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United Way
of Kentucky



VIA E-MAIL AND U.S. MAIL

December 31, 2021

Linda C. Bridwell
Executive Director
Kentucky Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 615
211 Sower Boulevard
Frankfort, KY 40602-0615

RECEIVED
JAN 03 2022

PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION

RE: Annual Status Report regarding United Way 211 Implementation

Dear Ms. Bridwell:

Pursuant to the Administrative Case No. 343 dated August 17, 2004 designating United Way of Kentucky as lead agency for implementation of the 211 dialing code in Kentucky, enclosed please find our annual report on the progress of the United Way 211 initiative.

We appreciate the ongoing support for statewide 211 by the Commission.

If you have any questions about the report or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Middleton", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Kevin Middleton
President and 211 State Director
United Way of Kentucky

Enclosure

KENTUCKY 211

**Status Report to the
Kentucky Public Service Commission**

from

United Way of Kentucky

**211 Statewide Implementation
Administrative Case No. 343**

December 31, 2021

Introduction

In July of 2000, the Federal Communications Commission reserved the abbreviated 211 dialing code nationwide for access to health and human service information and referral (I/R) services.

In 2001, following informal meetings held by the Kentucky Public Service Commission to discuss the assignment of 211 in the Commonwealth, United Way of Kentucky (UWKY) petitioned the Commission to assign the 211 dialing code to UWKY and its affiliated organizations. UWKY proposed that it be designated as the lead agency for the statewide implementation of 211 in Kentucky. The Commission granted UWKY provisional authority over 211 for a three-year period to develop a pilot program for the implementation of 211, and to report on its progress at the end of that time.

In 2004, UWKY submitted its report to the Commission on the progress of its pilot efforts, including its comprehensive business plan for Kentucky 211.

On August 17, 2004, the Kentucky Public Service Commission issued an order granting UWKY the permanent designation as the lead agency for the statewide implementation of 211 in Kentucky. The Commission directed that UWKY make annual reports on the progress of the 211 initiative. Pursuant to that order, UWKY submits this status report.

Kentucky's 211 Expansion Efforts in 2020-2021

UWKY remains committed to the ongoing development and maintenance of statewide United Way 211 services in Kentucky, and is pleased to restate that in late 2020 our expansion goals were achieved, and that **211 service is now available across all 120 Kentucky counties.**

Background:

An original plan was presented to the Commission in 2004, and was restructured in 2009 to account for new developments in technology, updated pricing and national expansion models. This plan gave us the opportunity to propose new potential to the administration and legislators, reacquaint them with 211 and ask for their support. Meetings with state leaders were well-received at the time, though funding was not available.

Throughout 2018 and through the summer of 2019, a planning committee comprised of representatives of the United Way of Kentucky staff and board of directors, as well as the 211 contact centers met with members of state government agencies, particularly within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, to explore the system's capacity for contracted service to the Commonwealth, in support of the now renamed Kynect Resources project. In April 2020, UWKY signed a contract with the CHFS to support bringing "closed loop" referral services to the Commonwealth, built by Deloitte on a Salesforce technology platform using 211 resource data, and offering residents the opportunity, for the first time, to maintain their own records of health insurance, referral and public benefits in a single, easy-to-use online system,

while agencies assisting these individuals will have the capacity to review referral data to ensure that the most efficient provision of human services is provided to all.

Further, a subsequent contract was signed in September 2020 through June 2021, and renewed in July 2021-June 2022. Through this partnership with the Commonwealth, UWKY invested in the expansion of 211 information and referral services to the final 62 “uncovered” counties. With the “soft launch” of 211 access in these counties in December 2020, an additional approximate 29% of Kentucky residents were provided access to the largest electronic health and human resources information and referral database (collectively) in the Commonwealth through full 211 service by phone, chat, text, email and web, bringing 211 access to every Kentuckian. Thanks to capacity provided through UWBG, our network has maintained infrastructure, call routing translations, and a fully resourced information and referral database for the newly covered counties for the last few years. Funding to increase capacity to field calls and market the service was a result of this partnership. New marketing launched in January 2021 and a statewide supporting website was launched at <http://www.kentucky211.org>.

In Summer 2021, UWKY received a private investment to support 211 services, and determined to hire a consultant to facilitate a four-part strategic direction setting series with Kentucky’s 211 contact centers. The UWKY Board 211 Ad Hoc Committee met twice, on May 14 and May 25. The initial planning meeting with the centers took place on May 18. We released an RFP and accepted eight proposals. After careful consideration of 211 experience, cost, facilitation experience, a displayed understanding of the project and a willingness to meet the timeline, we chose Pat Hanberry, who had been a founding voice in the development of Maryland 211 and who came recommended by Josh Pedersen, United Way Worldwide 211 director. We held our first of the four sessions on June 8, with a goal of discussing and addressing barriers to consistency in service delivery and user experience, as well as data sharing, in the context of:

- national quality standards,
- efficiency of delivery, and
- increasing interest from state agencies and other partners.

This series also provided a platform for Kentucky’s 211 Centers to discuss existing challenges, opportunities and network expectations, and resulted in the development of mutually agreed upon strategies to work more collaboratively and efficiently among the 211 contact center partners – to achieve the goal of shared systems that will provide a consistent and common user experience across the Commonwealth.

To that end, UWKY submitted a proposal in October 2021 to support additional outreach and onboarding services for the CHFS/Kynect Resources project, with a partnership approach to providing the technological and personnel supports to achieve our mutual goals of supporting Kentucky residents. The negotiation on that potential partnership is underway.

Through this work, we continue to engage with all partners to best utilize 211 services to improve individual and community health outcomes.

Future Efficiency:

By proactively creating efficiencies in service delivery, as well as a consistent, high-quality client experience, 211 services in Kentucky will continue to be the gold standard for information and referral, health and human service contact centers. UWKY will continue its work with our 211 contact centers to seek sustainable funding through contract services, legislative avenues, and grant opportunities, and to seek additional public/private partnerships in support of statewide 211.

Usage Volume

In 2020, call volume in Kentucky was 49,415, an increase from 2019 of about 6,150 calls. Web visits are no longer being tracked separately by all parties – additional information can be found in the center reports. Figure 1 below shows statewide call volume. In 2020, for those reporting individualized totals, calls for basic needs, such as housing, utilities, and food made up over 72% of all calls for services (see Figure 2 below).

