



# **House Select Committee on Government Efficiency and Accountability**

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# What is 2-1-1 Texas

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- 2-1-1 is a telephone dialing code assigned by the federal government for access to health and human services information and referral
  - Nationally, 27 states provide 2-1-1 services for 100% coverage for their population.
  - Since 2004, 100% of the population in Texas had access to 2-1-1.

# 211 Services

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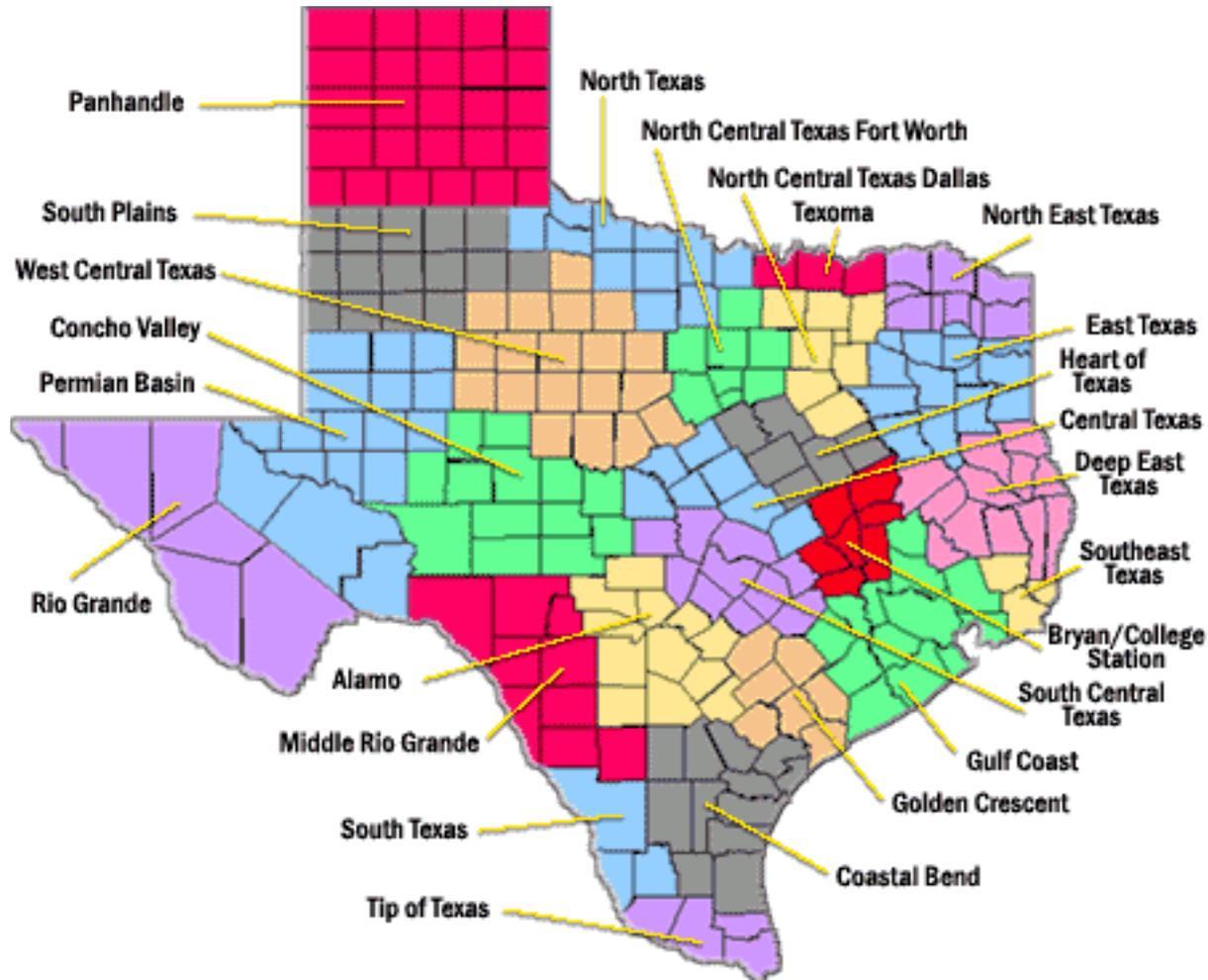
- In Texas 2-1-1 is a free service that can be called from any land line or Texas based cell phone that connects users to the following services:
  - Information and Referral (I&R) on local community services and resources.
  - Access to and information on applications for benefits, check the current status of your application, or to reapply for benefits. This includes: Medicaid, Medicare, Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Children’s Health Insurance, nursing home care, and other services for people who are elderly or that have disabilities.
  - Report waste, fraud, and abuse in all health and human services programs in the State of Texas to the Office of Inspector General.
  - Registration for the Evacuation Transportation System.
  - Information on the H1N1 Virus.
- This presentation will only focus on the I&R portion of the 211 System.

