original sender's permission or knowledge. Users can easily misaddress an e-mail/text messages. E-mail/text message is easier to falsify than handwritten or signed documents. Backup copies of e-mail/text messages may exist even after the sender or the recipient has deleted their copy. Clients who send or receive e-mail/text messages from their place of employment risk having their employer read their e-mail/text messages.