FIGURE 1

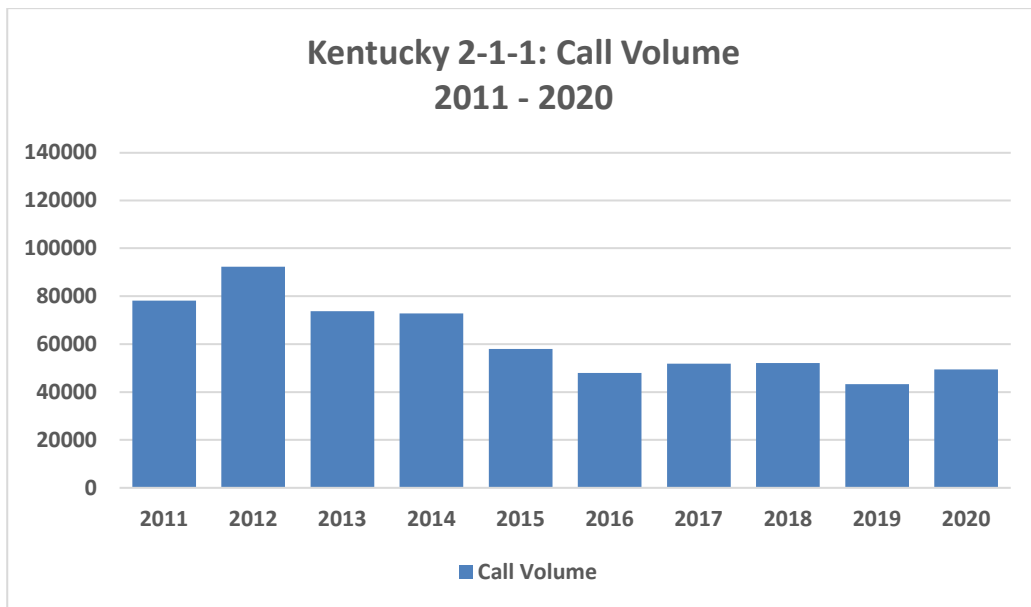
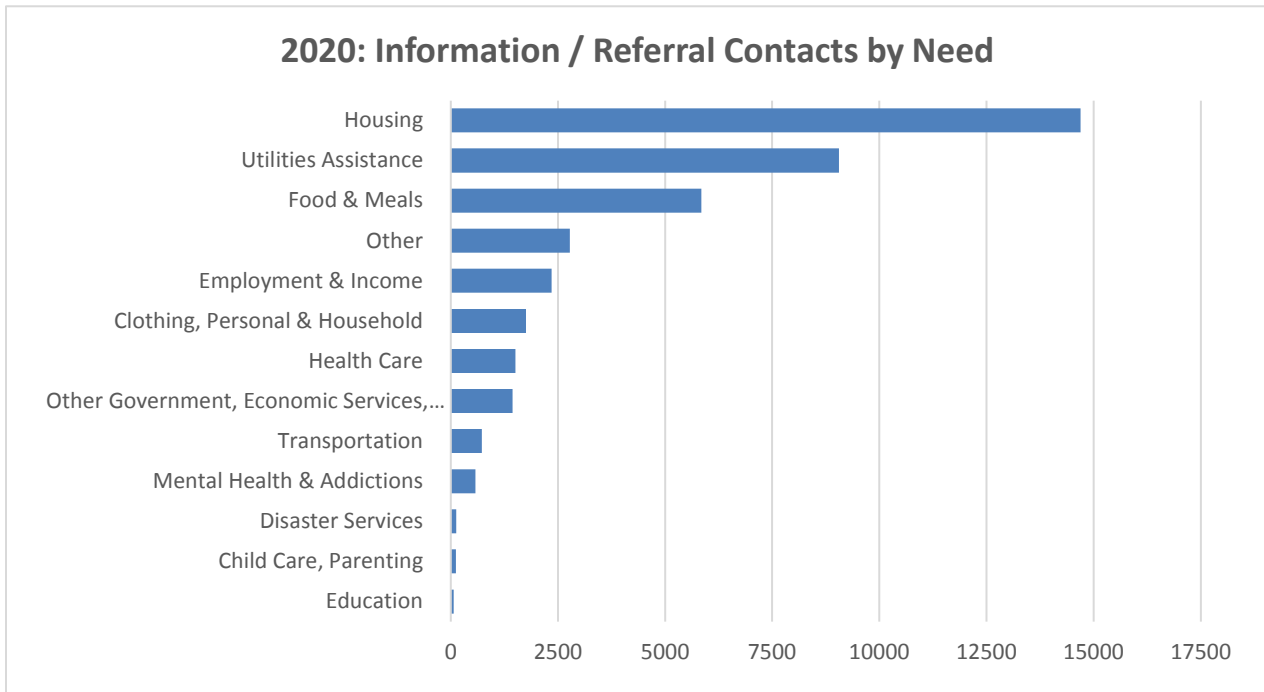


FIGURE 2



Community Partnerships and Special Projects

In addition to day to day information and referral services, United Way 211 has proven to be invaluable in several community partnerships and special projects.

Kynect Resources (NEW) - Kynect Resources is a new tool that makes it easier than ever to not only connect people with available resources, but track outcomes and collaborate with community partners. UWKY in coordination with our contact centers across the Commonwealth have partnered with the Commonwealth to populate the resource data that appears in the database. This partnership has allowed for the expansion of 211 across the entire state. Every Kentuckian can now dial 211 or text their zip code to 898-211 to access services 24/7/365.

Ride United – MUW 211 operates the Ride United program in partnership with United Way Worldwide and Lyft. Ride United – helps address unmet transportation needs by providing free rides to eligible riders. The free rides can be used to access employment, health care, food, public benefits and educational opportunities. MUW 211 serves as the operational arm of this program. 211 operators schedule rides through the Lyft Concierge portal for participating agencies as well as regular callers.

Health Access and COVID-19 – 2020 presented a new challenge as the world faced a global pandemic, COVID-19. This not only impacted how we served the community but the volume of inquiries we handled. Late March and early April, we saw record number of inquiries. The majority of callers were people who had never utilized the service in the past, and suddenly found themselves unemployed and needing resources to help meet their basic needs. All 211 contact centers across Kentucky cited increased health related call volume due to COVID-19 and associated increases during the height of the pandemic for other services due to the crisis.

United Way of Greater Cincinnati entered into a contract in the fall of 2020 with one of their largest Ohio counties. UWGC agreed to provide care coordination and necessary social services due to COVID-19 and to provide “United Way 211” as a single entry point for COVID related and CARES funding eligible services available to residents, including unemployment, re-employment, workforce development assistance, food and cash assistance, rent and utility support, and COVID-19 testing and vaccination information and more. Care Coordination assessed and ensured contact had a documented need for care coordination and/or social services due to COVID-19. Such need includes without limitation, i) a positive diagnosis of COVID-19; ii) required quarantining due to an exposure to COVID -19, positive COVID-19 test or while awaiting COVID-19 test results; iii) caring for a family member who is diagnosed with COVID-19 or is required to quarantine due to a COVID-19 exposure; iv) loss of income and/or increased in costs due to COVID-19; and v) care coordination and/or social service needs due to COVID-19. As a single point of entry under Care Coordination the goal was and remains today to connect residents impacted by COVID with critical immediate needs such as food, shelter and health kits and provide referrals for utility and rent payment assistance, mental health information and employment assistance. Individual support and follow-up is done with each eligible contact. This shows the power of the platform to be a service to communities in

special times of need.

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) – United Way 211 provides low income individuals and families with information about free tax assistance sites throughout the Commonwealth. MUW 211 and its partners, Louisville Asset Building Coalition (LABC) and Louisville Metro Government continue to increase awareness of, and access to, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). At a time when many families are struggling to make ends meet, EITC dollars can be used to reduce debt. MUW 211 directs the callers to Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites that offer trained volunteers who provide free help preparing the caller’s tax return. A person dialing 211 can speak with a specialist and learn about EITC/VITA site locations, dates, times and general eligibility requirements.

In greater Lexington, UWBG is committed to helping families and individuals become financially stable. The promotion of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is one important way UWBG helps those in the community achieve financial stability. EITC provides families with children an average tax credit of over \$2,000. This money can then be used toward savings, home repairs, bills, further education, or other needs that help families achieve greater stability. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites, with coordination through 211, prepare taxes free of charge for families and individuals who fall within the income guidelines. The VITA volunteers are also trained to ensure tax filers receive the maximum credits for which the client is eligible.

Disaster and Crisis Response – United Way 211 remains a vital partner in responding to natural and man-made disasters. In addition to connecting people to services such as shelter, volunteer feeding services, etc., United Way 211 has been used to recruit volunteers to assist in clean up after tornadoes, floods and other devastating weather events. United Way 211 supports Emergency Management operations and has signed memorandums of understanding in many counties. In December 2021, 211 activated to support the Western Kentucky tornado disaster.

Housing and Homelessness – United Way 211 provides support to homeless programs like the Single Point of Entry which tracks open shelter bed space, and has historically supported the point in time count to ensure adequate services can be provided to this at-risk population.

Federal Legislative Initiatives

In late 2020, in the final days of the 116th Congress, Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA) introduced Senate Bill 4989, which if passed would “facilitate nationwide accessibility and coordination of 211 services for information and referral for mental health emergencies, homelessness needs, other human services needs”.

The stated purposes of the bill, known as the “Human-Services Emergency Logistic Program Act of 2020” or the “HELP Act of 2020”, are as follows:

- (1) To strengthen the existing 211 services in States throughout the Nation.

- (2) To increase the availability, reliability, and responsiveness of 211 information and referral across the country, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
- (3) To reduce the use of 911 services for circumstances not related to law enforcement, fire, or medical emergencies.
- (4) To more efficiently connect individuals with needed human services.
- (5) To reduce the arrests, incarcerations, and law enforcement violence that occur from inappropriate 911 emergency referrals.

The HELP Act of 2020 was the first federal legislation introduced since the 111th Congress.

National View and Summary

In 2020, the 211 network in the United States made more than 27.8 million connections to help, resources, and services. Kentucky now serves 100% of our population, with 54% added over the last 5 years.

In the 20 years since the FCC assigned the 211 number for health and human services information and referral, it has repeatedly proven its impact and value. In Kentucky, United Way 211 is committed to maintaining the highest standards in the information and referral industry. In addition, we have achieved our stated goal to make 211 available to all Kentuckians. Expansion efforts in Eastern and Western Kentucky have built momentum for sustainable statewide coverage and funding.

Additional detail is available in the community reports below.



Get Connected. Get Help.™

United Way of the Bluegrass 2-1-1

Summary of January 2020- June 2021

Activity and Progress for United Way of the Bluegrass 2-1-1 Contact Center

UWBG 2-1-1 Vision

A community where everyone has access to resources to thrive.

UWBG 2-1-1 Mission

At the end of the day, we help people wind their way through a complex maze of health and human resources.

