

DID YOU KNOW?

As a participating provider on the CHIPA panel, you must provide or arrange for the provision of assistance to Members in emergency situations 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You should inform Members about your hours of operation and how to reach you after-hours in case of an emergency. In addition, any after-hours message or answering service must provide instructions to the Members regarding what to do in an emergency situation. When you are not available, coverage for emergencies should be arranged with another participating provider.

Requirements for Message or Answering Service

The California Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) requires that all professionals have an outgoing message or answering service that specifies what to do for:

- **Life-threatening emergencies:** it is appropriate to instruct callers to hang up and dial 911 for immediate assistance.
- **Urgent situations:** we suggest one of the following options:
 - Provide a way for patients to reach you directly, such as through a pager or answering service.
 - Arrange for on-call coverage with another behavioral health practitioner through a pager or answering service.
 - Refer patients to a 24-hour community behavioral health crisis line.
- **Routine Situations:** provide instructions to member how to leave a routine message and provide a timeframe to expect a returned phone call.

On-Call

Should your practice allow for the support of another participating provider, you should provide the contact information to your members when you know you will be scheduled out of the office.

As a standard of best practices, an instruction sheet on “what to do in an emergency” should be provided to any of your members in treatment.

Should you need assistance in drafting this document, please contact our Network Department for further assistance.

CHIPA Network Department: (800) 779-3825 option 6, option 3