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## 211 and COVID-19



For many people **211** was unheard of, or if they were aware, they had not utilized it or were unsure as to just what purpose it served. That has changed since the US spread of the virus. In Western New York calls to 211 doubled in the last 3 weeks over the same period last year, but the center was able to maintain. In Northern New York there have been more calls to 211 in the last 3 weeks than there were in all of 2019.

**So why are people calling 211?** In this crisis, it depends upon the week. Initially, callers asking how they could get tested, questions

about symptoms, and how to get food if they were unable to go out due to age, disabilities or being immunocompromised. Then came the calls from people who suddenly lost their job and didn't know how they were going to pay bills. Now the majority of the calls are about food concerns, unemployment and stimulus.

**Why is it important for government leaders and emergency managers to educate their communities about what 211 does?**

Because in these times of crisis, when people don't know where to get help for non-emergency needs, we don't want them calling 911. **Many of the challenging outcomes that are, or will, come about because of the virus can be addressed by 211.** This includes, but is not limited to, food, shelter, clothing, employment, mental health, developmental and other disabilities, and utilities.

**What 211 wants you to know TODAY is the following;**

- 211 is available 24/7 across all of New York, New Jersey and Washington. We do not have the list of each state so best to call during regular business hours to ensure you can get a question answered in your region.
- 94% of the US population has a 211 center serving their community, see the attached map.
- 211 has staff ready to answer calls, listen to concerns, and help people problem-solve.
- 211 has the most up to date resources on non-profit and government programs currently available to support your community.

**NEW RESOURCES:**

- COVID-19 Communication Card; two versions attached
- Accessible Public Service Announcements FACT SHEET
- Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) FREE services-see the attachment for details
- 211 USA coverage map

Please let us know how we can help you.



Any further questions can be directed to [dwhalen@niagara.edu](mailto:dwhalen@niagara.edu), 716-286-7355/home office 716-565-9338, or [carynewman@niagara.edu](mailto:carynewman@niagara.edu), 716-286-8139

## ATTACHMENTS

**FACT SHEET Accessible Public Service  
Announcements Category B: Emergency  
Protective Measures**

**Covid 19- Deaf or Hard of Hearing  
Communication Card**

**Erie County Covid-19 Deaf or Hard of  
Hearing Communication Card**

**ASL COVID-19 YOUTUBE Video Series**

**2-1-1 Coverage Map**

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### Upcoming Training Information

#### March 16th, 2020-POSTPONED

- Amherst, NY, Safety Awareness for Individuals with Disabilities and Families
- [Click Here](#) to Register

#### March 17th & 18th, 2020-CANCELLED

- Steuben County, NY Law Enforcement Disability Awareness Training Train the Trainer
- [Click Here](#) to Register

#### March 24th, 2020-POSTPONED

- **Amherst, NY, Disability Education& Awareness for Municipalities**
- [Click Here](#) to Apply to take the training

**March 25th & 26th, 2020-CANCELLED**

- **Seneca County, NY Law Enforcement Disability Awareness Training Train the Trainer**
- [Click Here](#) to Register

**March 31st, 2020-POSTPONED**

- **Amherst, NY, Firefighter/EMS Disability Awareness Training**
- [Click Here](#) to Register

**March 31st, 2020-POSTPONED**

- **Amherst, NY, Safety Awareness for Individuals with Disabilities and Families**
- [Click Here](#) to Register

**April 22nd & 23rd, 2020-POSTPONED**

- **Pennington, South Dakota, 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Disability Awareness Training Train the Trainer**
- [Click Here](#) to Register

**April 27th & 28th, 2020-POSTPONED**

- **Lee's Summit, Missouri, Law Enforcement Disability Awareness Train the Trainer**
- [Click Here](#) to Register

**April 29th & 30th, 2020-POSTPONED**

- **Lee's Summit, Missouri, 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Disability Awareness Train the Trainer**
- [Click Here](#) to Register

**April 29th, 2020-POSTPONED**

- **Lee's Summit, Missouri, Safety Awareness for Individuals with Disabilities and Families**
- [Click Here](#) to Register

**May 10-13, 2020 CANCELLED**

- **National ADA Symposium, Kansas City, MO**

**June 22nd & 23rd, 2020-POSTPONED**

- **Pierre, South Dakota, Law Enforcement Disability Awareness Train the Trainer**
- [Click Here](#) to Register

**June 24th & 25th, 2020-POSTPONED**

- **Pierre, South Dakota, 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Disability Awareness Train the Trainer**
- [Click Here](#) to Register