Telecommunications Manager, Missouri Public Service Commission April 30, 2025

Manager Telecommunications Department Missouri Public Service Commission Governor Office Building 200 Madison St. Jefferson City, MO 65102-0362

Re: Annual Report for Fiscal Year April 1st, 2024 through March 31st, 2025

Greetings:

On January 13, 2013, The United Way of Greater Kansas City, Inc., (United Way) f/k/a The Heart of America United Way, Inc. was re-authorized by the Commission in Case No. AO-2014-0093 to serve as a Missouri Information and Referral (I&R) Provider. The provisions of 4 CSR 240-32.200 require the filing of an annual report with your office. Pursuant to that rule we submit the following and trust that this form will be acceptable. As noted in previous reports submitted for FY 2009-10 and FY 2020-21, United Way of Greater Kansas City, Inc. was a merged collective of five metropolitan United Ways and now serves the six major metropolitan counties.

Operational Statistics

The following is a summary of operational statistics between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025:

- Service is provided 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.
- Stratus Audio/AMN Healthcare Language Services is available in over 200 languages 24 hours a day.
- Deaf relay service is available in Missouri by dialing 7-1-1.
- As of October 2019, United Way 211 transitioned to a cloud-based telephony system called NICE inContact. United Way 211 currently records 100% of its phone calls for monitoring for proper protocols and proper service delivery. All calls are confidential and NICE inContact system has secure servers where call data is stored. NICE inContact allows real time metrics to monitor, document, and report performance. United Way 211 has established the following service levels to strive towards:
 - 1) Grade of service: 70% of calls will be answered within 120 seconds.
 - 2) Abandoned calls will be 10% or less.
 - 3) The average wait time will be less than 3 minutes.
- Although data varies hour to hour, week to week based on call volume; an example of a weekly data report would show the following:

Week of Monday, March 17th – Friday, March 21st, 2025: Calls offered in: 2179

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Calls answered:	2094
Calls answered live:	96%
Average answer time:	0:32
Average call time (M:S):	6:34
Calls abandoned:	85
Percent abandoned:	4%
Grade of service:	88%

The United Way 211 service area data for the reporting year of April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025:

Total calls:	112,042
Calls answered:	100,116
Percent answered:	89.3%
Calls abandoned:	11,936
Percent abandoned:	10%
Average answer time:	1:51
Average call time (M:S):	7:01

- United Way of Greater Kansas City 211, to provide a higher level of service during peak hours, hired a vetted contractor, Direct Interactions, to provide call handling services during evening, overnight, holiday, and weekend hours while internally United Way increased the number of staff available during peak business hours to improve speed of answer as well as response rate while reducing abandonment rates. This transition started July 2024.
- Calls were received from Missouri and Kansas. Callers by geographic area, top 10 counties:
 - 1. Jackson, MO
 - 2. Clay, MO
 - 3. Wyandotte, KS
 - 4. Johnson, KS
 - 5. Platte, MO
 - 6. Buchanan, MO
 - 7. Cass, MO
 - 8. Leavenworth, KS
 - 9. Johnson, MO
 - 10. Lafayette, MO
- Top 10 Needs/Requests:
 - 1. Utility Payment Assistance
 - 2. Housing Stabilization (Rent, Mortgage)
 - 3. Unhoused Services (Shelters including Domestic Violence)
 - 4. New Housing Services (Rent Deposit, Housing Search)
 - 5. Transportation
 - 6. Legal Services
 - 7. Tax Assistance

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- 8. Food/Meals
- 9. Clothing, Personal, and Household Needs
- 10. Information Services (311, Libraries, Specialized Referrals)
- Top 10 Unmet Needs/Requests:
 - 1. Tax preparation assistance
 - 2. Community Shelters
 - 3. Rent payment assistance
 - 4. Homeless motel vouchers
 - 5. Ride Share App Services
 - 6. Legal Representation
 - 7. Electric service payment assistance
 - 8. Rental deposit assistance
 - 9. Motel Bill Payment Assistance
 - 10. Gas service payment assistance

Note: The United Way 211 definition of "unmet need" is that no referral was available to the caller at the time of the call. This could be for several reasons: funds currently not available, requested service was not available in the caller's service area, an agency suspended the needed program or service, or other reasons. United Way 211 always attempts to assist the caller with any other need that may have an available resource.

