

WHAT IF I HAVE PROBLEMS DIALING 2-1-1?

Callers from businesses and organizations with standard land-based phone systems should be able to pick up the phone and dial 2-1-1 with no problem.

For organizations with in-house PBX telephone systems, programming modifications may need to be made to enable three-digit dialing to ensure that employees have easy access to 2-1-1. Typically, your telecommunications staff or a service provider can make this simple adjustment. Callers from locations served by a PBX may need to dial 9 (or another prefix) before entering the 2-1-1 code, just like any other outside call.

United Way 2-1-1 encourages PBX administrators to implement the necessary programming changes to facilitate 2-1-1 dialing for users. A 2-1-1 specialist can also be reached 24/7 by dialing 1-800-552-1183.

MORE DETAILS

United Way for Southeastern Michigan 2-1-1 has requested that every landline and wireless carrier provide access to 2-1-1 in our MPSC-assigned six-county area (Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, Monroe and Lapeer counties). However, it is possible that some carriers are slow to implement the 2-1-1 code, or that certain office telephone systems (PBXs) are not able to access this specific 3-digit code. Additionally, pay telephone services are offered by a vast number of companies and private interests, and some may not have programmed 2-1-1 into their networks as yet.

If you are dialing from home, or from a pay phone

If you try to call from your home or wireless telephone, or a pay phone, and cannot connect by dialing 2-1-1, you can dial 1-800-552-1183 to be connected to a United Way 2-1-1 specialist 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Once connected, **please let the specialist assisting you know that you were unable to dial 2-1-1.** Include the name of the telephone carrier and (especially for wireless users) the location from which you were not able to connect to 2-1-1. Your assistance with designating areas where 2-1-1 service is not working properly is greatly appreciated!

If you are dialing from an office, hospital, or any building with multiple lines

Most companies and office buildings have business phone systems (commonly called a PBX), and 2-1-1 has to be programmed into the PBX before it will work properly. Most PBX systems will only allow 9-1-1 as an acceptable three-digit code.

If you dial 2-1-1 from inside your office and get a fast busy signal

This could mean that your PBX is not programmed to allow direct 2-1-1 dialing. Typically, your telecommunications staff or service provider can make this simple adjustment. In some cases, the issue can be resolved by dialing 9 or other access code needed to get an outside line before dialing 2-1-1. Check with your office manager or telephone system administrator to ensure that 2-1-1 is allowed through your PBX and recognized by your phone system.

If you get a message that your call cannot be completed as dialed, or a fast busy signal every time you dial 2-1-1

Unfortunately some carriers may be slow in programming the 2-1-1 number or there may be an error in how the number is being translated. You can dial 1-800-552-1183 to be connected to a 2-1-1 specialist 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Once connected, **please let the specialist assisting you know that you were unable to dial 2-1-1.** Please include the name of the telephone carrier and (especially for wireless users) the location from which you were not able to connect to 2-1-1.

For office managers and technical support personnel

To allow the use of the 2-1-1 code, simply enable the transmission of the 2-1-1 digits (3 digits, instead of 7, 10 or 11) when dialed from your PBX. This will ensure that users have easy access to the United Way 2-1-1 service.

If you are calling from a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone

Since VoIP utilizes an existing broadband connection to the Internet (instead of telephone lines) to complete a call, dialing N11 numbers to connect the caller to a local service presents a real problem. The VoIP provider is not able to use the regular lookup tables used to send the call to the proper local terminating point, such as with 2-1-1. Similar issues arise when a VoIP caller tries to dial a nationally-distributed toll-free number, such as Poison Control Center, where calls should be routed based on the caller's location. The FCC mandates that VoIP providers support the 911 dialing code, and can charge a fee to do so, which appears on your monthly bill. There is no such mandate for providers to support other N11 numbers.

The only solution for VoIP 2-1-1 callers at this point is to program 1-800-552-1183 into your speed dial or directory.