

## Appointment availability and after-hours access requirements

*This communication applies to the Medicaid programs for Simply Healthcare Plans, Inc. (Simply) and Clear Health Alliance (CHA) as well as the Florida Healthy Kids (FHK) program for Simply.*

**Summary:** To ensure members receive care in a timely manner, the state of Florida and the National Committee for Quality Assurance require PCPs, specialty providers, and behavioral health providers to maintain the following appointment availability and after-hours access requirements.

### Appointment availability requirements

Appointment type	Appointment standard
FHK appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urgent — within 24 hours</li> <li>Non-urgent — within 7 days</li> <li>Well care — within 28 days</li> </ul>
Medicaid urgent medical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within 48 hours of a request for care services that does not require prior authorization</li> <li>Within 96 hours of a request for care services that does require prior authorization</li> </ul>
Medicaid non-urgent medical or behavioral healthcare services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within seven days post-discharge from an inpatient behavioral health admission for follow-up behavioral health treatment</li> <li>Within 14 days for initial outpatient behavioral health treatment</li> <li>Within 30 days of a request for a primary care appointment</li> <li>Within 60 days of a request for a specialist appointment after the appropriate referral is received by the specialist</li> </ul>
NCQA behavioral health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For non-life-threatening emergencies: within six hours</li> <li>For urgent care: within 24 hours</li> <li>For initial, routine care visits: within 10 business days</li> <li>For follow-up, routine care visits: within 30 days</li> </ul>

Note: Waiting time should not exceed 45 minutes for a scheduled, routine appointment.

### After-hours access requirements

To ensure 24-hour coverage, PCPs must maintain one of these arrangements:

- Use an answering service that can contact the PCP or another designated Simply and CHA medical practitioner to answer the office telephone. All calls answered by an answering service must be returned within 30 minutes.
- After-hours appointment availability: The health plan must provide the state with the percentage of PCPs who offer after-hours access. Please assist us in updating our records.

<https://provider.simplyhealthcareplans.com> | <https://provider.clearhealthalliance.com>

Simply Healthcare Plans, Inc. is a Managed Care Plan with a Florida Medicaid contract. Simply Healthcare Plans, Inc. dba Clear Health Alliance is a Managed Care Plan with a Florida Medicaid contract.

Simply Healthcare Plans, Inc. is a Managed Care Plan with a Florida Healthy Kids contract.

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- Use a recording in the language of each of the major population groups served by the PCP to answer the office telephone after normal business hours. The recording must direct members to call another number to reach the PCP or another provider designated by the PCP. Someone must be available to answer the designated provider's telephone; another recording is not acceptable.
- Arrange for the office telephone to be transferred after office hours to another location where someone will answer and be able to contact the PCP or a designated Simply and CHA medical practitioner who can return the call within 30 minutes.

**The following procedures are not acceptable for the office telephone:**

- Only answering during office hours
- Answering after hours only using a recording that tells members to leave a message
- Answering after hours with a recording that directs members to go to an ER for any services needed
- Returning after-hours calls outside of 30 minutes

**What if I need assistance?**

If you have questions, contact your local Provider Relations representative or call Provider Services at **844-405-4296**.



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