## 25 Area Information Centers Regions

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- Support Philosophy of Local Service Delivery
- Serve Entire Population in Area:
  - 16 areas under 500,000
  - 3 areas between 500,000 and 1million
  - 4 areas between 1 and 2 million
  - 2 areas over 2 million
- Leverage Existing Systems
- Designate Regions and Supporting Entities
  - 11 are United Ways
  - 8 are Council of Governments
  - 6 are Private Non-profits, Community Councils, Local Workforce Boards, or City Entities

# Map of 2-1-1 Service Areas



# What does a 2-1-1 Area Information Center do?

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- Maintains a Comprehensive Regional Database
  - Local community service resources
  - Federal / state health and human service resources
- Provides Multiple Access Points
  - 2-1-1 dialing code (averaging over 150,000 calls a month)
  - Print materials
  - Website ([www.211texas.org](http://www.211texas.org))
- Provides Aggregate Data
  - Identify needs and gaps in resources
    - Top five needs identified in 2009
      1. Housing and Utility Assistance , 437,971
      2. Food and Meals, 320,145
      3. Income Support, 289,961
      4. Health Care, 221,725
      5. Individual and Community Support, 101,215
  - State/Regional/Local planning
    - Texas Workforce Commission request 2-1-1 data for unmet child care needs
    - Harris County Department of Education used 2-1-1 data by school district to determine the needs the families in those communities
    - City of Abilene's Office of Planning & Development Services uses 2-1-1 Texas A Call for Help reporting of 2-1-1 caller presenting needs-- met and unmet-- by zip code, to help focus the discussions for the public input segment of the CDGB and HOME funds for the HUD 5-year Consolidated Plan.
    - Local Volunteer Clinic in Sherman used 2-1-1 unmet needs data to apply for Federally Qualified Health Clinic grant

# Legislative History

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Senate Bill 397 (76<sup>th</sup> Session, 1999) required agencies receiving state funding to provide resource information to 2-1-1

House Bill 2641 (76<sup>th</sup> Session, 1999) required transportation information to be included in 2-1-1

House Bill 2048 (79<sup>th</sup> Session, 2005) required 2-1-1 to develop a mechanism to inform public of pre-kinder, after school programs

Senate Bill 1058 (80<sup>th</sup> Session, 2007) required 2-1-1 to provide referrals for reintegration services to military service members and their families.

House Bill 2558 (81<sup>st</sup> Session, 2009) required home and community support health care providers to educate clients and their families about the emergency Transportation Assistance Registry available by dialing 2-1-1

# Operating Budget

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- The total 2-1-1 Texas Information and Referral Network (TIRN) operating budget for the current fiscal year 2010 is \$14,951,915. This only reflects state and federal funding at HHSC and does not include additional funding from public/private partnerships used to operate the program.
- HHSC, through a separate budget, absorbs an estimated \$2,701,627 in telephony (call platform) and telephone service related costs.
- This fiscal year, HHSC, through TIRN, allocated \$9,548,553 in general operations contracts funding to 24 organizations known as Area Information centers (AICs) to provide information and referral service to Texas residents in 25 regions that cover all 254 counties in Texas.

# Benefits of a 2-1-1 System

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- Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resource, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas, Cost Benefit Analysis of 2-1-1 System 1998, 2000, and again in 2004 cites value to participants, taxpayers, and society
- Diversity of Special Projects recognizes 2-1-1 as an easy to remember number, the system's ability to quickly ramp up/down as need arises, to provide professionally trained staff, and a decreased costs in multiple call centers with 800#s
- System is designed to meet complex needs of individuals

# Behind the 2-1-1 Texas System

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- Available 24 hours a day, 365 Days a Year
- Nationally Accredited Agencies
- Professionally Certified Staff
- Multilingual staff & Hearing Impaired Access
- Comprehensive Regional Databases
- Statewide Coordination and Standardization
- Local Support and Control
- System that is Flexible and Scalable to Meet Disaster Response Needs