Operational Updates

- Staffing: 1 Executive Director, 1 Director, 2 Contact Center Managers, 1 Resource Center Manager, 2 full-time Resource Specialist, 1 QA & Training Manager, 1 QA Specialist, 3 Older Adult Intake Specialists, 11 full-time and 9 part-time Community Resource Navigators positions as of March 31, 2025. The average number of 211 staff during reporting period was 32.
- The two Community Resource Navigators, one Older Adult Specialist, and the Director were Inform USA (formerly AIRS) recertified this year. Two additional staff passed the certification exam for Community Resource Specialist - Aging/Disabilities (CRS-A/D) and one of the Contact Center Managers passed certification for Community Resource Specialist (CRS).
- The Executive Director manages external relationships, strategy, revenue development and oversight of the United 211 department.
- The Director oversees the operation of United Way 211 which includes the Contact Center, including the contractor for afterhours services, the Resource Center, and Quality Assurance.
- The Contact Center Managers supervise the operation of the contact center that operates 7am-7pm Monday-Friday and are responsible for employee selection, training, coaching and counseling, work force management and the operations of the Contact Center.

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- The Contact Center Managers and the QA & Training Manager monitor calls and review call records in order to provide ongoing coaching and training to Community Resource Navigators. As part of United Way's 211 quality assurance program, randomly selected call recordings are reviewed monthly. Each record is evaluated for accuracy and for meeting service delivery standards. Community Resource Navigators are provided with feedback related to the results of this continuous review.
- The Quality Assurance (QA) & Training Manger position was established to increase consistency and scope of call monitoring and coaching for the Community Resource Navigators to improve customer service. The QA program consists of the evaluations of call recordings and call records. The training program's goal
- The 211-operation moved to a fully remote work environment starting mid-March 2020. Because of the cloud-based NICE inContact telephony system and the other web-based contact center systems utilized, maintenance of call and service quality are efficiently maintained remotely.
- The Resource Center Manager supervises the Resource Center. The Resource Center maintains the resource database through building relationships with service providers, annual formal updates, indexing services and maintenance of agency as well as program information. The Resource Center Manager also manages the technical aspects of the internal resource database and the public online searchable database (211KC.org) which is a user-friendly interface including easy, common language searching.
- The Director and Resource Center Manager collaborate with communities and organizations in the 211-service area to facilitate system change and more efficient access to services. 211 provides reports on community needs and demographics to assist with grant applications, determining gaps in services, implementation of new programs and other requests to organizations such as Mid-America Assistance Coalition, Greater Kansas City Coalition to End Homelessness, Mid-America Regional Council, Evergy, local school districts, libraries, and many others.
- United Way of Greater Kansas City 211 team continues ongoing community outreach and research for resources. Team members attend community information sharing meetings such as the local county Community Resource Connection, as well as participants in committees led by other community initiatives such as the Greater Kansas City Coalition to End Homelessness and the Northland Health Alliance. We also provide information and presentations to community partners and community events around accessing resources through 211.
- The Executive Director and Director are responsible for several facets of the 211 operations
 relating to emergency and disaster response, including planning for and managing
 emergency operations of the 211-contact center and developing continuity of operations
 plan. Additionally, they are responsible for communicating and coordinating with
 emergency management agencies in emergency and disaster response, attending
 emergency management agency meetings, as well as engaging in community outreach and

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education in emergency preparedness. The 211 Contact Center has several layers of resiliency, and the Director is responsible for maintaining the plans.

- United Way launched a new follow-up SMS service in August 2024 utilizing a system created by the Stand Together Foundation called Loop. With a caller's consent, a SMS text message is sent to their phone with the basic contact information for each of the referred services. After three days, the platform prompts a series of follow-up questions and aggregates responses to provide resource connection rates, customer satisfaction survey for connected services, and the opportunity to request a call back from a 211 Community Resource Navigator. Since the launch, the response rate to the text-based follow up service has increased to 30.8% compared to less than 3% connection rate from call backs alone.
- UWGKC 211 continues to promote the online searchable database, United Way 211 Online at www.211KC.org, as a centralized place to find resources. This site is available to the public and averages over 13,000 hits per month. In the calendar year of 2024, there were 321,646 active visits. Part of our outreach strategy is to work on quality of content, such as maintaining frequent updates, as well as growing traffic on the website through increased awareness, partnerships, and trainings. 211kc.org is one of the most reliable resource pages the community, local government, and our partners utilize for navigating the ever-changing landscape of community resources.
- The 211KC.org resource database is also used as an alternative to agencies creating and updating their own resource lists. The banner icons and "common searches" links on the front page provide suggested searches and seasonally relevant links to resources. With a recent upgrade to the website, agencies and community members can create publicly shareable resource lists. The website is part of our mission to "connect people to resources, identify the needs of the greater KC region, and aid in the development of additional community services."