We create partnerships and alliances that will move citizens toward physical, emotional, and financial safety and stability. Together, we will ensure that 2-1-1 is a trusted source for information and help.

Business Plan and Expansion Efforts in 2020 and 2021

United Way of the Bluegrass (UWBG) 2-1-1 remains committed to providing top quality information and referral service to the communities we serve. Providing 2-1-1 service to the entire commonwealth has been a goal of UWBG for several years and was made a reality this year in partnership with The Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS). Building on the work previously completed in creating the resources database for the expansion area, made possible through a partnership with the Department of Aging and Independent living, we were able to leverage dollars from CHFS to create the remaining infrastructure including call routing, staffing, marketing, and technology to go live in the remaining uncovered 69 counties.

2020 was a busy year, UWBG 2-1-1 was:

- Awarded a grant from United Way Worldwide to help offset increased call volume due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Partner with the Cabinet for Health and Family Service on Kynect Resources, a new tool that makes it easier than ever to not only connect people with available resources, but track outcomes and collaborate with community partners
- Assist the United Way Financial Stability team with scheduling income tax appointment for UWBG's VITA program
- Promoted the 2020 census
- Expanded 2-1-1 coverage to the 69 counties that were previously without 2-1-1, making 2-1-1 available statewide.
- In concert with United Way of Kentucky, created a statewide 2-1-1 marketing strategy to promote the service

In 2021, UWBG:

- Continued partnering with the state on the Kynect platform, assisting agencies with getting added to the 2-1-1 database and onboarding the Kynect platform
- Shared marketing materials with 2-1-1 expansion area and placed billboards and radio adds
- Attended our first in person tabling event since COVID-19 began
- Partnered with the US Department of Veterans Affairs for a virtual resource fair for veterans in partnership with all KY 2-1-1's with UWBG acting as the hub for the KY 2-1-1 network
- Partnered with Kentucky American Water to complete applications for households seeking water bill payment assistance. The program can provide funds to qualified households once a year.

Usage Volume

Calls

Calls remain the primary way that individuals reach 2-1-1. From July 2020 through June 2021, UWBG 2-1-1 responded to 19,584 calls with a total of 19,965 requests. The top 5 requests were: Rent Payments Assistance, Electric Service Payment Assistance, Tax preparation Assistance, Community Shelters, and Food Pantries.

Text Messaging/SMS

UWBG was the first 2-1-1 in the Commonwealth to implement text messaging services. The service was implemented in late August 2015 and the marketing campaign launched in October of that year. For the 2020-2021 fiscal year UWBG assisted 469 clients via text message.

Customer Satisfaction

2-1-1 Navigators follow-up with any inquirer that answers “yes” when asked if we can. Each Navigator is assigned random inquiries from other navigators in order not to follow-up on their own calls or text messages.

Data continues to show the level of customer service provided by UWBG exceeds expectations. Customers are asked to answer the following questions as well as provide feedback on the program. Additionally, we ask clients about their experience contacting other agencies. This information helps our database curators identify any potential issues with the information listed in our resource database.

“Was our call specialist friendly?”

94% ranked 2-1-1 Navigators 5 out of 5.

“Overall, were you satisfied with the help you received?”

95% ranked their call 5 out of 5.

“Would you contact 2-1-1 in the future for other information and referral services?”

97% would

“Would you refer 2-1-1 to someone else in need or in crisis?”

97% would

Partnerships and Special Projects

Kynect Resources

Kynect Resources is a new tool that makes it easier than ever to not only connect people with available resources, but track outcomes and collaborate with community partners. UWBG 2-1-1 as well as all 2-1-1's across the commonwealth have partnered with the state to populate the resource data that appears on the site. This partnership has allowed for the expansion of 2-1-1 across the entire state. Every Kentuckian can now dial 2-1-1 or text their zip code to 898-211 to access services 24/7/365.

Earned Income Tax Credit (CKEEP)

UWBG is committed to helping families and individuals become financially stable. The promotion of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is one important way UWBG helps those in the community achieve financial stability. EITC provides families with children an average tax credit of \$2,240. This money can then be used toward savings, home repairs, bills, further education, or other needs that help families achieve greater stability. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites prepare taxes free of charge for families and individuals who fall within the income guidelines. The VITA volunteers are also trained to ensure tax filers receive the maximum credits for which the client is eligible.

Virtual Veterans Experience Action Center (V-VEAC)

UWBG 2-1-1's participation in this event was 2-fold. First, we designated 2 Navigators to be representatives for our contact center, they received training in Appointment plus and participated in scheduling veterans for the V-VEAC event. Second, during the 3-day V-VEAC event, these navigators received calls from the Veteran Engagement Team who were assisting veterans that need community support services not provided by a veteran program. From their our Navigators insured the Veteran was speaking with the 211 that services the community they lived in and connected them with available services. This opportunity allowed us to connect with a population that hasn't traditionally utilized our services giving us the chance to share with them what we do and connect with veteran agencies to ensure we had all available programs listed in our system.

Disaster/Crisis Response

2020 presented a new challenge as the world faced a global pandemic, COVID-19. This not only impacted how we served the community but the volume of inquiries we handled. Late March and early April, we saw record number of inquiries. Majority of callers were people who had never utilized the service in the past, and suddenly found themselves unemployed and needing resources to help meet their basic needs. UWBG 2-1-1 staff was able to quickly gather information on available services, which were changing daily. This information was critical to serving the needs of callers and making sure they knew where they could go to find assistance.



Get Connected. Get Help.™

United Way of the Bluegrass 2-1-1

Closing Thoughts

In Conclusion, UWBG 2-1-1 has had an eventful year. With the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had to adapt, but we kept moving forward. Being able to launch statewide 2-1-1 by bringing 2-1-1 coverage to the remaining 69 counties was a major accomplishment. We now set our sights on continuing to offer high quality service, building relationship with partners within our new service area and promoting 2-1-1, so residents now that it is available.

Southern Kentucky 2-1-1

Time Frame: January-December 2020

Total Referrals

14,963

County	Percentage	Total
Allen	2.4%	199
Barren	7.6%	642
Butler	1.5%	125
Edmonson	1.2%	105
Hart	1.9%	157
Logan	3.4%	291
Metcalfe	1.0%	86
Monroe	0.9%	73
Simpson	3.7%	309
Warren	62.8%	5320
Other	13.6%	1160
Total Calls		8467

Household Composition	Percentage
Single adult	16%
Single parent with one or more children	11%
Two parents with child(ren)	9%
Two or more adults without children	14%
Grandparent(s) with child(ren)	1%
Other	4%
Unknown/Declined to Answer	45%

Age Group	Percentage
Under age 18 years	0%
Age 18 to 24 years	5%
Age 25 to 44 years	24%
Age 45 to 64 years	24%
Age 65 years and older	11%
Unknown/Declined to Answer	36%

Race/Ethnicity	Percentage
American Indian/Alaska Native	1%
Asian	0%
Black or African American	12%
Hispanic or Latino	2%
Multiracial	2%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%
White or Caucasian	41%
Unknown/Declined to Answer	42%

Household Income	Percentage
No Income	17%
> \$10,000	12%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	11%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	4%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	3%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	3%
Over \$50,000	1%
Unknown/Declined to Answer	49%

Top Presenting Needs	Total
Utility Service Payment Assistance	1967
Rent Payment Assistance	1222
Food Pantries	1052
Heating Fuel Payment Assistance	438
Commodity Supplemental Food Program	287
Low Income/Subsidized Rental Housing	249
Food	192
Homeless Shelter	188
Aging and Disability Resource Centers	168
Household Goods	147

Top Referring Agencies	Total
Community Action of Southern Kentucky	1978
Bowling Green Warren County Welfare Center	1218
Hope House	948
Churches United in Christ Help Ministry	905
HOTEL INC	552
Salvation Army of Bowling Green	471
St. Vincent de Paul	464
Feeding America Kentucky's Heartland	390
Community Relief Fund of Glasgow-Barren Co.	319
Jesus Community Center	282

