



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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What is 2-1-1?

- A free, easy-to-access helpline that connects residents to the health and social service support they need
- An information and referral resource, helping connect people to **food, housing, utility payment assistance, health care, transportation, childcare, employment, mental health, disaster information and assistance, and more**
- A go-to resource for any health or social service needs, utilizing comprehensive, accurate information and delivering a user-friendly experience
- Residents across Cook County can access 2-1-1 in the following ways, 24/7/365:
 - By dialing 2-1-1 to speak with a live Resource Navigator
 - By texting your zip code to 898-211 to text with a live Resource Navigator
 - By visiting 211MetroChicago.org and searching the database of services available on the website
 - By using the webchat feature on the website to chat with a live Resource Navigator

What 2-1-1 is NOT

- A non-emergency request form of direct service, i.e., it does not replace 3-1-1 or other nonprofit organizations, businesses, and government agencies.
- An emergency medical assistance or dispatch line. For all emergencies, individuals should continue to call 9-1-1.
- A tool for surveillance, evaluation of services, or reporting on individuals or agencies
- 9-8-8 is a support line for individuals experiencing a crisis related to mental health and emotional wellbeing. Individuals can call 9-8-8 if they are experiencing a crisis and need immediate phone support.



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- Emergency shelter placement. 3-1-1 handles all immediate shelter placement for the City of Chicago.

Does 2-1-1 work with law enforcement?

- 211 Metro Chicago is a free and confidential service.
- It is available for anyone in Cook County who is seeking assistance getting connected to health and social services.
- The purpose of 211 Metro Chicago is to create greater access to social services in our communities and address the needs of individuals contacting 2-1-1, regardless of their identity and/or status.
- Emergency services (i.e. police, fire, etc.) are brought into 2-1-1 cases only if the person contacting 2-1-1 poses a threat to themselves or others. Data made publicly available regarding 211 Metro Chicago does not include identifying information. Any additional data sharing requires the consent of the resident and/or the service provider on behalf of and with consent of the resident or in response to a court-ordered and authorized warrant.

Does 2-1-1 collect immigration status or track other data related to immigration?

- 211 Metro Chicago is a free and confidential service.
- It is available for anyone in Cook County who is seeking assistance getting connected to health and social services. (*2-1-1 is for everyone*)
- 211 Metro Chicago does not gather personal information except for zip codes to aid in locating resources near the individual seeking support.

Will 2-1-1 track me? How can I ensure that my information remains private?

- Contacting 2-1-1 is 100% confidential. Any data we collect is provided at the individual's discretion and used only to help us connect them with the most helpful resources for them.
- Our system asks five optional questions: ZIP code, age, gender, if anyone in the home is a veteran, and if this is the individual's first time calling.
- This information is not required. Users can decline to answer by skipping questions or putting do not disclose
- All data is stored in a HIPAA compliant database, and all our contact center data is shared in aggregate form with no identifying information shared.
- Any additional data sharing requires the consent of the resident and/or the



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