

# PROVIDER Bulletin



## KERN HEALTH SYSTEMS

02/04/2026

### Timely Access Standards

Dear Provider,

Per APL 25-006, Timely Access Requirements, providers are required to participate in the ongoing quarterly Timely Access Survey conducted by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). DHCS surveys randomly selected provider offices to assess appointment availability, in-office wait times, telephone accessibility, and language accessibility. Surveys are conducted during standard operating hours (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. PST), with up to three call attempts made to complete the survey.

Providers must ensure all phone-answering staff are informed of this requirement and must participate if contacted, as compliance is required to meet regulatory obligations and ensure timely access to care for members.

#### Appointment Waiting Time and Scheduling

Appointment Type	Standard
Urgent care appointment for services that do not require prior authorization	Within 48 hours of a request
Urgent appointment for services that require prior authorization	Within 96 hours of a request
Non-urgent primary care appointment	Within 10 business days of a request
Non-urgent appointment with a specialist	Within 15 business days of a request
Non-urgent appointments with a non-physician mental health care provider	Must offer the appointment within 10 business days of request
Non-urgent follow-up appointment with a non-physician mental health care provider, for those undergoing a course of treatment for an ongoing mental health condition	Within 10 business days from prior appointment date
Non-urgent appointment for ancillary services for the diagnosis or treatment of injury, illness, or other health condition	Within 15 business days of a request
Pediatric CHDP Physicals	Within 2 weeks upon request
First pre-natal OB/GYN visit	The lesser of 10 business days or within 2 weeks upon request

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### Office Waiting Time Maximum

Service	Required Care	
	Urgent	Routine
Primary Care Services (including OB/GYN)	1 hour	1 hour
Specialty Care Services	1 hour	1 hour
Diagnostic Testing	1 hour	1 hour
Mental Health Services	1 hour	1 hour
Ancillary Providers	1 hour	1 hour

### Telephone Accessibility

Nature of Telephone Call	Response Time
Emergency medical or Kern County Mental Health Crisis Unit	Member should be instructed to call 9-1-1 or 661-868-8000
Urgent medical	30 Minutes
Non-urgent medical	By close of following business day
Non-Urgent Mental Health	By close of following business day
Administrative	By close of following business day

The entire policy, 4.30-P Accessibility Standards, can be located on our website at <https://www.kernfamilyhealthcare.com/> under the “For Providers” tab, KHS Policies and Procedures, Provider Relations.

KHS posts all bulletins on the KHS website, [www.kernfamilyhealthcare.com/](http://www.kernfamilyhealthcare.com/), choose Provider, then Bulletins.

For any questions, please contact your Provider Relations Representative at 1-800-391-2000.

Sincerely,

James Winfrey  
Deputy Director Of Provider Network  
Kern Health Systems