

MISSION & VISION

Washington Information Network 211's (WIN211) mission and vision is to answer the call to get help into people's hands state-wide. WIN211 exists to make people's lives better, to enhance community resiliency, to identify and break cycles of need and to help organizations, foundations, businesses, individuals and government more efficiently distribute resources.

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MESSAGE FROM THE WIN211 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The WIN211 Board of Directors continues to work tirelessly to explore funding strategies for WIN211 in light of the huge budget constraints facing the state of Washington, our local communities, and local provider agencies. Under the leadership of Board Chairs Barb Graff and Lance Stephens, the Board is committed to doing all it can to demonstrate the critical nature of continued funding.

With the assistance of part-time Consultant, David Ramsay, and input from United Way of King County's Doug Whalen, we have refined and tailored the WIN211 Business Plan and proposed funding strategies that reflect concerns identified by State Agencies and other funders. The purpose of this Business Plan and accompanying funding strategy is to show clearly how essential this service is to the State of Washington—especially in light of the “great recession” we've been experiencing. As the government support for these critical services shrink, more and more people in need will look to WIN211 as they try to find needed supportive services.

Advocacy is another key strategy. Board member Greg Forinash is leading the WIN211 Advocacy Committee, which continues to advocate and support the funding strategy we've developed—with help from call centers and our United Way partners. They've participated in many targeted face-to-face meetings and phone calls with representatives of state agencies and the executive branch over the past months.

The Board has also been working with the 2-1-1 Call Centers and our United Way of WA partners to plan strategies to obtain continued funding for 2-1-1, as well as plan for alternate service level contingencies that WIN211 could provide at various funding levels. The commitment of all partners in WIN211 has been extraordinary. Call centers have consistently stepped up to do “more with less” and continue the WIN211 statewide service in spite of greatly reduced funding. The fact that 2-1-1 continues today is a testament to the commitment of WIN211's staff, providers and partners.

The Board, in partnership with the 2-1-1 Call Centers wants to ensure that, in this time of reduced support for WIN211, we still provide quality services, albeit with some service level modifications in line with current reduced funding. With more people than ever seeking assistance, the Board and the Call Centers, with the help of many generous United Way partners and volunteers, remain committed to keep this critical service available to Washington State residents.

A VIEW OF THE RECESSION THROUGH THE NEEDS OF OUR CALLERS

*Bill Brackin, Program Director
North Sound 2-1-1*

"The majority of our callers are living at or below the poverty level."

"Rent or mortgage assistance has been the need of 18% to 20% of our callers."

Most of the news articles cover the recession from the perspective of industry, the stock market, the building trades, the impact on the middle class, politics, or some other middle to higher income perspective. Much less is written about the impact on the lower income group. Washington State 2-1-1 serves the needs of all communities; however, the majority of our callers are living at or below the poverty level and many are homeless. Based on the needs of over 400,000 callers per year to 2-1-1, here's what their concerns are.

Financial requests for rent/move-in/mortgage and utility assistance have always been the top needs of our callers—approximately 15%. Since the summer of 2008 the need has continued to grow, and for the last five months rent or mortgage assistance has been the need of 18% to 20% of our callers. Requests for utility assistance rose from 15.4% in 2007 to 16% during 2008 and 2009.

HUD reduced the number of available Section 8 Housing Vouchers several times, which resulted in an increase in need for low-cost or subsidized housing. Between 4-5% of our callers typically were seeking such housing, but by August of 2008 that demand had grown to just over 7% of our callers. The need has reduced since then but is currently on the increase. About 5.4% of our callers during September 2010 were seeking low-cost housing.

This year, Washington State 2-1-1 will refer 25,000 callers with a need for legal aid to community agencies and services. Since 2007 the percentage of our callers needing legal help has grown from 4.5% to over 8%.

Since we started tracking bankruptcy and foreclosure calls, 2-1-1 Information & Referral Specialists have, on a monthly basis, been assisting 50-85 callers looking for resources related to bankruptcy, and 75-125 callers needing resources related to mortgage and tax foreclosure.

But now for some good news!

- The percentage of callers requesting utility assistance has fallen from 16% last year to 14.5% for the first nine months of 2010, which still represents 45,600 callers!
- The number of callers with debt management issues seems to be declining. In 2009 about 95 callers per month had debt management issues, compared to an average of 68 per month this year.