Operational Requirements in Progress

- UWGKC 211 received its full AIRS Accreditation in November 2011. UWGKC completed the third reaccreditation cycle in December 2023 and was awarded reaccreditation by Inform USA (formerly AIRS) for another five-year cycle. The process takes 12 months and includes: submitting extensive documentation to Inform USA, a resource database review, 10 secret shopper calls, and a virtual site visit. To date, the resource database review and secret shopper phases have been completed with passing scores.
- UWGKC 211 is an affiliate member of the bi-state regional Metropolitan Emergency Managers Committee (MEMC).
- UWGKC 211 is a member of the regional Inform USA affiliate MAK-AIRS (Missouri, Arkansas, and Kansas – AIRS). The current United Way 211 Director serves as the President of the board for MAK-AIRS.
- UWGKC 211 currently has MOUs with: State Emergency Management Agency, The Family Conservancy Child Care Source, City of Kansas City Missouri Office of Emergency

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Management, AFL-CIO Community Services in St. Joseph, 3-1-1 Action Center in Kansas City, Missouri, Mid America Regional Council Department of Aging and Adult Services, CommCARE, ReDisover, Tri-County Mental Health Services, and many in the Kansas counties served by United Way 211.

Opportunities for Statewide Missouri I&R Provider Efficiencies

In collaboration with the active leadership of Missouri 211 operated by the United Way of Greater St. Louis, opportunities for statewide operating efficiencies are bulleted below. We are actively working collaboratively to grow and improve operational efficiencies.

- Jointly, Missouri 211 of United Way of Greater St. Louis and UWGKC 211 have a memorandum of understanding with the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA). This agreement is currently active.
- United Way of Greater Kansas City 211 and Missouri 211 have been operating a single statewide database for over eleven years. WellSky Community Services is a leader in the I&R software industry and the current platform for both 211s. This partnership provides a seamless experience to 211 callers in the state of Missouri. 211 can pull statewide reports when needed, including data for State Emergency Management related to the number of people calling to donate, volunteer, seek shelter, find congregate meal locations, or animal sheltering during times of disaster. Both contact centers use standard disaster intake forms for residential damage, volunteer assistance, or donation provision which adds uniformity to the information provided to government and non-profit disaster agencies.
- Missouri 211 and UWGKC 211 also utilize the same phone platform, NICE inContact Cxone, which allows for seamless transition between the two contact centers and expanded capabilities including a callback feature which provides callers the option to save their place in line without using phone minutes.
- NICE inContact disaster routing is active for use when necessary. This is possible because both organizations share a database system and utilize the same NICE inContact cloudbased telephony system.
- Both 211s collect data per Inform USA standards and provide service to the community according to the Inform USA Standards of Information & Referral. Both 211s can easily combine statistical caller and resource data for statewide or national reports. Additionally, each organization follows Inform USA service delivery standards and collects needs data utilizing the 211 LA Taxonomy, and thus produces matching data for reporting and metrics. Note: Personal Caller information such as name, address, phone, etc. are protected and never released in reports; external reports are only aggregated data.
- Missouri 211 and UWGKC 211 continue to compare operational functions such as reporting, outcomes measurements, statewide marketing, and communication messages as well as common service delivery standards for a "seamless" delivery of 211 service to Missouri residents.

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UWGKC contributes data to 211 Counts, an online reporting dashboard that gives a visual representation of current community needs over time. This information can be viewed by specific geographical areas and for specified time periods such as the previous day, week, month, year or a custom date range. The information is accessed through a website (211mo.211counts.org) and is available to government agencies, non-profit organizations, and the public at large. The data is obtained by 211 Counts daily through an interface with the WellSky database. This dashboard continues to be promoted as organizations show interest in the needs data that 211 collects from the community.

