



Access, Availability, and After-Hours Coverage Standards

ConnectiCare is committed to helping our members stay healthy, get well, and receive health care services in a timely manner. Providers are expected to have procedures in place to see patients within the following time frames and provide 24-hour accessibility as outlined below.

Appointment Wait Times

TYPE OF APPOINTMENT	TIME FRAME REQUIREMENT
Urgent care	Within 48 hours
Non-Urgent appointments for primary care	Within 10 business days
Non-Urgent appointments for specialist care	Within 15 business days
Non-Urgent for non-physical mental health	Within 10 business days
Non-Urgent for ancillary services	Within 15 business days

24-Hour Accessibility Standards

- All network practitioners must be available, either directly or through coverage arrangements, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- Availability must be by live voice direct to the practitioner or covering practitioner, or via an answering service that can reach the practitioner or covering practitioner.
- If an answering machine is used, it must provide an option for the member to directly contact the practitioner or covering practitioner in case of emergencies.
- An answering machine cannot simply refer the member to an emergency room unless it is a life-threatening issue.

TIPS FOR ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS:

- Periodically review the access and availability standards with your appointment schedulers.
- Conduct your own secret shopper audits (evaluate a random sample of practices annually).
- Monitor practices that did not meet these standards. Implement corrective action plans to ensure compliance.