



### **NJ 2-1-1 - The Connection to Help and Hope**

“Sometimes vital services don’t exist in a community, but often they do and people just don’t know about them. That’s where NJ 2-1-1 comes in. We provide the essential connection that makes help happen,” says Melissa Acree, executive director of NJ 2-1-1. The organization opened its doors in 2005 and has been connecting people with services in their communities ever since. With a statewide database of over 3,000 agencies and nearly 10,000 services and a seasoned staff that has been trained in empathetic listening skills and community programs, finding the right kind of help for basic human needs like affordable housing, food, healthcare, senior services, substance abuse and childcare (to name a few) may be as easy as dialing 2-1-1.

The very same resource database that is used by the call center staff is accessible to the public at the organization’s website, [www.nj211.org](http://www.nj211.org). All of the resources are organized by topic and search results can be limited geographically by zip code, city or county. Additionally, visitors to the site can avail themselves to content pages that provide essential details about state and federal programs designed to help people. Brief descriptions of these programs include specific eligibility requirements and links to applications and are designed to take the guesswork out of the help that is available when a person is facing difficult life decisions. A perfect example of this at this time of year is the organization’s Utility Assistance pages that provide information about every program available to NJ residents who are struggling to afford their utilities [<https://www.nj211.org/utility-assistance-programs>]. At this site you will find complete information about eligibility requirements, links to applications and listings of application agencies, as well as information about the supportive documentation that is needed. The page provides everything a person needs to take the next step.

The service is free, confidential, multilingual and always open. In addition to reaching NJ 2-1-1 by phone or searching the database online, live assistance can be accessed through an online chat feature at [nj211.org](http://nj211.org) and via text (text your zip code to 898-211 to start the conversation.)