

# 211 SERVES VETERANS IN PENNSYLVANIA



**211 connects veterans and their families to financial, health, employment and other services**

## FACT

There are over 800,000 veterans in Pennsylvania and 211 is committed to connecting these veterans and their families with services they need to transition into a civilian lifestyle and maintain self-sufficiency.<sup>1</sup>

Services like 211 can facilitate re-integration by encouraging help-seeking behaviors, providing a safe and supportive environment for veterans to call and access appropriate aid when they are in need.

## FACT

Last year, 6,568 211 referrals were made to veteran contacts providing them with critical services like utility assistance, tax preparation, food assistance, housing, and health resources.<sup>2</sup>

The statewide 211 database houses all of these resources. The Southwest 211 call center has a veteran on staff who is familiar with the various services available to that population and are able to answer the diverse needs.<sup>2</sup>

## FACT

Between 5.6% and 7% of Pennsylvania veterans are living in poverty. In addition, 4.9% of PA veterans are unemployed.

It is important to provide opportunities for our veterans to receive the services and help they need when they return home from duty. Income tax preparation, utility assistance, employment and training, as well as traditional veteran healthcare information is all available through 211.

## PLEASE VOTE TO INCLUDE FUNDING FOR PENNSYLVANIA'S 211 SYSTEM IN THIS YEAR'S STATE BUDGET TO HELP OUR VETERANS

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Services, 2017  
<sup>2</sup> 2-1-1 Data

# WHAT IS 211?

Every hour of every day, people need essential human services. Through 211 people connect to a wide range of services from disaster relief to utility assistance, senior citizen programs, emergency food, job counseling, youth programs and much more. The information provided comes from the 211 statewide resource database. The common software also records information about consumer contacts and needs. PA 211 is the single-most comprehensive source of assistance and volunteer information covering all sectors of service both private and public.

## 211 IN PENNSYLVANIA

211 is a health and human services referral line that has been established nationwide for the past 20 years. Last year, more than 190,000 Pennsylvanians contacted PA 211 for help on a range of issues. These are veterans, victims of drug and alcohol addiction, seniors, and job seekers, among many others. Currently, PA 211 receives a majority of its funding from the Pennsylvania United Way network, but also receives investments from state government and private entities.

**211 strives to be a public-private partnership for information and referral via all communication channels.**

For the past two fiscal years, Pennsylvania committed \$750,000 to 211. We urge the state to continue to partner with United Way to grow the 211 service. We are asking for a \$1.5 million annual investment to build the 211 network and increase the consistency of services across the state. With this continued investment, PA 211 can enhance its current capacity to help more residents on their path to self-sufficiency, and provide data to drive human service planning and policy improvements.

United Way and PA 211 hope to increase efficiency and effectiveness by partnering to eliminate silos for state information and referral functions, currently housed in multiple state agencies. PA 211 has partnered with state government on a couple initiatives, but plan to continue to build our partnership to provide information and referral services, as well as to provide data to all community based organizations, health care providers and others who have an interest in addressing social determinants of health. PA 211 has also been activated during disaster response to help with public information, rumor control, volunteer and donation coordination as well as non-emergency contacts. We can continue to build capacity within the 211 system to further our partnership with PEMA and FEMA to have a disaster relief strategy in place, so 211 can be used as an information line and leave 911 open for emergencies.

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To find out more about how you can help:

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