

211 Notification and Implementation Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador

August 24, 2020

United Way Centraide Canada
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Background

This Notification and Implementation Plan is for the use of the 211 dialing code to access information and referrals for non-emergency community and social services in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

In August 2001, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) assigned the 211 telephone number for community information services across Canada. Detailed information on Telecom Decision CRTC 2001-475 is available via this link: <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2001/DT2001-475.htm>

Effective and timely service navigation and access are critical to people's well-being, and in helping to prevent challenging life situations from becoming crises, and build resilient and strong communities, which is a key focus of United Way's work in Newfoundland and Labrador and across Canada. The information and navigational assistance provided by the award winning 211 helpline improves and saves lives, and 211 services now reach over 70% of Canadians. See www.211.ca.

As a response to COVID-19, the Government of Canada, under the Emergency Community Support Fund, has provided funding to United Way Centraide Canada for 211 enhancements, including expanding the 211 phone service to currently unserved regions. The 211 service expansion will provide residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, confidential and 24/7 information and referral service through the 211 helpline.

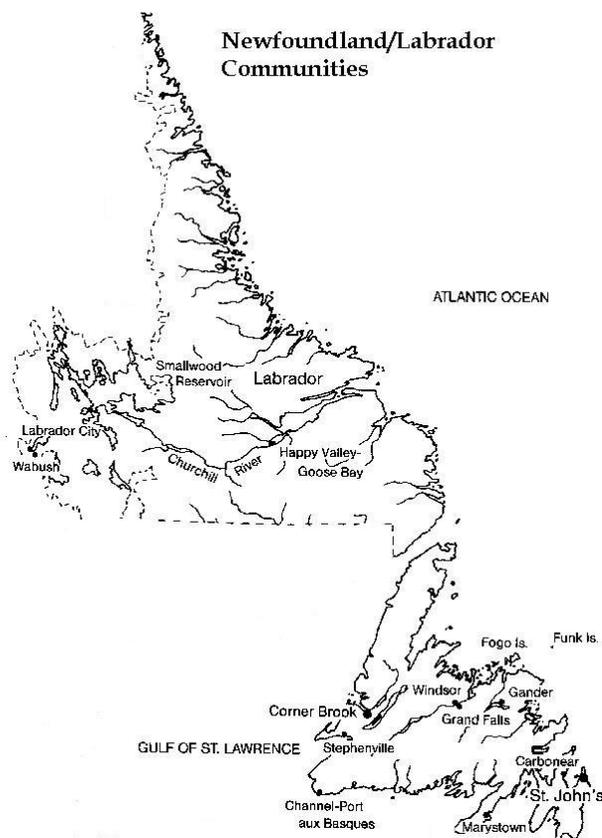
With a letter of endorsement (see Appendix) from Employment and Social Development Canada, United Way Centraide Canada has the support of the Government of Canada to implement the 211 helpline.

Service Description

The 211 Newfoundland and Labrador phone service will be provided by Findhelp Information Services/211 Central Region. All aspects related to the delivery of 211 services are strictly guided by standards set by the Alliance of Information & Referral Systems (AIRS). These standards are the foundation of information and referral (I&R) service delivery and the prime benchmark of quality I&R. Resources in the databases that support 211 phone services are indexed according to the 211 Taxonomy, which enables Certified Community Navigators who answer 211 calls to quickly and easily identify appropriate resources that may best serve the needs of callers.

Desired 211 Service Area

211 Newfoundland and Labrador will cover the entire province, and the map for the desired 211 phone service area is shown on the right:



Call Routing Arrangements

In Newfoundland and Labrador, all 211 calls from the 709 area code are to be routed to and terminate at this toll free number:

- **1-855-276-9072**

Telecommunications Service Providers (TSPs) are requested to permit callers in Newfoundland and Labrador to dial 211, with calls routed to the above terminating number at:

Findhelp Information Services/211 Central Region
1 St. Clair Avenue West
Toronto, ON M4V 1K6

TSPs are also requested to work with the appropriate cellular, cable and VoIP providers providing service in Newfoundland and Labrador, ensuring that the calls are routed correctly.

Telecommunications Service Providers

In accordance with this 211 Notification and Implementation Plan, all TSPs operating in the 211 Newfoundland and Labrador service area are requested to implement the network changes necessary to route 211 calls to the appropriate terminating point at Findhelp Information Services/211 Central Region (as outlined above), using standard routing and rating methodologies, by **October 1, 2020**.

