



## NJ 2-1-1 Partnership

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### **2-1-1 Day on February 11 Celebrates Human Service Number Nearly 340,000 Served in New Jersey in Past Year**

**East Hanover, NJ** -- February 11 is 2-1-1 Day, in recognition of the free, user-friendly phone number that serves 90% of America's population. Locally, NJ 2-1-1 is there for the people of New Jersey: In 2015 NJ 2-1-1 call specialists answered 172,845 calls for assistance and the NJ 2-1-1 website received 165,292 visitors who viewed 401,658 pages of information.

NJ 2-1-1 assists individuals with ongoing needs such as affordable housing, heating assistance, temporary financial assistance, disaster services, mental health services, nutrition and food assistance and numerous other human service requirements.

Some highlights of the past year since last 2-1-1 Day:

- In 2015, 2-1-1 call specialists responded to 5,265 calls for tax assistance, with nearly 12,000 viewers of the tax assistance pages at the NJ 2-1-1 website. Over 230 locations throughout NJ can be found on the site.
- March 2015: NJ 2-1-1 achieves AIRS (Alliance of Information and Referral Systems) accreditation, joining an elite group of organizations to meet the group's stringent criteria for call center professionalism and adherence to data collection protocols.
- June 2015: NJ 2-1-1 made special outreach through the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern Jersey to reach and assist individuals and families affected by the Atlantic City casino closings.
- July 2015: [www.endhungernj.org](http://www.endhungernj.org) was launched as joint enterprise of State of NJ-Division of Family Development with United Ways and NJ 2-1-1.
- September 2015: NJ 2-1-1 engaged in preparations and stand-by in case of emergency for visit of Pope Francis to Philadelphia and Southern NJ.
- October 2015: NJ 2-1-1 conducts in-service trainings for 9-1-1 operators, as well as Affordable Care Act training for call specialists.
- November 2015: NJ 2-1-1 became Central Intake for Middlesex County Homeless Hotline, making it the 4th county NJ 2-1-1 serves as primary point of contact.
- January 2016: NJ 2-1-1 partnered with NJ Department of Health in statewide Diabetes Management and Prevention Program, and executive director Joe Geleta testified before

NJ State Assembly committees about poverty in NJ, providing essential statistical data gleaned from the 2-1-1 statewide pool of callers.

The newly enhanced NJ 2-1-1 website [www.nj211.org](http://www.nj211.org) provides visitors with full access to the 2-1-1 resource database of over 10,000 programs and services and is organized to allow users to "self-serve" by providing comprehensive information like application links, application agency locations, eligibility guidelines and critical dates, among others. Special sections of the site are devoted to such topics as Financial Assistance, Affordable Housing, Food, Emergency Preparedness, Senior Services, Family Services, Home Energy Assistance, Utility Assistance, and Resources for the Unemployed, *among others*.

Information available through NJ 2-1-1 is culled from all over the state with the organization anticipating seasonal needs as it updates and provides resources for its users. Whether it is finding the closest food bank in their area; the nearest code blue shelter during the winter or nearest tax assistance location during the tax preparatory season, NJ 2-1-1 gives its callers and those accessing its website the full spectrum of available resources to meet any human service need.

"We are able to provide the people of New Jersey, locally and through the national 2-1-1 network, with a high quality and compassionate experience in finding the essential services that will positively impact their lives," said Joe Geleta, executive director NJ 2-1-1.

When a person dials 2-1-1 from landline or cell number, the call is routed to the NJ 2-1-1 Call Center. It's answered by a trained information and referral specialist who discerns the need, then searches a comprehensive database of relevant human service referrals. The 2-1-1 specialist explains how to access those services.

NJ 2-1-1 was launched by the United Ways of New Jersey ten years ago as a free way for individuals to connect to essential resources. Nationally, 2-1-1 serves more than 283 million Americans-- more than 90% of our population -- in all 50 states, plus Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. In 2012 (most recent data available), almost 16 million people called 2-1-1 for every need imaginable.

As the largest private funder of the 2-1-1 network, the United Ways of New Jersey, in partnership with the State of NJ, continue to strengthen and support NJ 2-1-1 as a critical link to resources, in order to build stronger communities in our state and to create opportunities for all.

NJ 2-1-1 is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year. NJ 2-1-1 provides services in multiple languages and serves the hearing impaired through its TTY services.

You can follow NJ 2-1-1 on Facebook and on Twitter @nj211.

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*Tours of New Jersey's 2-1-1 Center in East Hanover are available upon request. For additional reports about calls handled by NJ 2-1-1 Partnership, contact Executive Director Joe Geleta at 973-929-3704 or visit [www.nj211.org](http://www.nj211.org).*