

Special Bulletin

For NY professional and facility providers

February 18, 2025

Credentialing Update: Urgent Care Centers and Practices, Psychologists, and BH Organizational Providers

Effective May 19, 2025, Highmark is updating and clarifying the credentialing for the following entities and types of practitioners:

- Urgent Care Centers and Urgent Care Practices
- Licensed Psychologists
- Behavioral Health (BH) Organizational Providers

1. Urgent Care Centers and Urgent Care Practices – NY Regions Only

Urgent Care Centers (UCC), which are licensed and accredited, ***will be credentialed as an urgent care facility*** and will be listed in the Highmark Provider Directory as a UCC. Credentialing is not required for providers linked to the UCC. The providers linked to the group will not be listed in the directory.

Urgent Care Practices (UCP) — which are **not** licensed in the state of New York and may/may not have accreditation — will **not** be credentialed as an urgent care facility. The UCP will be listed in the Highmark Provider Directory as a UCC. Credentialing **is required** for providers linked to the UCP. The providers will be processed as follows:

- Providers linked to the group **prior to the effective date will be grandfathered** and will not need to meet the specialty and board certification requirements as defined below. These providers will need to maintain Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS).
- Providers linked to the group will not be listed in the directory.
- Physicians added to the group **after** the effective date will need to meet credentialing requirements for Emergency Medicine as follows:
 - Must be board certified in Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, or General Surgery.
 - Providers who are in the Highmark defined board eligibility period must have completed an approved, applicable ACGME/AOA residency or fellowship in the specialty in which they practice and complete board certification by Dec. 31 of the sixth year of the applicable

residency training or a contiguous subsequent fellowship training program. The intent is for the provider to become board certified.

- Maintain ACLS and PALS certification. Board certified Emergency Medicine providers are exempt from this requirement.

2. Licensed Psychologists – All Regions

Effective May 19, 2025, psychologists are only eligible for the **Medicare Advantage** network if they have a PhD, PsyD, or EdD degree.

3. Behavioral Health Organizational Providers (1500 and UB Billers) – All Regions

Effective May 19, 2025, Office of Mental Health (OMH) AND Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs (ODAP) are **not** acceptable accrediting bodies for BH organizational providers as they are not accrediting bodies.

The following entities, which serve the noted regions, are independent licensees of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association: Western NY: Highmark Western and Northeastern New York Inc. d/b/a Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield. Northeastern NY: Highmark Western and Northeastern New York Inc. d/b/a Highmark Blue Shield.

All references to “Highmark” in this document are references to the Highmark company that is providing the member’s health benefits or health benefit administration and/or to one or more of its affiliated Blue companies.