External Partnerships and Collaborations

UWGKC 211 has increasingly been asked by a variety of organizations and initiatives about partnering to become the point of contact for information and action. Some examples include:

- Since March 2016, UWGKC 211 has worked with the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation (KCMBF) through its Military Matters program to provide legal assistance to veterans unable to afford legal counsel who are not eligible for other programs such as Legal Aid. Dedicated staff complete an initial screening then KCMBF searches for a lawyer pro bono for those who are eligible. The Contact Center Manager and Director have been trained to complete the initial screening as well.
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) partnership to direct individuals to no-cost tax preparation sites and access to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). 211 made 4,266 referrals for VITA tax assistance during the 2024 tax season.
- Kansas City Regional COAD (KCR COAD) partnership to direct callers to appropriate resources in a time of emergency or disaster recovery. United Way of Greater Kansas City is a partner agency in KCR COAD.
- United Way 211 continues to collaborate with the Safe Havens for Abandoned Newborns Coalition to provide information and direction to callers on the proper Safe Haven locations (hospitals, fire departments, maternity homes, pregnancy resource centers, and police departments in Missouri). United Way 211 is prominently featured on all Safe Haven signs affixed on fire stations, hospitals, and police departments in the Kansas City metro area. Without the support of 211, there would be no central phone number for Safe Haven information in the KC metro area. Community Resource Navigators explain to inquirers that they do not have to abandon their babies but can hand them over to a staff member at any Safe Haven location according to the statutes of the law.
- United Way 211 expanded our partnership with the AFL-CIO Community Services Helpline in St Joseph in 2018 to share our WellSky user licenses. This has created efficiencies and cost savings for the organization while providing better service to the community they serve in Northwest Missouri through joint responsibility of updating the resource database.
- United Way of Greater Kansas City is working to ensure that people in the Greater Kansas City area have all the building blocks to be successful in the cycle of life, from healthy beginnings, to prepared youth, and to thriving adults and families. To accomplish this work, United Way uses multiple approaches, including direct funding for well-aligned programs at

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partner agencies, partnering with stakeholders on initiatives with demonstrated outcomes, and advancing systems-level change strategies where needed. UWGKC 211 supports this work not only by providing resources to individual and families in need but by providing information on caller needs and referrals provided as well as demographic information to assist the organization and community in identifying needs and underserved areas.

Barriers to Service

- There continues to be a need for PBX re-programming in certain corporations, hospitals, or other commercial entities. United Way 211 continues to educate callers from these organizations on this need.
- Continue the national work in ensuring all phone carriers should provide 211 service to their customers including pre-paid cell phones. Many low-income residents seek assistance on locating needed services yet are not able to connect to 211 on their pre-paid cell phones.
- A significant percentage of callers continue to present financial assistance needs. The nonprofit and faith-based assistance programs often have limited funds or run out prior to the end of a month. Utility and rent payment assistance continues to be a top need and the highest volume of unmet needs due to the limited funding available.
- An unfortunate trend is a sustained high volume of both demand and unmet needs for rent, utility, and shelter requests. These requests remain a significant percentage of all calls and continue to be beyond the reach of the organizations offering that type of assistance.
- Transportation to services following a referral continues to be a barrier for low-income callers as well as those in outer/rural areas of Greater Kansas City. Limited financial grants from United Way Worldwide have helped to support short-term transportation services but sustainable programming is needed to address the need.
- During this reporting period, 0.8% of callers were Spanish Speaking (non-English speaking). United Way 211 conducts outreach when possible to the Spanish-speaking community through partnerships and marketing materials. It is hard to determine how many Spanishspeaking households call United Way 211, since many times an English-speaking member of the family or an advocate places the call. United Way currently has 4 bilingual English/Spanish speakers at 211. We also utilize Stratus Audio/AMN Healthcare Language Services when the bilingual navigators are unavailable, and for over 200 other languages to ensure access to 211 services for all community members.
- Allowing time away from the office in order to be able to do outreach activities is a significant barrier. Many 211s are seeing a saturation of populations that are familiar with the 211 service. There is a growing need to find and connect with new populations, for example rural communities, which is difficult with staff and budget limitations.

