



Dial 211 for Essential Community Services

In many states, dialing “211” provides individuals and families in need with a shortcut through what can be a bewildering maze of health and human service agency phone numbers. By simply dialing 211, those in need of assistance can be referred, and sometimes connected to, appropriate agencies and community organizations.

Dialing 211 helps direct caller services for, among others, the elderly, the disabled, those who do not speak English, those having a personal crisis, those with limited reading skills, and those who are new to their communities.

211 is available to approximately 99 percent of the total U.S. population, according to 211.org. 211 covers all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. To find out whether 211 services are offered in your area, and to obtain more information, visit 211.org. You can also connect directly to 211 by text or through this website.

How 211 Works

211 typically works a bit like 911. Calls and texts to 211 are routed by the local telephone company to a local or regional calling center. The 211 center’s referral specialists receive requests from callers, access databases of resources available from private and public health and human service agencies, match callers’ needs to available resources, and link or refer callers directly to an agency or organization that can help.

Types of Referrals Offered by 211

- **Basic Human Needs Resources** – including food and clothing banks, shelters, rent assistance, and utility assistance.
- **Physical and Mental Health Resources** – including health insurance programs, Medicaid and Medicare, maternal health resources, health insurance programs for children, medical information lines, crisis intervention services, support groups, counseling, and drug and alcohol intervention and rehabilitation.
- **Work Support** – including financial assistance, job training, transportation assistance, and education programs.
- **Access to Services in Non-English Languages** – including language translation and interpretation services to help non-English-speaking people find public resources (foreign language services vary by location).
- **Support for Older Americans and Persons with Disabilities** – including adult day care, community meals, respite care, home health care, transportation, and homemaker services.
- **Children, Youth and Family Support** – including childcare, after-school programs, educational programs for low-income families, family resource centers, summer camps and recreation programs, mentoring, tutoring, and protective services.

- **Suicide Prevention** – referral to suicide prevention help organizations. Callers can also dial 988, the three-digit, nationwide phone number to connect directly to the [988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#).

Those who wish to donate time or money to community help organizations can also do so by dialing 211.

FCC Consumer Help Center

For more information on consumer issues, visit the FCC’s Consumer Help Center at fcc.gov/consumers.

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Last Reviewed: 04/18/2024