Gender	Percentage
Female	57%
Male	21%
Unknown/Declined to Answer	22%



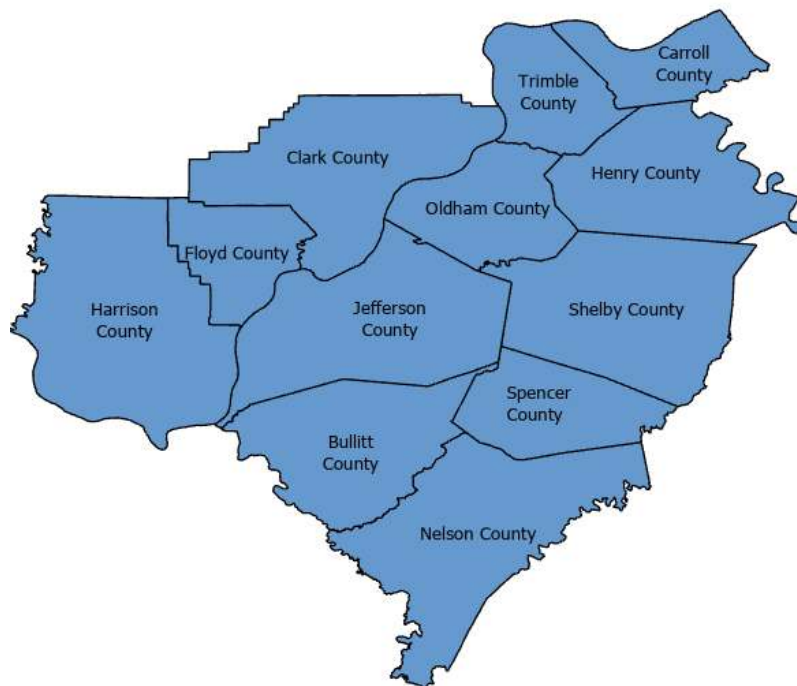
Metro Louisville Update for 2020

Metro United Way 2-1-1 (MUW 2-1-1) provides full service 2-1-1 coverage (24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year), continuing its role in helping individuals, families and the community to better manage their lives by providing access to the reliable and accurate information and referral resources they need, as well as distributing non-emergency information during local disaster or crisis incidents.

MUW 2-1-1 Service Delivery/Coverage Area

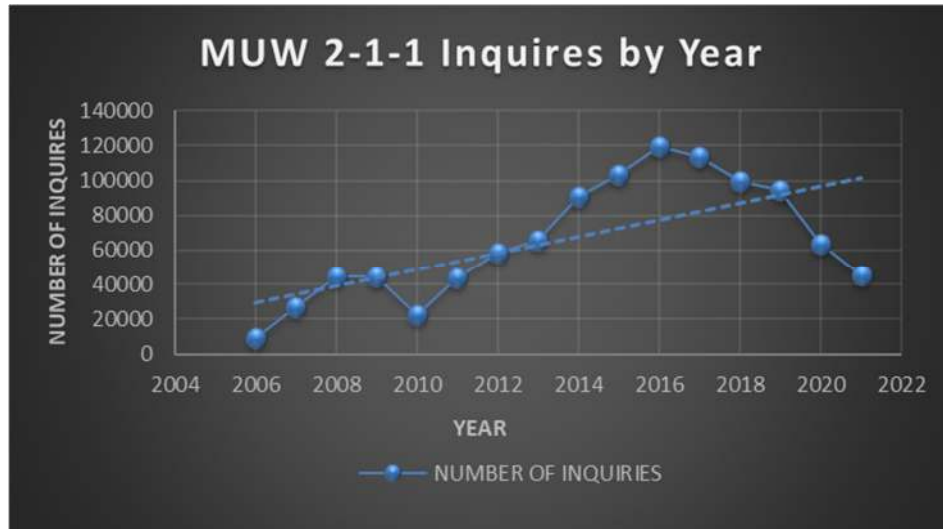
In May 2016, MUW 2-1-1 entered into a "partnership" with Center for Women and Families to provide 2-1-1 services for the Louisville Metro Area, which includes Bullitt, Carroll, Henry, Jefferson, Nelson, Shelby, Spencer, Oldham and Trimble Counties in Kentucky, and partial coverage through a working relationship with Indiana 2-1-1 in Clark, Floyd and Harrison Counties, Indiana. The nine Kentucky counties alone represent a population of 1,034,787 Kentuckians (approximately 25% of the population of the Commonwealth).

Since the Autumn of 2016, MUW 2-1-1 has had a service agreement with the United Way of Central Kentucky (UWCKy), providing 2-1-1 service for Breckinridge, Grayson, Hardin, LaRue, and Meade Counties in Kentucky. This new service area increased MUW 2-1-1's total service's population by an additional 192,955 people to represent a population of 1,227,782. The entire MUW 2-1-1 service area, including the Southern Indiana Counties population, is approximately 1.5 million people.



Call Volume/Growth

In 2020, MUW 2-1-1 received 63,799 calls, texts, emails, and online searches from individuals seeking programs and services information. This is a 32% decrease in the number of referrals from 2019, although a total of 45,218 contacts in the first half of 2021 suggests a return to pre-2020 call and web contact volumes.



As of July 31, 2021, the MUW 2-1-1 has been used by 1,042,635 individuals to find the programs and services they need throughout the Louisville Metro area, surrounding counties, Central Kentucky and across the Commonwealth.

As noted in the chart, there has been a reduction in call volume/web searches in the recent years. This drop in volume can be attributed to several similar specialized information and referral services in the Louisville area. However, a significant number of individuals still use 2-1-1 to find resources for multiple issues and problems that face them and their families.

Community Partnerships/Special Projects

MUW 2-1-1 continues to work in close partnership with other community service providers, local and state governments, agencies and businesses. The following examples highlight a few local initiatives in which 2-1-1 has played a vital role.

Earned Income Tax Credit Initiative (EITC)/ Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Site

MUW 2-1-1 and its partners, Louisville Asset Building Coalition (LABC) and Louisville Metro Government continue to increase awareness of, and access to, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). At a time when many families are struggling to make ends meet, EITC dollars can be used to reduce debt. 2-1-1 directs the callers to Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites that offer trained volunteers who provide free help preparing the caller's tax return. A person dialing 2-1-1 can speak with a specialist and learn about EITC/VITA site locations, dates, times and general eligibility requirements. During the 2018 tax season, MUW 2-1-1 provided information directly relating to EITC, AARP and VITA site locations to 228 individuals across the Metro

Louisville area and surrounding counties.

Education & Health

MUW 2-1-1 is also aligned to promote good health, healthy lifestyles and access to community resources. MUW 2-1-1 connects individuals and families to information on sites to help them enroll and gain access to health resources such as the state's child insurance program, KCHIP, and directs individuals to the MUW Success by 6 "Ages and Stages Survey" Questionnaire (ASQ) to enable parents to determine their child's level of mental development.

2-1-1 has formed a new partnership with the Kentucky Diabetes Prevention Network and the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program is first program of several to come in the 2-1-1 community database. 2-1-1 created and supported a texting survey that asked the needed questions to educate participants to their risks of being pre-diabetic. The individual texted "My Risk" to 898211 and answered a set of questions. The results were then calculated, and the appropriate information was provided to the client. Seasonally, 2-1-1 supports Flu Shot Clinics, providing callers with locations, dates and hours of operations for these clinics. 2-1-1 staff also makes presentations to senior groups explaining how they can find resources on everything from health-related issues to transportation.

2-1-1 is directly supporting the Jefferson County Public School System in their development of an initiative called Louisville Linked, to connect students with community-based organizations that work with them outside of school. The program houses data that should help the school district manage and grow the efforts of dozens of organizations looking to improve education. 2-1-1 will be the conduit for these agencies. 2-1-1 Call Specialists will direct callers looking for assistance with their children's educational issues directly to Louisville Linked agencies, and identifiable logos have been placed on the 2-1-1 web search to ID these agencies for people using the online 2-1-1 search.

On-Line Search, Mobile App, and Texting

2-1-1 began with the phone service in 2006. In January 2011, Metro United Way 2-1-1 launched its 2-1-1 community resource database's online search capabilities. Since the 2-1-1 database search "went live" it has handled searches for thousands of different health and human services throughout the Metro United Way 2-1-1 service area. The online search has been utilized greatly by local social workers, case workers, counselors and teachers for Clients of Programs like Louisville Linked, Destination Degrees, countless Veterans services and homeless programs, like the Single Point of Entry, which tracks open shelter bed space. We have updated our website to make it more intuitive and mobile friendly, thereby making it available via any smart phone, with or without our app. And, in January 2017, MUW 2-1-1 launched and continues to support txt211 – a method of accessing community resources by texting your zip code to 898211 to get help.

Disaster/Crisis Response

MUW 2-1-1 continues to be there for the community it serves during nature disasters and crisis incidents. MUW 2-1-1 supports Emergency Management operations in Louisville and Jefferson County, Oldham County, Shelby County and Trimble County with signed Memorandums of Agreement to directly work with, and in support of, during any crisis incident in those communities. By providing needed non-emergency information about what is happening during and after a disaster, 2-1-1 helps maintain the integrity of the 911 system to receive only emergency calls and allows EMA and first responders to focus on the job at hand. Metro United Way is also collaborating with the State Emergency Management Agency's Private Sector Working Group. Finally, 2-1-1 supported extreme cold weather information with White Flag info on shelters during multiple occasions during the winter of 2019.

