



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

United Way Recognizes the Vital Community Hotline on National 211 Day

Kennewick, WA – Today, February 11th (2/11) is National 211 Day – an annual observance celebrating the go-to, 24/7 three-digit (2-1-1) resource that helps millions of people in the U.S. and Canada – including in Benton & Franklin Counties. 211 which has operated for over 40 years – connects information about resources and services available in one's community.

Based on the latest 211 Impact Survey Data, 211 triaged over 16 million requests and here locally, responded to thousands of requests, with housing and shelter requests accounting for almost 30%, placing Benton & Franklin Counties in the top 10 for highest request rates for housing and shelter by county. Based off the calls for food assistance, almost 80% of requests are for help buying food with Yakima, Benton and Franklin Counties in the top 5 for most requests for food assistance.

211 is a vital resource utilized by residents who need assistance with disaster, food, health care, mental health, insurance, stable housing, utility payment, veteran services, childcare and other related needs.

The service is free and confidential and accessible in 99 percent of communities and is offered in over 180 languages.

211 specialists offer empathetic, non-judgmental care, and these trained specialists connect individuals and families to a range of available resources to meet their underlying needs, not just the one that prompted the call, text, or email.

"211 is an unmatched, critical service that provides connection and support to those who need help for a range of needs," said Dr. LoAnn Ayers, President and CEO of United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties. "On 211 Day, we express appreciation to the call specialists who provide support to help our community members who are helping thousands here in our area."

For 211 Day, we encourage people in our communities to:

- Call, text, or chat 211 if they or someone they know needs help.
- Share 211 widely with their neighbors, family and friends to connect others to help and support.
- Advocate to your local policymakers for the importance of and need to strengthen 211

About United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties:

Since 1958 our community-based organization continues to support the health, safety, and success of local kids and families. We envision a community where all children have an opportunity to learn and thrive.

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