

PRESS RELEASE

FCC 2-1-1 Designation Celebrates 10 years!

July 21, 2010

Ten years ago today, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) designated 2-1-1 as the national 3-digit dialing code to help people gain access to health and human services. Now, close to 80 percent of the population has access to 2-1-1. In 2009, nationwide, 2-1-1 information and referral service centers answered over 16 million calls, connecting people with job options, food, housing, education, counseling and much more. FEMA, federal and state agencies increasingly rely on 2-1-1 as the "go-to" number during disasters, connecting victims, volunteers and donors with information that speeds recovery.

The 2000 FCC designation came a little over a year after the state Department of Public Utility Control earmarked the 2-1-1 dialing code for Connecticut in 1999. In fact, Connecticut was the first to offer statewide access to health and human services through the easy-to-remember 2-1-1 phone number.

United Way 2-1-1, administered by the United Way of Connecticut, typically handles over 360,000 calls annually. The most frequently requested services are heat and utility assistance, housing and shelter, mental health care, substance abuse services and financial assistance. 2-1-1 has developed and maintains Connecticut's most comprehensive, up-to-date database of human service resources listing over 4,500 agencies and 48,000 services.

In order to ensure that everyone across the nation has access to 2-1-1, the Calling for 2-1-1 Act (H.R.211/S.211) has been filed in Congress. The Act has the support of over 300 members of Congress and would authorize a modest matching grant program to support 2-1-1. On this 10-year anniversary of the FCC Order, United Way Worldwide is calling on Congress to enact the Calling For 2-1-1 Act before the August congressional recess.

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About United Way of Connecticut

The mission of United Way of Connecticut is to help meet the needs of Connecticut residents by providing information, education, and connection to services. United Way of Connecticut furthers its mission by providing 24/7 toll-free information and referral through United Way 2-1-1; specialized services in child care, child development and disabilities, and HUSKY health insurance; and by collaborating with local United Ways and Connecticut state agencies and elected officials.

United Way of Connecticut is a service of the State of Connecticut and local United Ways.