Volunteerism/Community Information/Additional Disaster Support

MUW 2-1-1 continues to expand its ability to serve and support the community. 2-1-1 has always gone beyond information and referrals for health & human services, community support during disasters and crisis situations, and collection of data on areas of need.

2-1-1 regularly shares aggregate data with non-profit organizations, local government agencies such as family services, and continues to work with Veterans Affairs facilities in Louisville and other agencies that serve Vets to improve access to these critical programs.

Ride United Program

Towards the end of 2019, Metro United Way launched the Ride United program in partnership with United Way Worldwide and Lyft. Ride United – helps address unmet transportation needs by providing free rides to eligible riders. The free rides can be used to access employment, health care, food, public benefits and educational opportunities.

Metro United Way 2-1-1 serves as the operational arm of this program. 2-1-1 operators schedule rides through the Lyft Concierge portal for participating agencies as well as regular callers.

Summary

For past fourteen years, Metro United Way 2-1-1 has demonstrated substantial impact and value as a full service 2-1-1 Information and Referral system, built on solid infrastructure supporting high-quality standards. Metro United Way 2-1-1 continues to expand and improve its ability to service individuals seeking assistance, and the community as a whole during any type of crisis, through technological advances and creative partnerships. Metro United Way 2-1-1 is committed to maintaining the highest standards in the information and referral industry. Through our partnership with the Center for Women and Families 2-1-1 call center, we are pleased to share best practices and work with other 2-1-1 centers and partners in ensuring standards of excellence in service delivery.


UNITED WAY OF GREATER CINCINNATI/N KY 211

PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION REPORT



Jennifer S. Bieger, 211 Senior Manager


Submitted: August ,2021



United Way of Greater Cincinnati/N Ky 211 is pleased to present this annual update to the Kentucky Public Services Commission. The past year has been a whirlwind and one many will not soon forget. COVID-19 mercilessly wreaked havoc on individuals, families, communities, economies and so much more. I am extremely proud of United Way, 211, community providers, volunteers and so many countless others for the work that has been accomplished. United Way of Greater Cincinnati/N Ky 211 has been there every step of the way (24 hours a day/7 days a week) as a critical community connection line/resource for thousands of struggling Kentuckians who did not know where to turn for help. As a three time nationally accredited contact center, and over 45 years in the industry, our 211 is uniquely positioned every day to meet the ever-changing, dire needs of the community. United Way and 211 continue to work diligently and timely to respond and help fellow Kentuckians rebound. Below is a quick snapshot of the work that 211 network collectively has done this past year:

- *The 211 Network continues to be a critical component of frontline support during the COVID-19 pandemic. **The 211 Network reported 7.2 million requests for COVID-19 information, testing, or vaccines.***
- *By changing our collection methodology to asking about referrals or connections made, we are able to highlight the **27.8 million connections made by the network to help in 2020**, whether by phone, text, or chat.*
- *Though information & referral is our core service, there are many 211s that are **providing direct services and assistance**. For example, thirty-five 211 centers distributed CARES funding and provided \$32,000,000 in financial assistance, performed more than 121,000 homeless shelter intakes, and scheduled 175,000 VITA appointments in 2020.*
- *The data from 2020 reiterates what we know: even though 211 is not a crisis hotline, we support people in crisis every day. **The 211 Network reported more than 470,000 calls from people in emotional distress, a mental health crisis, or experiencing suicidal ideation.** 211s also reported 115,000 calls from people looking for help related to sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking. The 211 Network also made more than 600,000 connections to disaster services like shelters, D-SNAP, and clean-up services.*

Incredible collaborative work! Read on to learn more about our
United Way of Greater Cincinnati/211 impact.



Geographical Area Served & Population Coverage

Update as of August 2021-

United Way of Greater Cincinnati/N Ky 211 continues to provide coverage 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to residents in 8 counties across 2 states (*Kentucky and Ohio*). Total population of this service delivery area is **1 million, 514,341 residents**.

Note: *In September of 2020, UWGC added an additional county (Adams, OH) to our service delivery area. This was done to assist in disaster county build out in conjunction with our Ohio 211 network.*

State	Population
Kentucky	
Boone	133,581
Campbell	93,584
Kenton	166,998
Grant	25,069
Total	419,232
State	
Ohio	
Adams	27,776
Brown	43,432
Clermont	206,428
Hamilton	817,473
Total	1,095,109
Total Population for 8 counties	1, 514,341

Figure A: UWGC 211 geographical area served

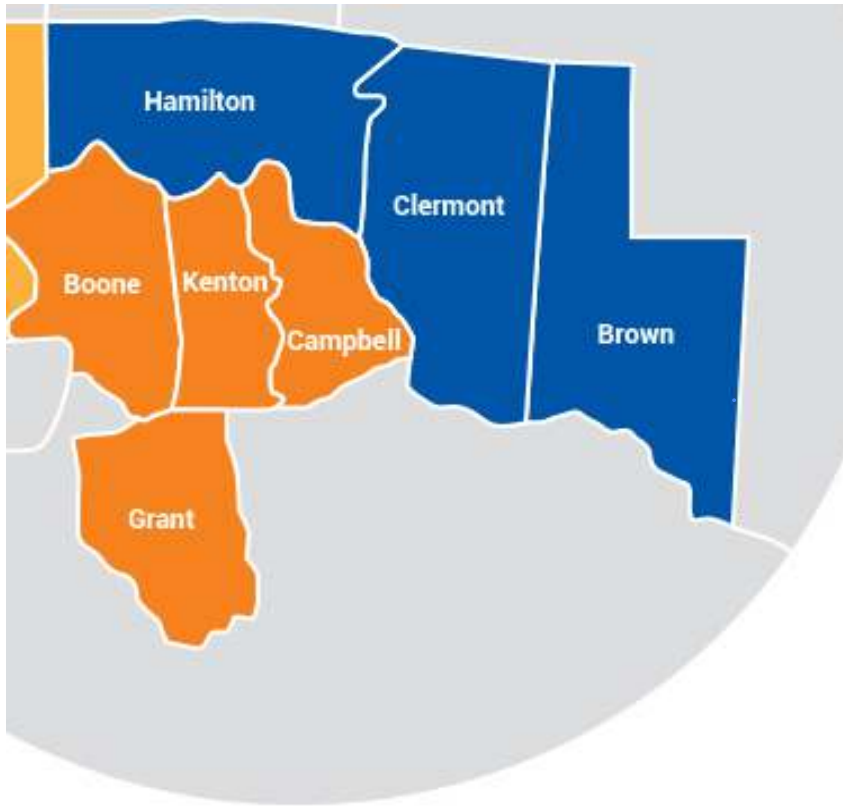


Figure B: UWGC -N Ky 211 Coverage Map

(Adams County, Ohio added in 2020)

Ky: Boone, Campbell, Kenton, Grant (9.3% of Kentucky state population).

OH: Adams, Brown, Clermont and Hamilton and Adams (9.3% of Ohio state population).

In 2020 there were **40,462** + calls to the contact center and an additional **37,416** visitors searched our website at www.uwgc.org/211.

Year to date (2021) there have been approximately **9,860** visitor searches.

WEB SEARCHES AND AVERAGE LENGTH OF VISIT				
2017	2018	2019	2020	YTD(2021)
57,766	64,429	72,778	37,416	9,860
16 minutes	4 minutes	4 minutes	4 minutes	4 minutes

