



NJ 2-1-1 Partnership

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NJ 2-1-1 Celebrates 2-1-1 Day

New Web Platform Provides Real-Time Access to 2-1-1 Data

(Cedar Knolls, NJ) On February 11, NJ 2-1-1 and all 2-1-1s across the country will be commemorating 2-1-1 Day in order to showcase a national communications system designed to be a front line in resource and referral for those seeking help with health and human service needs. While all callers' identities are confidential, a caller's demographic data, the needs that are communicated and resources provided are collected within the NJ 2-1-1 system and reflected on the reports that, up until now, had only been shared with community and state partners at designated intervals. "We're pleased to announce that we are now able to share this real-time data and that it will be available to anyone who wants to see it, for purposes of identifying need, as well as budgets and planning," said NJ 2-1-1 Executive Director Melissa Acree.

The data from NJ 2-1-1 can be accessed by clicking on the map of New Jersey found at www.211counts.org. Ms. Acree continued, "NJ 2-1-1 is pleased to have enhanced the flow of essential information to policymakers to better inform them of the public response to critical needs. Sharing this data on an ongoing basis provides policy makers at all levels of government, as well as grant writers, and many others who are striving to serve the community, with a reliable source of data that reflects the current needs of the public we serve."

When a visitor to the site, accesses the New Jersey page they see the top needs expressed by callers to NJ 2-1-1. This information can be filtered to provide relevant statistics based on different parameters: a set time period; individual zip codes; counties; legislative districts; and school districts. In addition to the steady stream of information being downloaded nightly by NJ 2-1-1, visitors to 211 Counts can access census data for every zip code in the state by hovering over a detailed map found just below the call center information. When one of the needs expressed by callers is clicked, the map reflects the number of calls received from that very zip code. Along with that the visitor will see the poverty rate, unemployment rate, percentage of the population having less than a high school diploma and the percentage of rental housing in that community. Tables to the right of the map reflect the highest rate of requests by zip code and graphically depict the volume of calls received during the previous twelve months.

The 2-1-1 system in our state began when the NJ Board of Public Utilities designated the 3 digit dialing code as a direct line for information and referral services for New Jerseyans in need. NJ 2-1-1 opened its doors in 2005 and has been answering calls for help ever since. As familiarity with the organization's services grows, so too do the number of successful connections to help. In 2018, NJ 2-1-1 responded to over 560,000 requests for assistance that came in by phone, text, chat and online searches. The organization is a subsidiary of United Ways of NJ; serves as the homeless hotline in 5 counties in our state; is the state's Home Energy Assistance Hotline; and augments multiple state, county and municipal initiatives.