**PA 2-1-1 Day Talking Points**

1. 2-1-1 is the most comprehensive source of assistance and volunteer information covering all sectors of service both private and public. 2-1-1 is like 4-1-1, but it connects people to help for any health or human service –related need. 2-1-1 is available in all 50 U.S. states, and 97% of Pennsylvanians currently can pick up their phone and get connected to 2-1-1. Many Pennsylvanians can also text for help using 898-211. The examples of services we currently connect people to include utility assistance, senior citizen programs, emergency food, job counseling, support groups, youth programs and much more.
2. 2-1-1 is designed to serve three major objectives:
* Connect people in need to health and human service assistance available through government programs and private non-profit organizations in their communities;
* Provide assistance to communities in time of disaster, allowing 9-1-1 to work primarily with first responders; and
* Connect volunteers and donors with organizations who can leverage these resources to meet the needs of the community
1. Personalize with some explanation of the benefit 2-1-1 brings to your community for example:
	1. How much cash or in-kind assistance is your United Way contributing to support the availability of 2-1-1 in your area?
	2. How many contacts to 2-1-1 were generated in your county?
	3. Are you directing the public to contact 2-1-1 for any specific projects, such as to gain access to VITA services, or find out where to enroll for Kindergarten?
	4. Do you use 2-1-1 information to quantify needs and then make decisions about what services to fund or support in your community?
	5. How does the idea of having a place for people to turn for help support the goals of your Board and your organization’s strategic plan?
2. 2-1-1 is in a unique position to create a public- private partnership with the Commonwealth to serve as a single-point of contact for information and referral. State funding will help leverage the investments made by United Way so that we can give all Pennsylvanians one-stop access to help through a variety of communication channels 24 hours per day, seven days per week.
3. 2-1-1 has partnered with Connect To Home: Coordinated Entry System of Eastern PA to serve as the 24/7 phone access point for housing and homeless services for individuals who are homeless or immediately at risk of becoming homeless in a 33 county region. These counties include: Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Somerset, Lehigh, Northampton, Columbia, Cumberland, Juniata, Lebanon, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Schuylkill, Snyder, Union, Bradford, Clinton, Lycoming, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wyoming, Carbon, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne.

Those contacting 2-1-1 will receive a pre-screen to determine if they are homeless or immediately at risk, and then 2-1-1 will conduct the assessment utilized by the whole eastern continuum. In addition to 2-1-1 as an option for these individuals, there are also access sites across the 33 county region for those in need to walk-in for assessments. Coordinated entry is a strategy to connect people to the right services as quickly as possible, prioritize based on need and vulnerability, help a community know all who are experiencing homelessness, and enhance data-driven decision making for planning, resource allocation and performance evaluation.

1. 2-1-1 has been activated throughout the year to respond to various emergency situations facing Pennsylvanians. For example:
	1. During Hurricane Irma, several PA 2-1-1 centers were activated to help Florida residents. The Southwest PA 2-1-1 center handles 1,289 calls from Broward County residents.
	2. When the snowstorm hit Erie in December, the PA 2-1-1 Northwest region was called into action. They responded to 1,264 requests for help and were able to screen callers for eligibility for Team Rubicon snow shoveling services.
	3. PA 2-1-1 partnered with Butler County EMA to help residents have severe flash flooding. The PA 2-1-1 Southwest region responded to 368 request for vital services, such as mucking out basements, food, shelter, health services and helping families to have hope.

 *Note: if a reporter would like to ask more questions about this public-private partnership and you are not comfortable answering, you can refer him or to United Way of Pennsylvania staff.*