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SUMMARY: UnitedHealthcare customers will have their access interrupted to multiple UAB Health System entities statewide along with Baptist Health Montgomery if an agreement cannot be reached by July 31.

Insurance contracts with UnitedHealthcare set to expire, negotiations continue

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – The health plan contracts between UnitedHealthcare of Alabama, Inc., and multiple [UAB Health System](#) entities are set to expire this summer.

This applies to both commercial and Medicare Advantage plans and affects all UAB-owned and affiliated entities, including, among others, UAB Hospital; The Kirklin Clinic of UAB Hospital; all UAB Medicine primary, specialty and urgent care clinics; UA Health Services Foundation; UAB Callahan Eye and all physician clinic locations; UAB Medical West and all physician locations; Cooper Green Mercy Health Services and all UAB St. Vincent's facilities, including Birmingham, East, Blount, Chilton and St. Clair; and all UAB St. Vincent's surgery center, urgent care and physician locations, as well as Baptist Health hospitals and its surgery centers and physician locations in Montgomery and Autauga counties. The expiration also affects services provided by UAB- and UAB St. Vincent's-employed physicians, regardless of the location of care, including at Children's of Alabama. A list of all potentially affected entities is available online at uabmedicine.org/united.

Patients with United insurance will continue to have uninterrupted access to the above entities through July 31, 2025. (Note: UAB does not currently participate in United ACA and Exchange Individual and Family Plans.)

Starting Aug. 1, 2025, if agreement cannot be reached, United members who choose to receive care at these entities may be personally responsible for the costs of services rendered. Some patients may qualify to continue to access care after July 31 pursuant to the continuity of care terms offered by their plan.

“We are deeply disappointed that UnitedHealthcare has created this uncertainty for our patients,” said UAB Health System CEO Dawn Bulgarella. “We will continue to diligently negotiate with United in good faith to reach a reasonable agreement before July 31. Our goal is to remain a participating provider and continue delivering the highest-quality care to the people of Alabama. We encourage patients and employers to contact United and express the importance of keeping UAB Health System entities in-network.”

Patients with questions about access to UAB Health System entities can call the number on the back of their insurance card for information about physicians and hospitals that accept United insurance.

“As Alabama’s leading health care provider, serving more than 1.4 million unique patients, we are committed to a sustainable model that ensures continued access to high-quality care,” Bulgarella said. “We cannot accept terms from United that would compromise our ability to serve the patients and communities who depend on us.”

United reported \$14.4 billion in earnings in 2024 and continues to [lead the industry by a significant margin as the single most profitable health insurer](#). In the first quarter of 2025 alone, [the company posted a profit of over \\$6 billion](#). Those profits come at the expense of its policyholders and health care providers, Bulgarella says.

United has faced growing challenges renewing contracts with hospitals across Alabama and the nation, prompting many health care providers — including major academic medical centers — to publicly alert patients about ongoing disputes. Nationally, consumers have been made aware of United’s contract issues with Duke University Health System, UNC Health Care, Prisma Health, Northeast Georgia Health System, Stony Brook University Hospital, OU Health, Hartford Health, Community Care Physicians, Westerly Hospital and Team Health. In Alabama alone, both Huntsville Hospital Health System and Infirmary Health in Mobile have issued similar notices within the past year.

Common concerns cited by these organizations include below-market reimbursement rates, excessive claim denials and delayed payments — all of which threaten providers’ ability to deliver timely, high-quality care.

“United’s approach to contract negotiations has already led to breakdowns with numerous providers — and more may follow,” Bulgarella said. “Their demands often ignore the economic pressures facing health care systems, while their public statements frequently paint an incomplete or misleading picture.”

For patients interested in transitioning to another health plan that allows in-network coverage, plans accepted by UAB Health System entities, its affiliated hospitals and physician groups include:

- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama and Blue Advantage
- Cigna Healthcare – Commercial plans
- Health Care Service Corporation (Formerly Cigna HealthSpring) Medicare Advantage Plans (excludes Baptist Health which is not participating)
- Humana Medicare Advantage Plans
- Viva Health Commercial and Medicare Advantage plans
- Aetna – Commercial Plans
- Aetna – Medicare Advantage Plans (Callahan Eye Hospital, UAB Medical West, UAB St. Vincent’s Birmingham, UAB St. Vincent’s East, UAB St. Vincent’s Blount, UAB St. Vincent’s Chilton, and UAB St. Vincent’s St. Clair only)
- Ambetter – Individual and Family Plans

About UAB Health System

[UAB Health System](#) comprises the patient-care activities of the [University of Alabama at Birmingham Marnix E. Heersink School of Medicine](#) and more than 3,100 licensed beds in a system of 15 owned, affiliate and network entities across the state. This includes UAB Hospital, which is the eighth largest in the nation, which is home to the states only Level I trauma center (now undergoing a \$73 million expansion) and is consistently named by U.S. News & World Report as the top hospital in Alabama, with seven specialties currently in the top 50 nationally.

UABHS encompasses the largest multi-specialty group of health care professionals in Alabama serving patients from every state in the nation and many countries around the world; Callahan Eye Hospital, the only specialty eye hospital in Alabama and one of only a few in the world entirely dedicated to advancements in ophthalmology; and Viva Health, which serves more than 78,500 Alabamians through Medicare or employer-sponsored health plans. In 2024, UAB acquired the Ascension St. Vincent's Health System, adding five hospitals and 19 ambulatory facilities to meet the health care needs of Alabamians.

UABHS provides more than \$250 million in world-class charity care. UAB is advancing innovative discoveries for better health as a three-time recipient of the prestigious Center for Translational Science Award.



EDITOR'S NOTE: The University of Alabama at Birmingham is one of three doctoral research universities in the University of Alabama System. In your first reference to our institution, please use **University of Alabama at Birmingham** and **UAB** on subsequent references.

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