Please keep in mind that the information is a compilation of statewide data and that the trends for each 2-1-1 region will vary depending on local community needs. Should you have questions or want specific information about the trends in your area, we encourage you to connect with the program director in your region.

CALLER COMMENTS ABOUT KING COUNTY 2-1-1 AND THE INFORMATION & REFERRAL SPECIALIST

"She was a wiz. If it weren't for her I would probably be living on the streets now. God bless her!"

"She was very good. She gave me a lot of info and phone numbers, and she was nice about it."

"Eunice was very nice, very helpful. I was in tears on the phone with her because I've never been in a situation like this before, and as a parent it's even harder. She was so great. Please tell her thank you for me."

"Absolutely helpful. Very valuable. I've never been this low before. It's great to know there's someplace that will guide you on the right path to get help."

3RD QUARTER CALL VOLUMES

REGION	CALLS ANSWERED	REFERRALS PROVIDED
North Sound	16,247	22,652
Peninsulas	3,994	5,075
Southwest Washington	2,316	2,406
South Sound	17,950	31,776
King County	29,627	78,223
Greater Columbia	10,833	10,004
Eastern Washington	4,157	5,806
TOTAL	85,124	155,942

MOST REQUESTED COMMUNITY RESOURCES

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2010	NUMBER OF REQUESTS	PERCENT OF TOTAL CALLS
Rent/Mortgage/Move-in Cost Asst	12,573	14.8%
Utility Assistance	10,182	12.0%
Legal Help	5,947	7.0%
Emergency Shelter	4,495	5.3%
Housing/Low-Cost Housing	3,623	4.3%
Food/Food Bank Information	3,268	3.8%
Household, Clothing and Personal Goods	3,129	3.7%
Undesignated Temporary Financial Aid	2,291	2.7%
Transportation/Travel	2,085	2.4%
Mental Health/Behavioral Health	1,810	2.1%

POSITIVE COMMENTS & SUCCESS STORIES: HOW 2-1-1 HELPS EVERY DAY

"The Information & Referral Specialist was very helpful, very polite and was trying to help me. He discussed things with me and answered all my questions. And I appreciate you calling back; that shows that you take care of the customer and want to make sure that everything is going straight."

"Very helpful. I feel that I was given as much information as possible, that I was eligible for - that pertained to my needs. And I felt that I was not given false information or misled, so it was very good."

GREATER COLUMBIA 2-1-1 SUCCESS STORIES

A Franklin County resident called in search of food assistance and an Information & Referral Specialist was able to complete an application for Basic Food. DSHS made contact the same day to complete her emergency application and she qualified for Basic Food. The client was very thankful for 2-1-1 services as she has disabilities that limit her from sitting for long periods of time as well as seeing clearly to drive to the local office.

A Yakima County resident called in need of assistance with food. The Information & Referral Specialist was able to complete a Basic Food application for the caller who speaks only Spanish and was not comfortable completing the forms herself. The caller received services within two days of her initial call to 2-1-1. She was extremely satisfied with her first 2-1-1 experience and that we have well informed, helpful Spanish-speaking staff.

