



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NJ 2-1-1 Web Survey Assesses Needs **Utility Assistance and Food Top the List of Urgent Needs**

Paramus, NJ January 20, 2009 - In an ongoing Needs Survey hosted at www.nj211.org, the following were acknowledged to be of “urgent concern”

Utility assistance 68%
Buying food 65.4%
Paying rent 65%
Paying outstanding credit card debt 56.5%
Paying mortgage 52.4%
Buying prescriptions 52.4%
Paying for medical coverage 45.5%

52.2% of respondents own their own home, while the remaining rent. 88% of those completing the survey currently earn less than \$50,000/year. When asked what brought them to the NJ 2-1-1 Web site, 27.8% stated a job loss and 30.6% noted a health care crisis.

A new section of the site, *Help in Hard Times* (<http://nj211.org/hardtimes08.cfm>) includes in-depth information on many of the subjects noted: Avoiding Foreclosure; Food and Nutrition Programs; Utility Assistance; and Living Through a Layoff. New sections will be added to include information about Health Insurance Needs and Living on a Limited Budget. These pages are filled with information about state and community resources with details including how a program works, specific eligibility requirements and full contact information. Also available at the web site is a 36 page Utility Assistance Guide that can be downloaded at the site.

All citizens facing difficult times are encouraged to visit www.nj211.org to search the online resource database or chat with a resource specialist using the site’s Instant Messaging capabilities. New Jersey residents can also dial “2-1-1” 24 hours a day, seven days a week if they want to speak directly with a call specialist who will help them to find available programs and services throughout the state. Language translation and TTY services are offered to any caller. To lodge your comments and take the one-minute survey, go to <http://nj211.org/hardtimes08.cfm>.

About NJ 2-1-1

NJ 2-1-1 is a system of support, using inbound calls as well as a Web site (www.nj211.org) with Instant Messaging capability, that is intended to provide free, personal assistance to anyone trying to navigate their way through the vast network of health and human services, government assistance programs and local community resources in New Jersey. NJ 2-1-1 is aimed at lessening the burden of callers by providing understanding and compassion along with the information that is needed to address the caller's concerns. This confidential service is supported by United Way in partnership with the State of New Jersey – Department of Human Services, Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, Department of Health and Senior Service, and the Department of Children and Families.