SUPPORTING METRO DENVER WITH ACCESS TO VITAL RESOURCES

Mile High United Way's 2-1-1 Help Center Report

October - December 2019
COMMUNITY TRENDS

+ **Extreme Weather Shelters Activated**

The housing crisis many in Colorado face extends not only to affordable long-term housing options, but also to shelter availability. Across Colorado, dozens of community shelters offer emergency overnight shelters and shelter staff work tirelessly to try to match the demand for space. During colder and wetter periods – defined as weather 32 degrees below and wet, or 20 degrees below and dry - the need for a warm, safe place to sleep at night becomes an even more pressing need. In these periods of extreme weather, as defined above, additional shelters activate to help meet this community need. These shelters aim at bridging the gap between the supply of spaces available and needed when the weather is unsafe for homeless Coloradans to be overnight outside or in cars. 2-1-1 provides connections to these shelters and information on their availability for those in need.

COUNTY CALLS

Mile High United Way’s 2-1-1 Help Center provides services to counties across Colorado. These counties contacted us most often over the past quarter:

- **32% Denver**
- **20% Arapahoe**
- **12% Weld**
- **12% Jefferson**
- **11% Adams**
### TOP FIVE NEEDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent Payment Assistance</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility Assistance</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual, Family and Community Support</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter/Transitional Housing</td>
<td>9%</td>
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</tbody>
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### 2-1-1 NEWS

#### + Holiday Resources

Mid-December, Mile High United Way hosts around 350 families, including some 900 children for the annual Children’s Holiday Party. This one-day event spans from early in the morning to late in the afternoon, offering parents or guardians an opportunity to select gifts for all their children aged 0-18. While parents are upstairs choosing gifts and toys, children are matched with a volunteer who takes them around to a variety of holiday-themed activities, such as face painting, cookie decorating, arts and crafts, and storytelling. 2-1-1 was able to help register families in need that dialed 2-1-1 looking for holiday resources.

Apart from signing families up for Mile High United Way’s hallmark holiday event, 2-1-1 Navigators also connected 1,445 families and individuals across the state to a host of holiday resources. These resources ranged from drop in meals or pick up baskets for Christmas or Thanksgiving, as well as gift and toy giveaways. Access to such resources enables families, who may be experiencing temporary hardship, to maintain a semblance of normalcy and holiday spirit during a season that can be financially draining on families with already limited financial resources available.

### FOLLOW-UP RESULTS

- 67% Of callers followed up on the referrals.
- 46% Of callers who followed up on referrals received the help they needed.
- 3% Of callers had scheduled future appointments.
- 7% Of callers did not receive the help they needed due to the referred agencies’ lack of funds.

12% Of callers were awaiting callback from referred agency.

26% Who followed up on referrals did not receive help due to other reasons.

86% Of the callers would recommend 2-1-1 to a family and friends.

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1 Includes needs such as Thanksgiving & Christmas meals, highly specialized information services including 3-1-1, snow shoveling assistance, etc.

2 Includes needs such as tax assistance, WIC, and Veterans’ benefits, etc.
RIDE UNITED

Mile High United Way’s partnership with Lyft was in full swing this past quarter. The “Ride United” partnership officially launched in mid-August after a successful 2018 pilot program. Ride United can assist clients in metro-Denver, Greeley and Ft. Collins with a ride after all other transportation resources have been exhausted. Rides can be requested for the following categories: (1) Non-Emergent Health, (2) Employment-Related, (3) Food Security, and (4) Public Benefit Enrollment. Since the launch of this campaign, hundreds of rides have been completed, enabling access to valuable community resources that may have otherwise been out of reach.

One such caller served through Ride United is from Weld County. Our client and her 4 small children were temporarily living in her broken-down car. She called 2-1-1 looking for help and was provided a variety of resources, aimed at helping nudge her family to a position of greater long-term stability. To address her immediate need, she and her children needed to eat. With their car not safe to drive, they were stuck. The Ride United program helped this family with a ride to a nearby food bank, where they gained immediate access to crucial resources. It is the great privilege of 2-1-1 and our new Ride United initiative to help remove barriers for families like this to access important community resources.

SNAP EXPANSION

Food insecurity remains one of the most pressing issues facing Coloradans. In 2018, 2-1-1 partnered with Hunger Free Colorado to process pre-applications for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This partnership formed to help food insecure callers connect with food resources beyond local food pantries, meal sites, WIC, and after school or summer meal programs in the 2-1-1 database. In October 2019, 2-1-1 was delighted to renew this partnership. To bolster 2-1-1’s commitment to this program, the SNAP team welcomed a new specialist and as such, the team aims to increase their applications by over 30% in the coming year.

SNAP specialists are highly trained to help answer questions about eligibility or other inquiries about SNAP and streamline access to this vital community resource. Our SNAP specialists screen for eligibility, complete applications over the phone, educate clients about the application and re-certification processes, update information for current SNAP benefit recipients, and prepare these individuals for the interview process. Should additional needs arise during the contact, the SNAP specialists are fully trained on the 2-1-1 database and can help connect the caller to other appropriate community resources.

SUPPORT 2-1-1

Interested in being part of our impact? Visit unitedwaydenver.org/donate to make a financial gift.

‡Standard message and data rates may apply. Text STOP to opt-out. For end user privacy and terms and conditions of texting with 898-211, go to preventionpaystext.com/policies

Dial 2-1-1, Text 898-211, search our database or chat with us at unitedwaydenver.org/211