Figure C: UWGC 211/ N Ky Web Searches and average visit length

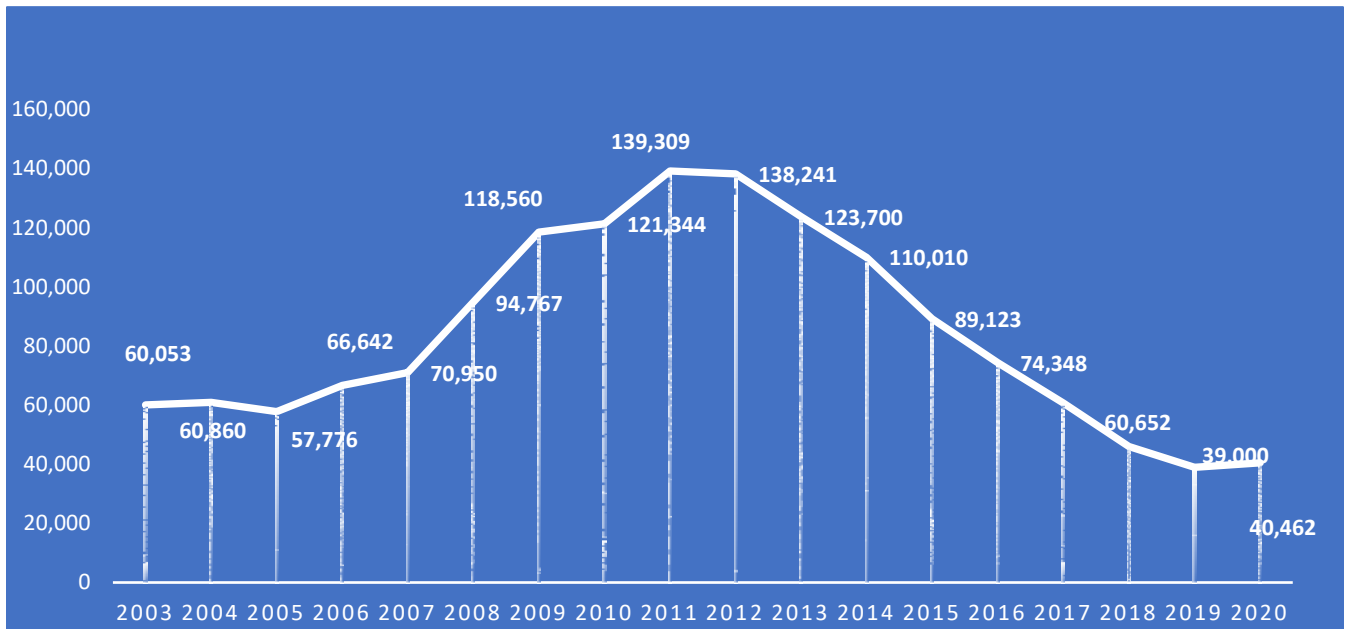


Figure D: UWGC 211/N Ky Call Volume since Launch (Feb, 2003 – December, 2020).

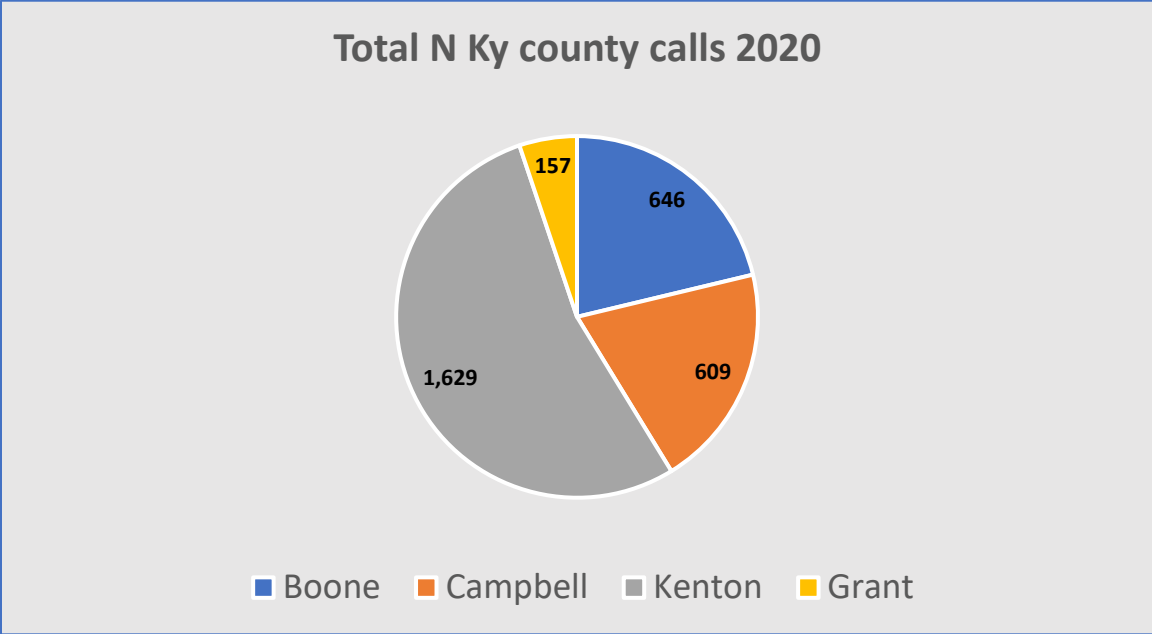


Figure E: UWGC 211 /N Ky County Calls- 2020

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TTL
Boone	1,597	1,302	1,120	883	789	724	620	541	646	8,222
Campbell	2,178	1,882	1,659	1,176	1,004	811	602	570	609	10,491
Kenton	4,876	4,399	3,663	2,933	2,438	2,097	1,753	1,467	1,629	25,255
Grant	366	325	233	157	171	169	150	129	157	1,857

Figure F: Snapshot of UWGC 211 /N Ky County Calls

Note: In 2020 basic needs such as the following were among the most frequent request to the United Way of Greater Cincinnati/N Ky 211 contact center for our Kentucky counties:

- ✓ **Utility**
- ✓ **Rental**
- ✓ **Food**
- ✓ **Housing**
- ✓ **Undesignated temporary financial assistance**

YTD our contact center volume has increased significantly by **approximately 800 calls (Up 50%)** for our Ky residents in comparison to the same time last year. Pandemic was the main driver of the majority of social service-related needs.

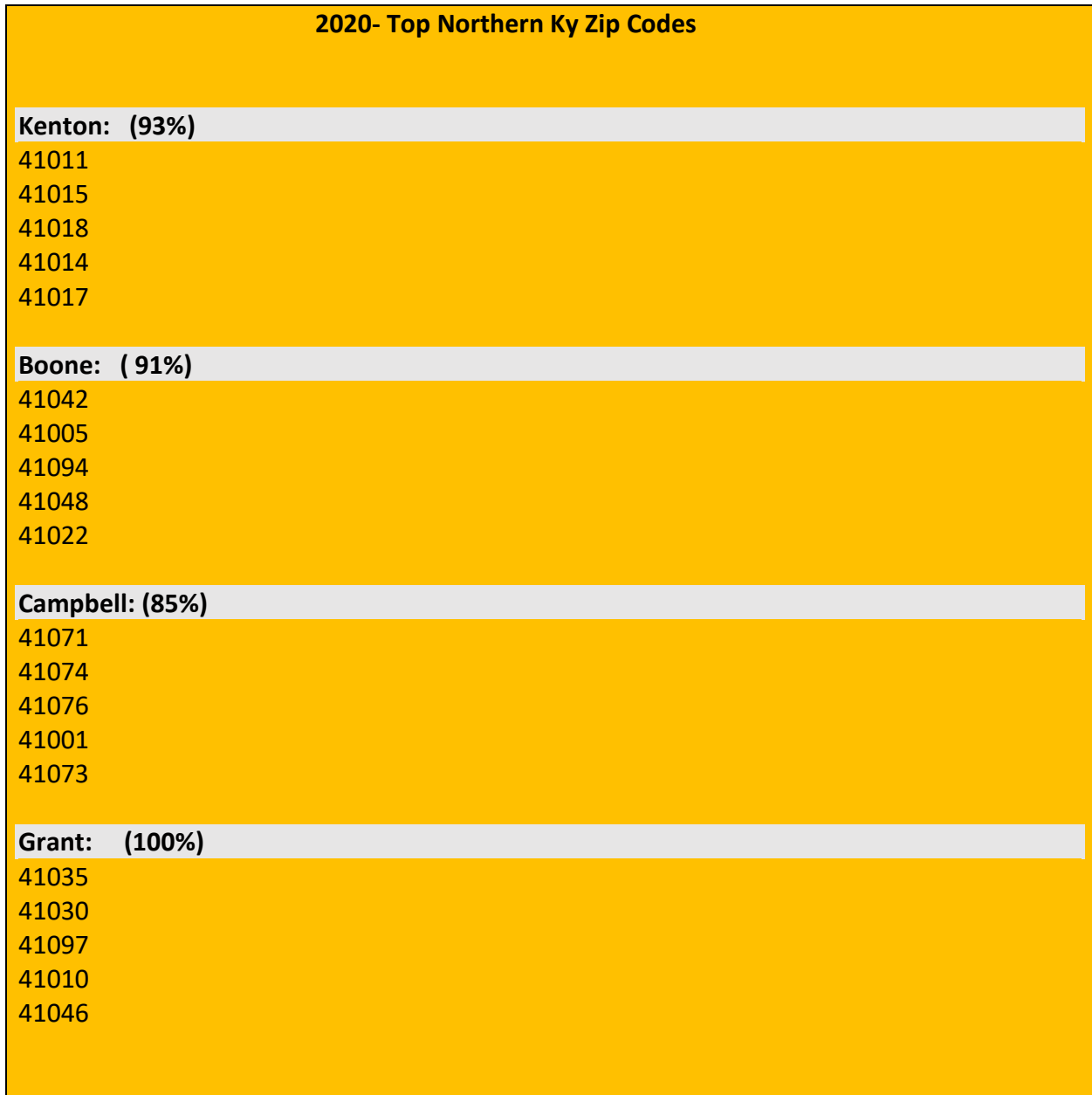


Figure G: Top Zip Codes 2020

UWGC 211 /N Ky County Calls

The above chart represents top zip codes for our Northern Kentucky counties. The percentage that is listed at the top of each county = combined percentage for the zip codes listed out under their specified county.

