

PCP after-hours access requirements

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*Note to staff: It is imperative that your office updates any changes to your practice via the Provider Maintenance Form (PMF). Access the PFM online at [anthem.com](https://www.anthem.com). Select **Providers**, and your state. Under the *Provider Resources* heading, select **Provider Maintenance Form**.*

The impact of COVID-19 in 2020 prohibited Anthem from conducting the annual after-hours access studies to assess phone messaging for our members for perceived emergency or urgent situations after regular office hours. We will resume the survey in the second quarter of 2021 and expect when your office is contacted, you will be able to accommodate a member's urgent concerns after hours.

To be compliant, per the Provider Manual, have your messaging or answering service include appropriate instructions, such as:

Emergency situations:

The compliant response for an *emergency* instructs the caller/patient to hang up and call 911 or go to ER or connects the caller directly to the doctor.

Urgent situations:

The compliant response for *urgent* needs would direct the caller to Urgent Care or ER, to call 911 or connect the caller to their doctor or the doctor on call.

Messaging that only gives callers the option of contacting their health care practitioner (via transfer, cell phone, pager, text, email, voicemail, etc.) or to get a call back for urgent questions or instructions is **not compliant**, as there is no direct connection to their health care practitioner. This prompt can be used in addition to, but not in place of, the emergency and urgent instructions.

Is your practice compliant?

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