

Dial 211 for Help with Basic Needs

If you are one of the 3.3 million workers who had to file an unemployment claim last week due to the pandemic, you may be wondering how you are going to make ends meet until we get through this. NJ 211, an information and referral service that connects people in need with services that can help, may have some answers for you. The service is free, confidential, multi-lingual and always open. There are three ways to connect with a live specialist who knows community resources: by phone (simply dial 211); by text (text your zip code to 898-211) or through an online chat system at www.nj211.org.

The call center is exceptionally busy these days, but when you finally do make the connection you will be speaking, texting or chatting with someone who has access to a resource database of over 10,000 programs and services, some of which are right here in Sussex County. All relate to some sort of health or human service need. So, if the world crisis has turned YOUR world upside down and you are now wondering how you are going to feed your family; pay the utility bill; find affordable healthcare; or address a similar need, contact 211. If you are struggling with a substance use disorder; are in need of mental health services; or are looking for a support group that you can connect with virtually, 211 may have some resources for you.

NJ 211 opened its phone lines in 2005 and has been serving New Jerseyans ever since. The organization is written into the state's emergency response plan which means that when coronavirus COVID-19 started wreaking havoc in our state, 211 was activated to assist in communicating all that the state is doing to assist people in need. If you have a question about any of the recent government directives or are wondering about things like social security payments, tax filing extensions, how to report a violation of the Executive Order 107, testing site locations, or other matters related to the pandemic, contact 211 and see if they can point you in the right direction. Or, go to www.nj211.org to learn more. Click on the bright yellow banner at the top of the page to find information about resources that have been created to help you, your family and your business weather this storm. Go to the "Get Help With" tab at the top of the page to learn more about everyday systems that exist in our state to help people get by when times get tough.