

Timely Access Regulations

This notification summarizes the timely access to care standards, to include appointment availability and after-hours protocols. Each provider office is required to abide by these standards. As well, the CPMG PR team will conduct annual audits to ensure compliance. Please read and familiarize yourself with the following standards.

Commercial Non-Emergent Medical Appointment Access Standards

Appointment Type	Time-Elapsed Standard
Non-urgent appointments for Primary Care (PCP)	Must offer the appointment within 10 Business Days of the request
Non-urgent appointments with Specialist physicians (SCP)	Must offer the appointment within 15 Business Days of the request
Urgent appointments that do not require prior authorization (PCP)	Must offer the appointment within 48 hours of request
Urgent appointments that require prior authorization (PCP and SCP)	Must offer the appointment within 96 hours of request
Non-urgent appointments for ancillary services (for diagnosis or treatment of injury, illness, or other health condition)	Must offer the appointment within 15 Business Days of the request
In-office wait time for scheduled appointments (PCP and SCP)	Not to exceed 15 minutes

Medi-Cal Non-Emergent Medical Appointment Access Standards

Access Measure	Time-Elapsed Standard
Access to PCP or designee	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Non-urgent appointments for Primary Care (PCP, excludes physicals and wellness checks)	Must offer the appointment within 10 business days of request
Non-urgent appointments with Specialist physicians (SCP)	Must offer the appointment within 15 business days of request
Urgent appointments that do not require prior authorization (includes appointment with any physician, Nurse Practitioner, Physician's Assistant in office)	Must offer the appointment within 48 hours of request
Urgent appointments that require prior authorization (PCP & SCP)	Must offer appointment within 96 hours of request
First Prenatal Visit	Must offer the appointment

Access Measure	Time-Elapsed Standard
	within 5 business days of request
Child physical exam and wellness checks with PCP	Must offer the appointment within 10 business days of request
Non-urgent appointments for ancillary services (diagnosis or treatment of injury, illness, or other health condition)	Must offer the appointment within 15 business days of request
Initial Health Assessment (enrollees age 18 months and older)	Must be completed within 120 calendar days of enrollment
Initial Health Assessment (enrollees age 18 months and younger)	Must be completed within 60 calendar days of enrollment

Exceptions

Preventive Care Services and Periodic Follow Up Care: Preventive care services and periodic follow up care are not subject to the appointment availability standards. These services may be scheduled in advance consistent with professionally recognized standards of practice as determined by the treating licensed health care provider acting within the scope of his or her practice. Periodic follow-up care includes but is not limited to, standing referrals to specialists for chronic conditions, periodic office visits to monitor and treat pregnancy, cardiac or mental health conditions, and laboratory and radiological monitoring for recurrence of disease.

Extending Appointment Waiting Time: The applicable waiting time for a particular appointment may be extended if the referring or treating licensed health care provider, or the health professional providing triage or screening services, as applicable, acting within the scope of his or her practice and consistent with professionally recognized standards of practice, has determined and noted in the relevant record that a longer waiting time will not have a detrimental impact on the health of the patient.

Advanced Access: The primary care appointment availability standard listed above may be met if the primary care physician office provides “advanced access.” “Advanced access” means offering an appointment to a patient with a primary care physician (or nurse practitioner or physician’s assistant) within the same or next business day from the time an appointment is requested (or a later date if the patient prefers not to accept the appointment offered within the same or next business day).

Triage/After Hours Care Standards

- ✓ Triage or screening by telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- ✓ After hours and weekends, provider medical advice and triage lines shall instruct patients to call 911 if there is a life or limb threatening emergency.

- ✓ Must provide the patient with: a phone/pager number, an on-call provider or nurse triage for appropriate screening/referral, an answering service or voicemail ability to leave a message.
- ✓ Answering service or recorded message must state a 30 minute time range for when the patient should expect to hear from the provider.

Phone Message Examples

You have reached the office of _____. If this is a medical emergency, hang up and dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. The office is now closed, but if you need to speak to a physician,

Option 1: Please stay on the line and you will be connected to Dr./Nurse _____.

Option 2: You may page Dr. _____ at _____ and you will receive a call back within 30 minutes.

Option 3: Please leave your name and a call back number. Dr. _____ will call you back within 30 minutes.