Overall Satisfaction		Received Help	
2005	95%	2005	66%
2006	98%	2006	80%
2007	97%	2007	65%
2008	97%	2008	67%
2009	96%	2009	73%
2010	95%	2010	66%
2011	96%	2011	66%
2012	96%	2012	62%
2013	97%	2013	61%
2014	94%	2014	59%
2015	98%	2015	65%
2016	93%	2016	72%
2017	95%	2017	62%
2018	87%	2018	47%
2019	90%	2019	54%
2020	84%	2020	43%
Accumulative Average	94%	Accumulative Average	60%

Figure H: UWGC 211 /N Ky Caller Satisfaction/ Received Help

Our accumulative overall customer satisfaction level maintains at 94%. This field customer survey continues to be conducted by an independent auditor (H&H Data). With the pandemic, many innovative ways were developed through our United Way and 211 to meet needs in a direct relief mode through key partnerships. We continue our valiant efforts to meet immediate, short-term and long-term needs in a timely manner while also helping direct agencies close the gaps. Our Care Coordination efforts are helping facilitate this by following the bi-directional close-the-loop referral model.

2-1-1 BY THE NUMBERS

Launched: 2/11/2003 Accessible: 24/7/365

Consecutive times that UWGC 211 has achieved national accreditation status **3**

8 Counties in the UWGC 211 coverage area

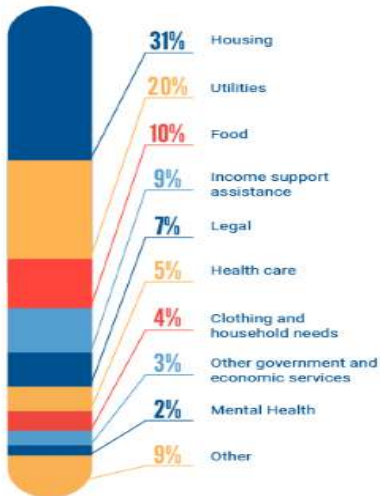
Population within the UWGC 211 coverage area **1,735,399**

9 UWGC staff assigned to 211

The staff's combined years of 211 experience **126**

40,462 Calls received in 2020

RESOURCES IN UWGC'S 211 DATABASE



CALLERS' NEEDS

2,019
Number of calls in 2020 for information about United Way's Free Tax Prep program

642
Number of calls from mothers or mothers-to-be since 2017, when a collaboration began with Cradle Cincinnati, a program to reduce infant mortality

AREAS WHERE CALLS ORIGINATED BY ZIP CODE



COVID

A sense of “normal” quickly dissipated for many regarding COVID- as the world people once knew suddenly changed all around them. UWGC/N Ky 211, a critical reassurance line for thousands, from the onset has been in “full action mode” and has worked tirelessly to help individuals, families and communities rebound from hardships. This involves as mentioned prior- agency capacity building with partners to meet evolving, immediate as well as long-term needs.

Early on our 211 staff, for safety purposes, were required to work remotely for over 4 months. With solid foundational operations our 211 transitioned easily. We brought staff fully back in August. Then in our county where our building is stationed the heat map for ODH put our county in purple tier. We sent staff back remote in November (a few stayed in building). 100% of 211-day staff were brought back first of January and remain here today.

As of today- we are aware that the delta variant is creating a surge and that Kentucky as of today surpassed 10% for COVID-19 positivity which is highest report since February. Ky Dept of Health stated that 2,583 new cases alone were reported in a one-day period in early August. They reported that being the highest single-day total since February.

UWGC/N Ky 211 remains steadfast and diligent to help in any way we can to fight the spread.

As of today we also have no counties in a green tier.

- We are also working to help those calling in regard to rental and housing assistance.

Current COVID RELIEF News:

UWGC GRANTS \$9M+ TO HELP WITH COVID-19 FALLOUT

UWGC has granted approximately 135 partner agencies a total of more than \$9 million to help stabilize COVID-19's impact on local families. Below is a note from our CEO, Moira Weir **CINCINNATI, Ohio (July 5, 2021) –**

Dear friends,

This money helps the "boots on the ground" stabilize and budget for 2022. Their work is extremely important. While the health effects of the pandemic may be subsiding, families still struggle with the economic effects. They rely on nonprofits, faith-based organizations and other community groups they know and trust.

All grant recipients are partner agencies funded by United Way in the past few years and work throughout United Way's 10-county service area in southwest Ohio, northern Kentucky and southeast Indiana. Together, they serve tens of thousands of Greater Cincinnati residents, helping families meet basic needs, reach financial stability, improve health and wellness and

obtain quality education, among other things. A complete list of the agencies can be found at: uwgc.org/partners.

This continues our support of nonprofits during COVID. These same partners were advanced allocated money last year to help with immediate COVID response and were among the groups receiving \$7.2 million in relief funding through the COVID-19 Regional Response Fund. We supported them in many other ways, including distributing 1.6 million masks -- donated by Procter & Gamble -- through them to the families they serve.

I'm proud to say we also expanded our support beyond partner agencies to work with hundreds of other community-based and faith-based groups, ensuring equitable relief efforts. That work will continue; United Way is committed to showing up and being relevant in all communities.

We exist at the intersection of donor interest and community need. Our donors trust us to know what is going on in our community, to assess where the need is greatest and to develop a plan that not only meets the immediate need but changes the system so people are financially stable in the future. We are grateful to have that trust and proud to partner with key nonprofits making our community better.

During the past year UWGC has focused on four fundamental strategies:

- ***Stabilizing and supporting our nonprofit system of care***
- ***Supporting families through direct relief efforts***
- ***Empowering families to get help where they live, work and worship***
- ***Innovate programs and systems to respond to a rapidly changing world***

See below for a snapshot of our progress: **WHAT WE DID.....**

Empower Families to Get Help Where They Live, Work & Worship

\$1+ million invested to empower families to get help where they live work & worship

\$1 million donated goods distributed to communities

678 partners supported or engaged

1,275 volunteers engaged

Innovated Programs & Systems to Respond to a Rapidly Changed World

\$2.2 million invested to innovative programs & systems

80 partners supported or engaged

18,718 individuals served

817 volunteers engaged

Stabilize & Support a Nonprofit System of Care

\$30 million invested or administered to support a nonprofit system of care

340 partners supported

3 policy wins

\$715,000+ needs fulfilled through UW-funded programs

Support Families through Direct Relief Efforts

\$1.7 million invested in direct relief efforts

\$390,000 leveraged resources & time of 416 volunteers

56 partners engaged

18,600 households served

132,000 requests for services fielded

Our first deep dive had to do with stabilizing and supporting the nonprofit system of care. Here's what we did over the past year:

COVID-19 Regional Response Fund: At the start of the pandemic, we quickly helped to raise and grant more than \$7.2 million dollars in responsive grants.

- Mobilized 13 funding partners, five media partners and 46 community supporters
- Provided grants that supported more than 250 community nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and neighborhood groups
- Moved more than 330 individuals and families from emergency shelters or congregating living into hotels/motels before transitioning to permanent housing
- Opened five pandemic childcare centers for essential workers
- Helped hospital systems across the region purchase critical equipment and supplies
- Supported nonprofits to provide more than 600,000 meals

Flexible Program Funding: We invested \$20.6 million in grants to 136 organizations in support of more than 200 social services and programs.

- Provided greater flexibility, allowing nonprofit partners to shift funding to meet the immediate needs of our community and access resources ahead of traditional payment schedules
- Programs funded by United Way fulfilled more than 715,000 needs, a 47% increase from 2019

Advocating and Investing in System Change: United Way invested \$279,000 in six policy partners to continue to advance systems change.

- Along with United Way Worldwide, advocated in support of the CARES Act and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's eviction moratorium
- Supported the renewal of Preschool Promise in Cincinnati, continuing to ensure a strong early-education system of care for Cincinnati families

Administration of CARES Funding to Nonprofits: Advocated for CARES to support nonprofit agencies as they responded to community needs, and administered nearly \$2 million of CARES grants to 43 organizations.

