

2-1-1 CONNECT!

Nevada 2-1-1 Semi Monthly Newsletter

February 2017

HERE TO SERVE!

Nevada 2-1-1 exists to connect all individuals, families and providers to essential health and human services information and resources. There are more than 2.8 million residents in Nevada. At some point each of us will need some form of human services. When that time comes, Nevada 2-1-1 wants to be the preferred point of contact. With 995 current agencies listed in our statewide database, more than 2,690 programs and 4,300 services can be accessed. Call Specialists are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Translation services are also available.

This is the First Edition of 2-1-1 Connect!, a new semi-monthly newsletter available online to those in need of services as well as providers. It's one of the many communication methods we are using that will allow Nevada residents and service providers to get to know us, and for us to better serve you. We will highlight provider agencies throughout the state as well as members of our Community Ambassadors Alliance. There will also be stories of residents who have taken advantage of this free service and the benefits they received.

We will also provide quarterly reports, information on new providers, upcoming events, and offer tips to help navigate through life in Nevada.

Nevada 2-1-1 services can also be accessed via our website, www.nevada211.org, or by sending a text message with your zip code to **TXT211** or **898211**. We look forward to serving you all and welcome you to 2-1-1 CONNECT!

"Michael helped me with not only providing the right referrals, but he listened to me and walked me through the process of each referral. Michael went over and beyond! I have worked in customer service since 1980, and if I were still working, I would coax Michael into working for me!"

- William, Las Vegas

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How We Got Here

Prior to July 2015, Nevada 2-1-1 was managed by HELP of Southern Nevada and the Northern Nevada Crisis Call Center. Under the direction of these agencies, the program was established and began to grow. 2-1-1 reportedly answered approximately 5,000 call per month from around the state. Call coverage was provided 24 hours per day throughout the year, including weekends and holidays. In December 2014 a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued by the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) with the intent to address an increased State financial contribution and establish a more structured governance system to implement 2-1-1 services.

In 2015, the state awarded a contract to the Financial Guidance Center (FGC), under the direction of CEO Michele Johnson, to operate the Nevada 2-1-1 system with oversight maintained by DHHS. Upon receiving the contract in July 2015, FGC integrated the Call Center into its Las Vegas headquarters and began a new era of Nevada 2-1-1. FGC quickly saw an escalation as the number of calls per month jumped to an average of 10,000, double the number prior to FGC assuming oversight of the Nevada 2-1-1 program, with calls hovering around 12,000 during November and December (holiday season).

After assuming the role of the 2-1-1 Call Center administrator, FGC began a fundamental overview of the program, ensuring the database was an accurate representation of each individual service provider and eliminating duplicate services and ensuring providers were still operational. Nevada 2-1-1's database now stands at 995 agencies, 2,693 programs, and 4,309 services, including state and local government agencies and non-profit providers who touch the lives of many of the 2.890 million residents of Nevada¹.

The Future of 2-1-1

To ensure Nevada 2-1-1 would be positioned for long-term success, the DHHS and FGC enlisted the services of Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. (SEI) to develop a Strategic Plan (Plan). SEI established a Strategic Planning Workgroup and focus groups, which were comprised of 110 individuals from state and county staff, as well as community stakeholders from across the state.

The process revealed that FGC needed to correct some deficiencies within 2-1-1, and redirect expectations and goals. Many ideas came about directly from the working groups involved in the development of the Plan. Some of the recognized deficiencies included a database rarely being up to date, a website that was difficult to navigate, and the inability to intuitively search for services and programs. Additionally, adequate disaster/emergency response procedures needed to be developed. Further, many people either didn't know about the services provided through 2-1-1 or were unhappy with their experiences with it.

In partnership with DHHS, FGC developed a team to begin addressing these concerns. Three Field Technicians were brought in to deal directly with the accuracy of the agencies, programs and services in the database.

(Cont'd on page 3).



Some of 2-1-1 Call Center Staff

History of Nevada 2-1-1

The three-digit dialing code, 2-1-1, was exclusively assigned to support the distribution of information and referral services by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 2000. Following this assignment, the FCC charged each state with establishing its own 2-1-1 system.

In 2005, Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) were amended to establish and maintain a system to provide non-emergency information and referrals concerning health, welfare, human and social services. NRS 232.359 requires the State to maintain a 2-1-1 system.

After the NRS was adopted, the late Governor Kenny Guinn established the Governor's Partnership on 2-1-1 through an Executive Order in 2006. Former Governor Jim Gibbons renewed the order in 2009, as did Governor Brian Sandoval in 2011. Governor Sandoval's Executive Order expired on December 31, 2013. Following that expiration, 2-1-1 operated under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the key operational partners, with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) serving as the lead agency responsible for coordinating and overseeing 2-1-1 activities.

