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Frequently Asked Questions about United Way 2-1-1

What is United Way 2-1-1?

United Way 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember, three-digit number that families and individuals can call to obtain free and confidential information on health and human service resources in our community.

How do I get help from 2-1-1?

Help is available by phone or online 24/7/365. To speak with a trained Information and Referral Specialist by phone, dial 2-1-1 (some cell phone users may need to call toll-free at 800-543-7709). Search online from any computer or mobile device. Live chat is also available.

There are so many community resource lists out there; what makes 2-1-1 different?

2-1-1 is a comprehensive information and referral service staffed by trained professionals who quickly assess needs and help callers reach the right resource right away. United Way 2-1-1 is more than a static list of agencies or programs—it's the most thorough source of up-to-date health and human services program information in Olmsted County. Where appropriate, 2-1-1 Information and Referral Specialists can also connect callers to crisis lines, senior navigators, or other hotline resources.

What types of services and organizations are included in the database?

2-1-1 offers information on a range of services, including; housing, food, childcare, counseling, education, emergency preparedness, employment, energy assistance, health care, legal help, parenting resources, transportation, and much more. Both nonprofit and for-profit organizations that provide health or human services may be included in the database, along with government entities, civic associations, and advocacy groups.

Nearly 3,000 Olmsted County agencies and programs are listed.

How do I know that the agencies United Way recommends are legitimate?

United Way asks for agencies' employee identification numbers (EIN), which are used to identify businesses. Services that are run on a volunteer basis are vetted; if complaints are received about a particular service, we follow up and will remove it from the database if necessary. United Way of Olmsted County works with community groups and partner agencies to identify trusted local programs and ensure that they are listed appropriately in the database.

How do I know that the program information United Way provides is accurate?

All program information is provided by the service agency and is updated at least once a year. If you see information in the database that you believe is incorrect, you can send a message to 2-1-1 staff through the program page or call to speak with a specialist.

How does 2-1-1 assist callers in languages other than English?

Our information and referral staff includes multilingual professionals; interpretation services are also available by phone. Our database can be searched by language to locate services with multilingual staff. Online search results are available in translation in over 100 languages.

Whom should I contact if I have more questions?

For information about 2-1-1 in Olmsted County:

Vangie Castro
Impact Program Assistant, United Way of Olmsted
County vangiec@uwolmsted.org
507-535-5509

For assistance with your agency's 2-1-1 listing:

Kristen Fogerty
United Way, 2-1-1 Resource Program Manager
kristen.fogerty@gtcuw.org
612-340-7519

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