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To: All Behavioral Health Providers
From: IEHP – Provider Relations
Date: January 22, 2026
Subject: **Access Standards – Appointment Availability – Behavioral Health Providers**

As a reminder, please review our access standards and encourage your staff to keep them on hand when making appointments or greeting Members in the office. We appreciate your partnership to provide prompt access to care for our Members.



All Providers must provide 24-hour phone access, 7 days a week, including an answering machine and/or answering services during and after business hours. Members who reach voicemail must receive detailed instructions on how to proceed, including but not limited to how to obtain urgent or emergency care, as well as direction that a licensed triage person is available via the IEHP 24-Hour Nurse Advice Line at (888) 244-IEHP (4347) or (866)-577-8355 for TTY users, 7 days a week, 24-hours a day.

Appointment Standards for Behavioral Health Providers

	Medi-Cal	IEHP DualChoice	IEHP Covered (Covered CA)
Type of Appointment	Timeframe		
Life-threatening emergency or urgently needed services for immediate medical care.	Immediate disposition of Member to appropriate care setting		
Non-life-threatening emergency	6 hours, or go to the ER		
Urgent visit for behavioral health needs that <u>do not</u> require an authorization nor require immediate medical care	Within 48 hours of request		
Urgent visit for behavioral health need that do require authorization	Within 48 hours of request		
Not Emergency or urgently needed, but Member requires medical attention		Within 7 business days of request	
Initial routine (non-urgent) with a Behavioral Health Care Provider	Within 10 business days of request		

Appointment Standards for Behavioral Health Providers continued...			
	Medi-Cal	IEHP DualChoice	IEHP Covered (Covered CA)
Type of Appointment	Timeframe		
Follow-Up routine (non-urgent) visit with a Behavioral Health Care Provider	Within 10 business days of request		
Follow-up routine (non-urgent) visit with a non-Physician Behavioral Health Provider or Substance Use Disorder Provider	Within 10 business days of the prior appointment or at the clinical judgement of the treating Provider regarding the speed and frequency of medically necessary care.		
Telephone Wait Times: Triage, Screening & Advice	The waiting time to speak by telephone with a physician, registered nurse, or other qualified health professional acting within his or her scope of practice and who is trained to screen or triage a Member who may need care, must not exceed 30 minutes.		

Provider Telephone Standards			
	Medi-Cal	IEHP DualChoice	IEHP Covered (Covered CA)
Type of Call	Timeframe and Acceptable Alternative(s)		
Returning Member Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent non-emergency calls: within 24 hours • Non-urgent calls: At minimum of 3 attempts to return Member’s call within 3 business day 		

<u>IEHP Member Services Telephone Standards</u>			
	Medi-Cal	IEHP DualChoice	IEHP Covered
Type of Call	Timeframe		
IEHP Member Services - Member services telephone wait times during normal business hours – Calls received after normal business hours (Monday – Friday 7am – 7pm and Saturday- Sunday, 8am-5pm) are returned within one (1) business day. Calls received after midnight are responded to the same business day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected within 10 minutes 		

Additional information regarding IEHP Access Standards can be found in the IEHP Provider Manual Policies MC and MA_ 9A, “Access Standards” and IEHP Covered_ 4A, “Access Standards.” If you have any questions, please contact the IEHP Provider Call Center (909) 890-2054, (866) 223-4347 or email ProviderServices@iehp.org.