

Vermont 2-1-1  
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**Vermont 2-1-1 Call Center Hours Reduced to Weekdays 8:00 to 8:00**  
*Increased Vendor Costs Resulted in Loss of After-Hours Coverage*

(Essex Junction) The organization hosting Vermont’s one-stop number to call for information about health and human services has announced that it is no longer able to offer 24/7/365 service by phone. Effective October 1, Vermont 2-1-1 contact center hours are 8:00am-8:00pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

The new hours are the result of an increase in service charges from a partner 2-1-1 agency contracted to respond to calls from 8pm – 8am, weekends and holidays. “Unfortunately, the increase in the proposed contract exceeded our current budget capacity, and no other providers could replace the service at the rate we needed,” said Vermont 2-1-1 Director MaryEllen Mendl.

“Our partners at the Department of Economic Services recognize the importance of the service, and though we were hopeful for additional funding from the state to fill the gap, they are working with community partners to ensure people who need emergency housing after 8:00 p.m. will have a way to reach the program,” said Mendl.

Mendl said, “What is not impacted is the quality of service Vermonters get when they dial 2-1-1 for information and resources. Thousands of people reach out to 2-1-1 annually looking for help navigating the complex human service delivery system. Our robust Community Resource Directory will continue to be updated and is available on-line 24/7/365 at [www.vermont211.org](http://www.vermont211.org).”

Mendl said the people who will be most affected by the change are those seeking after-hours emergency housing. In 2018, Vermont 2-1-1 received over 41,000 calls and texts for a wide variety of services, of which over 8,000 contacts were for emergency housing.

“What makes Vermont 2-1-1 an important and unique service, is that Vermonters know that when they reach out to us, that they will be treated with respect and provided with useful information and resources,” said Mendl. The agency’s contact center staff are trained and become certified in Information & Referral by an international accrediting organization, the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS).

Vermont 2-1-1 is a free, confidential program of the United Ways of Vermont. Vermonters connect with Vermont 2-1-1 by phone, text, and email to find services and resources to help with everyday needs and in difficult times. Vermont 2-1-1 also is a primary partner in disaster response, recovery and communications. In the event of a major statewide emergency, the agency will expand its hours to 24/7.

Connect with Vermont 2-1-1 simply by dialing 2-1-1 from anywhere in Vermont, visiting [vermont211.org](http://vermont211.org), or texting your zip code to 898211 between 8am – 8pm Monday through Friday.

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