KING COUNTY 2-1-1 SUCCESS STORIES

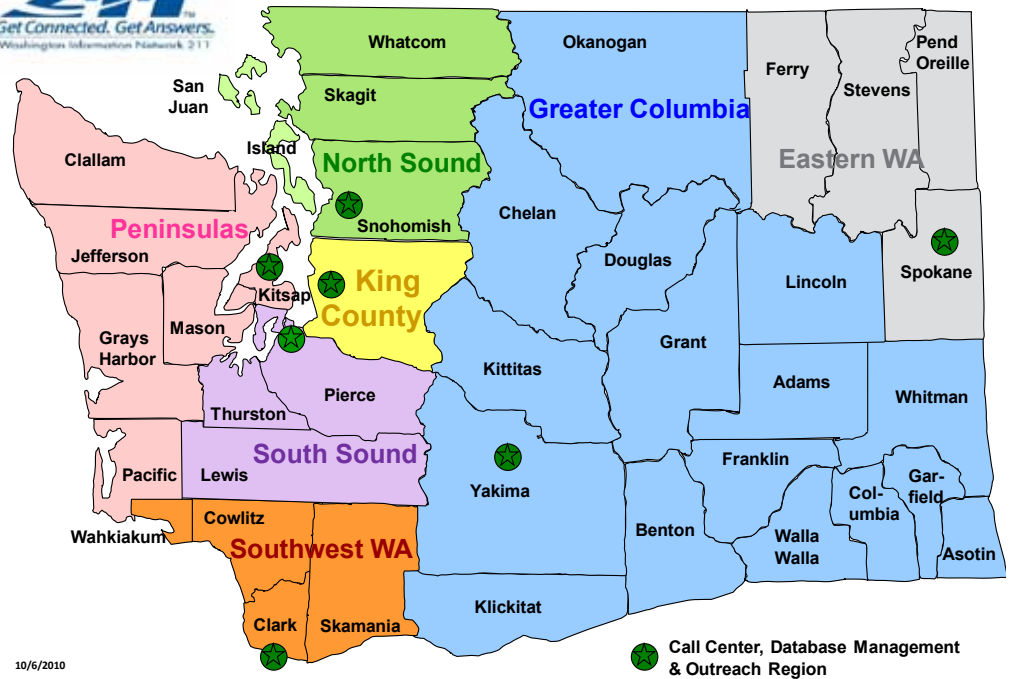
A caller in Zip Code 98027 needed resources for rent assistance. The Information & Referral Specialist was able to provide five referrals and the caller was able to have a 3-day pay or vacate notice faxed to Hopelink in Redmond the same day and they were able to cover the full rent amount. The caller's comments on the King County 2-1-1 service were: "They were really good; very patient and thorough. They asked all kinds of questions about our household and veteran status, and then tailored all the information I was given to our family and situation. 2-1-1 is a good source of information—it sure beats thumbing through the yellow pages."

A caller in Zip Code 98003 needed utility bill assistance. St. Luke's Operation Blessing pledged \$75 which covered the full amount needed. When asked about the Information & Referral Specialist who assisted her, she said, "He was very positive and supportive. And he was encouraging, because I was in despair and wasn't sure that I'd be able to find help, but he let me know that there was help out there and that made me feel hopeful. He did a great job."

A caller in Zip Code 98118 was provided referrals for multiple needs, including move-in assistance. The caller was a veteran, and was able to receive an appointment for the Housing Stability Program, which covered the \$250 move-in deposit and rent assistance for the first month. The caller also received a clothing voucher and a bag of groceries from St. Vincent de Paul. The comments about the service providers were, "They were a Blessing! They were so nice and so helpful. We got more help than we ever expected." On King County 2-1-1 the caller said, "You guys are the best! Everything was outstanding. You hooked us up with some great places that gave us so much assistance!"



Washington State 2-1-1 Call Center Service Areas



WASHINGTON INFORMATION NETWORK 2-1-1

Contact WIN211 with questions or comments:

info@win211.org

Milissa Smith, Program Manager
milissa@win211.org

Phone 425.264.0301
Fax..... 425.264.0316

200 Mill Ave S, Suite 505
Renton, WA 98057

REGIONAL 2-1-1 CONTACTS

2-1-1 REGION	CONTACT INFORMATION & PARENT AGENCIES
North Sound 2-1-1	Bill Brackin, bbrackin@voaww.org <i>Volunteers of America Western Washington</i>
Peninsulas 2-1-1	Kelly Schwab, kellys@kmhs.org <i>Kitsap Mental Health</i>
Southwest WA 2-1-1	Liesl Wendt, liesl@211info.org <i>2-1-1 Info</i>
South Sound 2-1-1	Shawn Parkhurst, shawnp@uwpc.org <i>United Way of Pierce County</i>
King County 2-1-1	Susan Gemmel, sgemmel@crisisclinic.org <i>Crisis Clinic</i>
Greater Columbia 2-1-1	Amy Peters, apeters@pfp.org <i>People for People</i>
Eastern WA 2-1-1	Jan Dobbs, jdobbs@smhca.org <i>Spokane Mental Health</i>

IS YOUR AGENCY RECORD OR RESOURCE LISTING OUT OF DATE? CALL 2-1-1 AND HELP US CORRECT IT.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

www.win211.org