Telecommunications Service Providers serving Newfoundland and Labrador include, but are not limited to:

- Allstream Inc.
- Bell Aliant
- Bell Mobility
- Bragg Communications Inc.
- Fido Solutions Inc.
- Iristel Inc.
- Rogers Communications Partnership
- Telus Integrated Communications
- Telus Mobility

Implementation Schedule

All TSPs are requested to formulate a system test plan and make modifications to their networks, as necessary, in preparation for the implementation of the 211 helpline in Newfoundland and Labrador. Soft launch/testing will occur from October 1, 2020, in anticipation of a public launch to start as of October 7, 2020. Should any problems occur during this time that may impact the October 1, 2020 implementation date, please notify: Judy Shum, 211 Project Manager, United Way Centraide Canada, at jshum@unitedway.ca.

The major implementation activities, deliverables and associated dates are as follows:

Date	Activity/Deliverable
August 24, 2020	The 211 Newfoundland and Labrador Notification and Implementation Plan is provided to Telecommunications Service Providers for the implementation of 211 dialing by October 1, 2020
September 10, 2020	First conference call with TSPs to go over implementation plan
September 22, 2020	Check-in conference call with TSPs
October 1, 2020	Start date of soft launch/testing of the 211 helpline in Newfoundland and Labrador
October 7, 2020	Start date of public launch of the 211 helpline in Newfoundland and Labrador

Call Volume Estimates

According to the 2016 Census, the population of Newfoundland and Labrador is 519,716. The 211 helpline is being launched across Newfoundland and Labrador, so it will be available to all residents in all communities in the entire province at the same time. Current 3-year projections of call volume estimates:

- Year 1 - up to 4,000 calls
- Year 2 - up to 7,000 calls
- Year 3 - up to 10,000 calls

Operational Support for 211 Newfoundland and Labrador

United Way Centraide Canada has been working closely with Findhelp/211 Central Region, and United Way of Newfoundland and Labrador on the implementation of the 211 helpline.

Findhelp/211 Central Region is United Way's natural partner in the expansion of 211 services, with a long history of providing information and referral services, a strong track record, the necessary technological base, a professional staff, and an advanced infrastructure to support answering calls from anywhere in Canada. Findhelp/211 Central Region is certified by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS), a rigorous service and operational standard. Their Community Navigators receive comprehensive training and ongoing coaching, and they benefit from quality assurance measures to ensure they have appropriate support and guidance to be successful in their roles.

The 2020-21 operational costs of 211 Newfoundland and Labrador are provided by United Way Centraide Canada, through the Government of Canada's Emergency Community Support Fund. Working in collaboration, United Way and its 211 Newfoundland and Labrador partners will implement promotional strategies to raise awareness of the 211 helpline across the province, and promote the public launch in October 2020. Community stakeholders will also be engaged to help with broadly sharing information about the 211 helpline.



Dan Clement
President and CEO
United Way Centraide Canada
116 Albert Street, Suite 900
Ottawa, ON K1P 5G3

Dear Mr. Clement:

COVID-19 has raised awareness of just how important it is for Canadians to have accessible and up-to-date information about essential and community services.

Under Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan and the Emergency Community Support Fund, which offers targeted support for vulnerable populations, the federal government is providing funding to United Way Centraide Canada for activities including Community and Social Services Helpline 211 Enhancements. Under our contribution agreement with you, this funding is in support of your organization's work in:

- continuing to offer 211 callers timely, up-to-date information as demand increases;
- building out community resource datasets and expanding access to the 211 system to all parts of the country for the project period; and
- disseminating information on COVID-19 through 211.

To support expanding access to the 211 system to all parts of the country, I am providing this letter so you are able to show colleagues in the Governments of Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Quebec, and Yukon, and community stakeholders that Employment and Social Development Canada is providing funding support to the United Way Centraide Canada for 211 enhancements. This is an important part of our efforts to support local organizations to respond to COVID-19.

Further, I hope this letter will assist Telecommunications Service Providers in responding to requests from United Way Centraide Canada to implement 211 dialing in a timely manner by underscoring the importance of this service.

Yours sincerely,

Susan E MacPhee

Susan E. MacPhee
Director, Social Programs Division
Social Innovation and Community Development Directorate
Income Security and Social Development Branch
Employment and Social Development Canada