- United Way, funded by Hamilton County government, created and administered nearly \$1 million in grants to support services to 9,000 county youth
- Administered nearly \$900,000 in CARES grants across Hamilton, Clermont, Grant, Kenton, and Boone counties to support emergency shelter, food and financial assistance for rent, mortgage, and utility payments.

211 Care Coordination Implemented

United Way of Greater Cincinnati entered a contract in the fall of 2020 with one of our largest counties (Hamilton). Our United Way agreed to provide through 211 a closed loop referral network and service providers to provide Hamilton County residents with care coordination and necessary social services due to COVID-19 and to provide “United Way 211” as a single entry point for COVID related and CARES funding eligible services available to County residents, including unemployment, re-employment, workforce development assistance, food and cash assistance, rent and utility support, and COVID-19 testing and vaccination information and more. Care Coordination assessed and ensured contact had a documented need for care coordination and/or social services due to COVID-19. *Such need includes without limitation, i) a positive diagnosis of COVID-19; ii) required quarantining due to an exposure to COVID -19, positive COVID-19 test or while awaiting COVID-19 test results; iii) caring for a family member who is diagnosed with COVID-19 or is required to quarantine due to a COVID-19 exposure; iv) loss of income and/or increased in costs due to COVID-19; and v) care coordination and/or social service needs due to COVID-19.*

As a single point of entry under Care Coordination the goal was and remains today to connect residents impacted by COVID with critical immediate needs such as food, shelter and health kits and provide referrals for utility and rent payment assistance, mental health information and employment assistance. Individual support and follow-up is done with each eligible contact.

211 increased staff in fall of 2020 for Care Coordination purposes. Under this program we additionally increased our gateway channels and made 51555 available for texting purposes depending upon a contacts preference. This was in addition to our live answer and web response.

The Care Coordination process adds depth to our existing 211 program by going deeper with clients and doing valuable navigation. Our navigation also entails Coordinators helping assist clients in completing applications for assistance as appropriate. This helps expedite the overall process and also provides more person centric service delivery focus. The overall closed loop model also has been beneficial in agency capacity building. We are also building upon technology platforms in this process.

Our partnership with the Health Collaborative also helped solidify and mainstream 211 information on COVID-19 testing sites. Our aim was to assist in stopping the spread by ensuring callers/contacts had updated and easily accessible information on where to get tested using the *testandprotect* website. 211 information was prominently displayed at the testing sites to ensure clients knew where to call for direct help and support services as needed.

In December of 2020 the contract was renewed with the County and will run through December of 2021 at which time it will be re-evaluated.

211 Vaccine Support

In January when covid vaccine became available we were asked by Hamilton County to be a **support** hotline for people to call to get information. This propelled our call volume significantly, both for our main 211 and Care Coordination services. Marketing was widespread and bled heavily over to our N Ky 211 counties. We had to draw in help from our regular UWGC employees to help with the volume of thousands of calls in early part of 2021. One primary purpose in answering/supporting vaccine calls early on was to focus on assisting elderly and those who did not have access to internet. Volume continued to balloon because of the need- and calls remained extremely heavy. Care Coordinators scheduled vaccine appointments as well as arranged transportation with Lyft codes for those eligible and that continues today. We have done community outreach on many fronts, including staffing the Equity bus and promoting “get out the vax” events and directing to needed support services. Care Coordination as mentioned runs deeper than what is noted above, and we fine tune every day with focus on evolving and ensuring meeting needs of community. It is a newer add to our main 211 and the forward thinking aligns well with our collective Community Impact design and delivery.

211 Relief-a-Thon

In March of 2021 we did a one-night telethon /Relief-a-Thon that was widely broadcast and had 211 as call-to-action number for residents who were trying to understand the resources available to them related to CARES funding. 211 staffed answered the calls. We came close to 500 calls in a 2-hour period just for the telethon. Relief-A-Thon – March 16, 2021, Objective: The Relief-A-Thon was targeted outreach to residents to help inform them about resources the county has available to help those negatively impacted by COVID. United Way’s Role: United Way of Greater Cincinnati (UGWC) staffed a team of sixteen 211 Navigators and five Job and Family Service staff members to answer live calls during the Relief-a-thon. Callers were connected to critical COVID-19 relief resources by warm transferring the caller to a Referral Partner, creating an electronic referral to a Referral Partner or, in limited cases, provided information to connect directly to the partner. Summary of Results: Caller – Counts & Demographics 402 callers were helped through a live call between 6PM – 9:30PM. 129 unique callers left a message to be followed up with which was done by 211 Care Coordinators and main 211 staff. The average call was 6:44 minutes and 94.5% of callers consented to having an electronic referral made on their behalf. This whole process was an attempt to give people another avenue to reach to get access to support services with more cohesive follow-up. It should be noted that though the telethon was time-limited, we (211) still provide the same referral/navigation connection avenue for callers under both the main 211 and Care Coordination.

**United Way of Greater Cincinnati/ N Ky 211
EITC- 2020**

Total Earned Income Tax Credit Initiative Calls to 211 in 2020 = 3,420

Ky = 262 or 8% of the total EITC calls

At last count, through 211, close to 38,000 have been connected to free tax preparation sites in our region since 211's official launch in 2003. Millions of dollars through tax credits (EITC) have been brought back into the communities into the pockets of hard working, low-wage earners. UWGC N Ky 211 has played a **pivotal** role in ensuring people know about the credit.

211 began appointment scheduling for all sites this tax season and also answered questions on how to obtain stimulus payments. All the while fielding regular 211 calls and the additional surge of calls brought on due to requesting information for vaccine.

UWGC EITC RESULTS:

6,800
Families helped in 2021.
\$2 MILLION
In tax filing fees avoided in 2021.
\$10 MILLION
Refunds collected for filers in 2021.

Kentucky Veterans

United Way of Greater Cincinnati/ N Ky 211 continues our support to Kentucky veterans. An example recently was our work with our state 211 network and engagement in supporting the Department of Veteran Affairs in their efforts to provide a virtual event to Ky veterans needing social service support. This was a two-pronged process in that we were positioned to help schedule appointments as well as a triage hub center on the actual scheduled days of the event.

Though these were targeted events it flowed with what we do everyday in fielding and responding to veteran callers and helping them navigate through the system to get the help they need.

Kentucky Resource Engine/KyNect

We are into our second year of support for the Kentucky Resource Engine / KyNect project. We continue to onboard and train community partners and engage in 211 data sharing angle of project.

National Accreditation/ Kentucky 211 strategy/ Other strategic work

UWGC 211 has long standing history as an I&R and nationally accredited 211 center. We will be going on 45 years in the I&R industry and 18 years as a full-fledged 211 center. Last year we pushed through, even with the pandemic, and achieved our 3rd national accreditation through the Alliance of Information and Referral Providers. Accreditation has helped us with standard setting and best practices and helps to inform sound strategy. We are additionally pleased to offer our expertise to the current overall strategy work that is being undertaken with the Ky 211 network to help plan and execute a path forward that concentrates on an agile, accessible system that concentrates on meeting the needs of our Kentucky residents. Three strategy sessions have taken place thus far with more completion to work expected by fall of 2021.

On the same token we continue our strategy work with our peers in Ohio and nationally along the same line of building up and out a seamless 211 network. Ohio network for example has done discovery work related to social determinants of health intersecting that we have been engaged in.

Additionally in the past we have reported on our special project work which still continues for example our work with Cradle Connections that focuses on helping support moms and moms to be while also working to reduce infant mortality. We still engage in our back-to-school resource support for families along with our cooling/warming shelter connection work.

Conclusion:

Our 211, Our United Way, simply put continues to do amazing work and is constantly evolving.

Something that came to mind from the early days of 211 we have always had 211 operators answer the phone and ask as one of the first questions **“How may I help?”** We continue that today seeking how we stay person-centric and helping callers/contacts find the best solution options while also providing a ray of hope. In challenging times such as these, **that says a lot!**

As we conclude this report, as mentioned, we are well aware that the delta variant is surging, and increased hospitalizations are happening related to Covid-19. The counties that we serve are either in the red or orange zone. United Way of Greater Cincinnati /N Ky 211 has hard work ahead and prepared to meet the challenge. We will stay the course and continue **as always to be there... as we know lives depend on us!**

WHAT WE BELIEVE.....

United Way of Greater Cincinnati/N Ky 211 believes all families in our region deserve economic well-being, so we build solutions and align systems to help people thrive. We work to uncover the greatest needs and reduce system barriers to help address those needs.