

# CLS Newsletter

MONDAY, MAY 13, 2019

## Wyoming 2-1-1

### What is 2-1-1?

Every day thousands of people across North America turn to 2-1-1 for information and support—whether financial, domestic, health or disaster-related. 2-1-1 is a free, confidential referral and information helpline and website that connects people from all communities and of all ages to the essential health and human services they need.

In 2017, 2-1-1s across the US answered over 13.4 million calls and almost 1 million texts, web chats and emails. Referrals were most often made for housing or utilities assistance; physical or mental health services; assistance finding and obtaining employment; and services to address and prevent homelessness. Today, 2-1-1 is available in all 52 states and to 94% of the US population.



Like 9-1-1 for emergency services, 2-1-1 has been set aside nationally by the Federal Communications Commission for the public to more easily access community information. 2-1-1 is also a central resource for community information during and in recovery from disasters.

### Wyoming 2-1-1: Find Help Here

Until Wyoming 2-1-1, there was no single, comprehensive statewide provider of information and referral for Wyomingites. With thousands of nonprofit organizations in Wyoming, plus scores of government agencies, finding help can often be confusing and intimidating. 2-1-1 is a one-stop source of infor-

mation for people looking for community services and resources, especially for those who need essential services, such as food, shelter, counseling, employment assistance, and more. Callers receive personalized information from a live information and referral specialist. 2-1-1 is confidential and available in more than 180 languages.

Whether in times of natural disaster or personal crisis, Wyoming 2-1-1 is committed to being the first, most essential resource to anyone who needs help.

### How many Wyomingites have access to 2-1-1?

In 2011, Wyoming 2-1-1 started operating in seven Wyoming counties, expanded to 12 counties in 2012 and now serves all 23 Wyoming coun-

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ties. Today, one hundred percent of Wyoming residents have access to 2-1-1.

2-1-1 can be accessed by any cell phone, landline or computer. A toll-free call to 2-1-1 connects you to an information and referral specialist who can put you in touch with local organizations that provide critical services that can improve—and save—lives.

## **Who can benefit from using Wyoming 2-1-1?**

- Families seeking services for their children
- Seniors seeking information about financial scams
- Human Resource professionals helping an employee find resources for transportation, childcare, or their aging parents
- Laid-off workers struggling to find employment or feed their families
- Teachers, clergy, and agency staff seeking help for their

clients

- Disaster victims seeking housing, food, counseling

## **Who answers 2-1-1 calls?**

2-1-1 calls are answered by an Information and Referral Specialist. Specialists are trained in navigating the maze of human service agencies and programs. Non-english speaking callers are assisted seamlessly through a telephone interpreting service with access to interpreters in more than 180 languages.

In 2018, nearly 3,500 calls were handled and over 5,000 referrals statewide were made.

## **What is the location of Wyoming 2-1-1?**

Wyoming 2-1-1 provides services primarily over the telephone or through the internet. The call center is located in Cheyenne, Wyoming and is open Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

## **Number of health and human services in Wyoming 2-1-1 database**

As of March 2019, Wyoming 2-1-1 database includes approximately 550 agencies/organizations of which have over 2,000 programs or services such as:

- supplemental food and nutrition programs
- shelter and housing options and utilities assistance
- emergency information and disaster relief
- employment and education opportunities
- services for veterans
- health care, vaccination and health epidemic information
- addiction prevention and rehabilitation programs
- reentry help for ex-offenders
- support groups for individuals with mental illnesses or special needs
- a safe, confidential path out of physical and/or emotional domes-

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Wyoming 2-1-1 continues to promote the benefits of its services and continues to grow its database to include more agencies and services in order to support the needs of Wyoming individuals and families.

## **How does Wyoming 2-1-1 benefit the community?**

Wyoming 2-1-1 creates the community infrastructure for linking the array of services of nonprofit and public agencies into a more efficient, coordinated network. Government, nonprofits and service organizations will receive fewer inappropriate requests for help, and their dollars can be focused on providing services. Wyoming 2-1-1 strengthens the community by uniting the people who want to help with those who need help.

Wyoming 2-1-1 is also a useful planning tool. Based on aggregate data about the types of calls that 2-1-1 receives, communities are in a better position to anticipate

demand for services and mobilize resources to meet changing needs. 2-1-1 also helps support the integrity of 9-1-1 systems, saving that vital community resource for life-threatening emergencies.

## **Who is funding Wyoming 2-1-1?**

Wyoming 2-1-1 receives substantial financial support from the Wyoming Department of Health. It is also privately funded through Wyoming United Way agencies, grants, foundations and individual donors. Additional funding is needed to sustain and expand the service.