

DMHC ACCESS STANDARDS

Help obtain health care services in a timely manner. Please schedule appointments for your members in accordance with the following time frames.

In-Office Waiting Room Time: The time after a scheduled medical appointment a patient is waiting to be taken to an exam room to be seen by the practitioner is **within 30 minutes.**

Primary Care Provider (PCP) Accessibility Standards

Appointment Type	Time-Elapsed Standards
Routine Primary Care Appointments (Non-Urgent) Services for a patient who is symptomatic but does not require immediate diagnosis and/or treatment	Must offer the appointment <u>≤ 10 Business days</u> of the request.
Urgent Care Appointment Services for non-life threatening conditions that could lead to a potentially harmful outcome if not treated in a timely manner	Must offer the appointment <u>≤ 48 hours</u> of request (if not authorization required). Must offer the appointment <u>≤ 96 hours</u> of request (if prior authorization is required).

Specialty Care Provider (SCP) Accessibility Standards

Appointment Type	Time-Elapsed Standards
Routine Specialty Care Physician Appointment (Non-Urgent)	Must offer the appointment <u>≤15 Business days</u> of the request.
Urgent Care Appointments Services for non-life threatening conditions that could lead to a potentially harmful outcome if not treated in a timely manner	Must offer the appointment <u>≤ 48 hours</u> of request (if not authorization required). Must offer the appointment <u>≤ 96 hours</u> of request (if prior authorization is required).
Non-Urgent Ancillary Appointments (for diagnosis or treatment of injury, illness, or other health condition)	Must offer the appointment <u>≤15 Business days</u> of the request.

Behavioral Health (BH) Accessibility Standards

Appointment Type	Time-Elapsed Standards
Routine Appointment (includes non-physician behavioral health providers)	Must offer the appointment <u>≤ 10 Business Days</u> of the request.
Urgent Care Appointments Services for non-life threatening conditions that could lead to a potentially harmful outcome if not treated in a timely manner	Must offer the appointment <u>≤ 48 hours</u> of request.
Non-Life Threatening Emergency	Must offer the appointment <u>≤ 6 hours</u> of request.
Life-Threatening Emergency Care	Immediately.
Follow Up Care After Hospitalization for mental illness	<u>Must Provide Both:</u> One follow-up encounter with a mental health provider <u>≤7 calendar days</u> after discharge

	<p>Plus One follow-up encounter with a mental health provider ≤ 30 calendar days after discharge.</p>
Medi-Cal Appointment Accessibility Standards	
Appointment Type	Time-Elapsed Standards
<p>Routine Primary Care Appointments (Non-Urgent) Services for a patient who is symptomatic but does not require immediate diagnosis and/or treatment</p>	Must offer the appointment ≤ 10 Business days of the request.
<p>Urgent Care Appointments Services for non-life threatening conditions that could lead to a potentially harmful outcome if not treated in a timely manner</p>	Must offer the appointment ≤ 48 hours of request (if not authorization required).
<p>Adult Physical exam and wellness check</p>	Must offer appointment ≤ 30 calendar days of the request.
<p>Routine Specialty Care Physician Appointment (Non-Urgent)</p>	Must offer the appointment ≤ 15 Business days of the request.
<p>First prenatal visit A periodic health evaluation for a member with no acute medical problem</p>	Must offer appointment ≤ 14 calendar days of the request.
<p>Preventative Health Examination (Routine)</p>	Must offer appointment ≤ 10 business day of the request.
<p>Non-Urgent Ancillary Appointments (for diagnosis or treatment of injury, illness, or other health condition)</p>	Must offer the appointment ≤ 15 Business days of the request.
<p>Initial health assessment (> 18 months)</p>	Must offer appointment ≤ 120 calendar days from when the member becomes eligible.
<p>Initial health assessment (<18 months and younger)</p>	Must offer appointment ≤ 60 calendar days of enrollment or within periodicity timelines as established by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
<p>Post-partum visit</p>	Must offer appointment ≤ 3-6 weeks after delivery.
After-Hours Access Standards	
<p>After Hours Care: All Providers or covering physicians (PCP, SCP, BH) are required by contract to provide 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, including holidays and weekends coverage to members. Physician or their on-call coverage or triage/screening clinician must return urgent calls to member, upon request within 30 minutes. *Clinical advice can only be provided by appropriately qualified staff, e.g., physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner or RN.</p>	
<p>NCQA guidelines requires that your office answering service and/or machine must state the following:</p>	
<p>Emergency care</p>	<p>The patient should be directed to emergency care for any life threatening situation with this message: "If you are experiencing a life-threatening situation, hang-up and dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room":</p>
<p>Urgent care</p>	<p>For non-emergent needs, the patient can be directed to leave a phone number for a call back and should receive a call back within 30 minutes.</p>



AFTER HOURS SAMPLE SCRIPT

One of the following scripts may be used by physicians and medical groups as a template to ensure that Members (patients) have access to timely medical care after business hours or when your offices are closed.

IMPORTANT: Effective telephone service after business hours ensures callers are able to reach a live voice or answering machine within 30 seconds.

I. CALLS ANSWERED BY A LIVE PERSON (such as an answering service or centralized triage):
If the caller believes that he or she is experiencing a medical emergency, advise the caller to hang up and call 911 immediately or proceed to the nearest emergency room.

Examples:

*Hello, you have reached the <answering service> for Dr. < Last Name>. **If this is a medical emergency, please hang up and dial 911 immediately or go to the nearest emergency room.** If you wish to speak with the on-call physician, Dr. <Last Name> can assist you. Please <page/call> him/her at <telephone number>. You may expect **a call back within 30 minutes.***

II. CALLS ANSWERED BY AN ANSWERING MACHINE:

*Hello, you have reached <insert Name of Doctor>. **If this is a medical emergency, please hang up and dial 911 immediately or go to the nearest emergency room.** If you wish to speak with the physician on-call (select appropriate options):*

Examples:

*Hello, you have reached the <Name of Doctor> for Dr. <Last Name> if this is a medical emergency, please hang up and dial 911 immediately or go to the nearest emergency room. If you wish to speak with the physician on-call, please leave a message with your name, telephone number and reason for calling, and you may expect **a call back within 30 minutes.***

*Hello, you have reached <Name of Doctor>. **If this is a medical emergency, please hang up and dial 911 immediately or go to the nearest emergency room.** If you wish to speak with the physician on- call, you may reach him/her directly by calling < telephone number> or press <number> to page the physician on-call. You may expect **a call back within 30 minutes.***