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The Future of 2-1-1 (cont'd)

The role of the Field Technicians continues to be to contact existing providers listed in the database to assist them in completing the required initial documents. to certify all services and programs are accurate. This step is necessary as 2-1-1 is pursuing national accreditation and this is a required process.

The services of a marketing firm, KPS3 have been secured to create various messaging tools to build community support from consumers, providers, and service and investment partners. Goals for the future include the ability to enroll those eligible for public benefit programs, provide the ability to search for volunteer opportunities, and strengthen disaster response capabilities.

The 2-1-1 team was rounded out with the addition of two Outreach and Engagement Specialists, whose primary functions are developing a stronger base of support, opening channels of communication with various stakeholders, and developing the disaster/emergency response protocols. Steve George assumed the position based in Northern Nevada and Will Reed in Southern Nevada.

More information about Nevada 2-1-1, including Reports, can be accessed on our website: <http://www.nevada211.org>



Suicide Among Nevada's Military Veterans Is of Great Concern To DHHS

Department of Health and Human Services

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is an office of the Executive Branch of State Government and is led by the director, Mr. Richard Whitely, who was appointed by Governor Sandoval in June 2015. The Director also serves in an advisory capacity as a Member of the Governor's Cabinet. DHHS is one of the largest departments in state government comprised of five Divisions including: Aging and Disability Services, Child and Family Services, Health Care Financing and Policy (Medicaid), Public and Behavioral Health, and Welfare and Supportive Services.

DHHS has a staff of more than 6,100 and a legislatively approved biennial budget of \$9.8 billion dollars in state and federal funds. The total DHHS budget represents nearly one third of the entire state budget. The largest expense incurred by the Department is the payment to Medicaid providers for submitted claims. DHHS is also responsible for ten critical programs managed through the Director's Office, such as the Office of Consumer Health Assistance, the Tribal Liaison Office, the Public Defender Office, the Office of Community Partnerships and Grants, and Nevada 2-1-1.

The mission of DHHS is to promote the health and well-being of Nevadans through the delivery or facilitation of essential services to ensure families are strengthened, public health is protected, and individuals achieve their highest level of self-sufficiency. The DHHS creed is: "Helping People - It's Who We Are and What We Do"

For more information about DHHS and the many services, programs, and offices located throughout the state, visit their website at: <http://dhhs.nv.gov>



Fighting to Increase Food Security Throughout the State

Nevada 2-1-1 Responds to Emergency in Northern Nevada

When the National Weather Service predicted flooding along the Truckee and Carson rivers, as well as small streams and creeks throughout Northern Nevada during the week of January 8-13, the Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC) located in Washoe County—which encompasses the cities of Reno and Sparks, as well as Washoe County and the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony—asked Nevada 2-1-1 to take on the responsibility of serving as the information and referral contact for people in need of information and non-emergency services throughout the duration of the expected flood event.

Nevada 2-1-1, with its 24-hour/seven days a week Call Center staffed with Call Specialists, took on the challenge of serving not only Washoe County residents, but those calls received from other counties of Carson, Douglas, Lyon, and Storey, by providing information about sandbag locations, shelters, road closures, school closures, evacuation centers, and calls for assistance.

To successfully accomplish this critical role, Nevada 2-1-1 was constantly in contact with the REOC, State Joint Information Center (Carson City), and local government emergency operation center staff via text message, emails, and phone updates, as well as having an onsite Nevada 2-1-1 liaison to ensure time-sensitive communications occurred as quickly as necessary.

The heavy rains began to fall on Sunday, January 8 and continued through Monday, January 9. The constant heavy rain took its toll on Sunday afternoon with flooding in downtown Reno and Sparks. As the danger to the community rose, so did the constant stream of phone calls from worried Northern Nevada residents. In fact, the Nevada 2-1-1 Call Center handled more than 1,300 disaster-related calls beginning on Friday evening, January 6, through Monday afternoon.

As the week wore on, it was Douglas, Carson City, and Lyon county residents who next felt the brunt of the constant pouring rain when the Carson River began to overflow its banks. To further complicate the situation, heavy amounts of snow began to impact communities later in the week. Nevada 2-1-1 continued to handle hundreds of calls over the course of the week about much-needed non-emergency services, including asking for recovery assistance from many homeowners.

Nevada 2-1-1 is proud of our service to the people of Northern Nevada in their time of need. Our role in helping people find answers to pressing, but non-emergency, questions is one of our key roles. If you'd like to learn more about how Nevada 2-1-1 can help your area, organization, or business during a disaster or emergency situation, go to www.Nevada211.org or give us a call at 800-451-4505. We're here to help!

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information, referrals, or comments.

Nevada 2-1-1: Dial 211

Financial Guidance Center:
800-451-4505

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***Please feel free to forward to those within your email distribution list.**

