



Timely Access to Care: After-Hours Requirements for Network Care Providers UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of California

In accordance with California Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC), California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) guidelines, we're required to help ensure our members have appropriate access to physician or physician-supervised care after normal business hours.

What this means for you

Please review the following after-hours requirements for your organization. We also ask that you assess your internal policies and procedures for after-hours care to help ensure you're in compliance for your patients who are UnitedHealthcare Community Plan members. The after-hours requirements are as follows:

- At a minimum, a physician or an appropriate licensed professional under his/her supervision is available for after-hour calls
- Care providers provide a telephone answering machine and/or an answering service and/or office staff during and after hours
- Care providers are able to offer a notice to the caller regarding the length of wait for a return call from the provider
- Care providers are able to provide a notice to the caller regarding how they may obtain urgent or emergency care, including how to contact another provider who has agreed to be on call to triage or screen by phone or, if needed, deliver urgent or emergency care
- Care providers have standards in place to help ensure that the availability of – and access to – after-hours services are sufficient to prevent delays in care that may be detrimental to the health of members

Annual monitoring

To help determine whether care providers are following the after-hours standards, each year we randomly select a group of care providers to complete a required after-hours survey. If we determine a care provider isn't regularly following the after-hours standards, we may issue a corrective action plan.

Available resources

You can also view the Timely Access to Care Standards Education to make sure you're up-to-date with the current standards at [UHCprovider.com/training](https://uhcprovider.com/training) > UnitedHealthcare Community Plan – California Required Training > Timely Access to Care Standards Education.

We're here to help

If you have questions about the after-hours requirements or our annual monitoring process, please email the Quality department at uhccscaqualitydepartment_dl@ds.uhc.com. Thank you.