

211: PENNSYLVANIA'S 24/7 HUMAN SERVICES NETWORK

What is 211?

211 is a free, confidential, 24/7/365 helpline that connects people in Pennsylvania to essential health and human services. Every contact is answered by a live, trained resource navigator by phone, text or online chat. We also offer self-serve online options for individuals to search vetted agencies and resources.

How to connect:

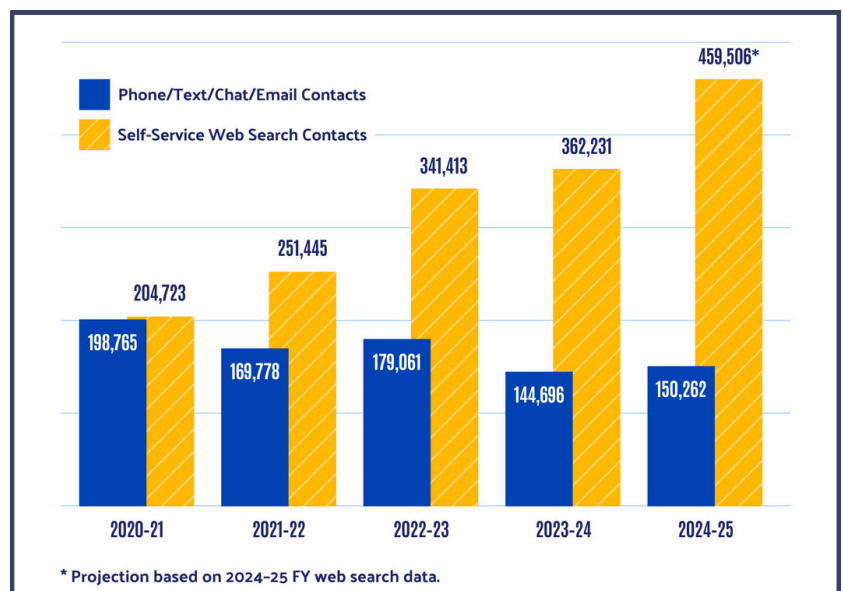
- Dial 211 from any phone.
- Text your ZIP code to 898-211.
- Chat at **pa211.org**.
- Help available in 180+ languages.

Who operates 211

PA 211 is a statewide network operated by United Way of Pennsylvania. United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania runs PA 211 Southwest, the largest contact center in the commonwealth, which serves roughly 70% of Pennsylvanians across 34 counties, including Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Cambria, Washington and Westmoreland.

Why 211 matters to Pennsylvania:

- Real people, called resource navigators, answer questions 24/7 — no chatbots. This is vital for older adults and residents without reliable internet.
- 211 is available in all 67 counties. In FY25, Pennsylvanians reached out 222,598 times for help with housing, utilities, food and more, always connecting with a live resource navigator.
- Navigators provide calm, compassionate guidance and connect callers to verified resources in real time.



What Pennsylvanians Need Right Now

The most common requests for assistance deal are for:

- Housing, shelter and utility assistance.
- Food access.
- Employment and income support.
- Mental health and crisis services.
- Child care and family support.
- Veteran and military family services.



A statewide early-warning system.

211 data shows what families are struggling with today. Trends in call volume and specific need provide state and local leaders with an early alert system for emerging crises, helping target limited dollars where they will have the greatest impact.

Responsive in critical moments.

211 scales up and down quickly during disasters and major policy changes. We partner with PEMA and local governments to route residents to emergency shelter, appliances and debris cleanup, and to help case managers track unmet needs. The network flexes in response to changing conditions while always keeping that vital human connection.

Accessible by design.

Phone, text and chat options meet people where they are. Language access covers 180+ languages. Navigators stay on the line until a plan is clear.

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What Pennsylvanians Need Right Now

How United Way and PA 211 deliver.

All contacts are answered by trained resource navigators who live across the commonwealth. Backing them is a real-time database of about 21,000 services maintained by 12 dedicated coordinators who verify information year-round to keep listings current. We combine people power with smart technology to route help faster and also analyze community need.

An example of 211 at work:

An 84-year-old called about a thermostat issue. In conversation, she revealed she had not eaten or had water since the day before and her phone could only dial 911 and 211. With her permission, our 211 resource navigator connected her to the Area Agency on Aging, which provided food, water and ongoing case management, and helped her secure a SafeLink phone. This one call surfaced multiple risks and also resolved them.

Our Ask:

We need sustained investment in PA 211 operations in order to:

- Maintain 24/7 live coverage statewide.
- Modernize technology and data tools.
- Support surge capacity during disasters and policy shifts.
- Expand outreach to hard-to-reach populations.

Bottom Line

211 is a lifeline for residents and a decision tool for leaders. We help Pennsylvanians meet basic needs and give you timely data to guide policy.

Contact

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