Please find enclosed reports, flyers and marketing materials.

Telecommunications Manager, Missouri Public Service Commission April 30, 2025 UWGKC 211 is pleased to be authorized as a Missouri 211 Comprehensive I&R Provider. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

United Way 211 United Way of Greater Kansas City, Inc.

By:

ld Juden

Todd Jordan Vice President, Community Impact & Executive Director, 211 Todd.jordan@uwgkc.org

United Way 211: Answering our Community's Call

The only nationally accredited information and referral service in our region.

Free and confidential.

Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Each call is answered by trained Community Resource Navigators who navigate a database of 7,000+ services.





A MESSAGE FROM OUR 211 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Now more than ever, our friends, neighbors and colleagues turn to United Way 211 for assistance.

Beyond the fundamental information and referral services our team provides every day, 211 is often the front door for people in unique situations needing help. For example, our 211 serves as the call center for Mid-America Regional Council's Aging and Adult Services, providing information/referrals, as well as advocacy for more than 12,000 older adult callers last year. Transportation is a significant challenge for many people in our metropolitan area. In partnership with United Way Worldwide and Lyft, our 211 was able to provide nearly 3,000 rides to individuals trying to get to work, healthcare, or other critical needs.

211 also works to support the stability of households in our metro. In Kansas City, Missouri, the 211 team is the contact center for applying for the KCMO Right to Counsel program where people who are facing eviction get access to free legal services as they navigate their housing crisis. In 2024, 211 handled almost 2,000 calls as part of this work. 211 also handles contact and scheduling for Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites across the metro. Last year, 211 received more than 4,200 calls for this service and helped connect low to moderate income households to free tax assistance programs which allow households to access credits, refunds, and financial education.

We're proud that we not only provide help to people across Kansas City, but that we do it with the highest standards in the Information and Referral (I&R) industry as our team is nationally accredited by Inform USA, the gold standard for I&R agencies. 211 plays an instrumental role in connecting our community to programs and services while driving United Way's mission forward as an ecosystem coordinator. By reducing barriers, creating partnerships and innovating to meet community needs, 211 makes Kansas City a place where all can thrive. On behalf of the entire 211 team, I want to thank all our Waymakers[™] whose dedication to United Way makes our work possible!



DR. TODD JORDAN, PhD Vice President of Community Impact and 211 Executive Director



TOP FIVE ASSISTANCE30%UTILITY ASSISTANCE17%HOUSING STABILITY11%UNHOUSED SERVICES7%NEW HOUSING NEEDS5%TRANSPORTATION

CONTACT DEMOGRAPHICS



RIDE UNITED

In partnership with Lyft, this program works to fill the unmet needs gap for transportation assistance. United Way 211 scheduled transportation to appointments, services, and organizations at no charge.

TOTAL REFERRALS: 2,592

TOP TRANSIT NEEDS: Employment - 1294 🚔 Healthcare - 495 🔿 Food - 272 🖚 Education - 168 🤝 Housing - 94 🏠 Legal Services - 49 📥 Economic stability - 41 \$

SUPPORT 211

TOP REFERRAL

ΜY

TAXFS

(m)

KANSAS CITY

KCMO Right to Counsel/Eviction

Prevention

PROGRAMS

MILITARY

MATTERS

Coglition to End He

Unhoused **Pre-Screens**

When each of us do our small part, we make a difference for 1 in 3 Kansas Citians who rely on us.

Learn more about the work of United Way of Greater Kansas City in your community and give to ensure these vital services can continue at unitedwaygkc.org/donate or scan this QR code:

MOST LANGUAGES

English, Spanish, Bosnian, Vietnamese, Arabic & more



STAY UP TO DATE WITH UNITED WAY: Follow us on socials @UnitedWayGKC and subscribe to our newsletters at www.unitedwaygkc.org.



NEED HELP? DIAL 211 OR VISIT 211KC.ORG

FIND HELP FOR:



AND SO MUCH MORE.

FREE, CONFIDENTIAL, <mark>AVAILABLE 24/7 – 365 DAYS A YEAR.</mark>

Also available at (816) 474-5112 or toll-free (866) 320-5764. Email 211kc@uwgkc.org Language interpretation available.





Greater Kansas City

Get connected. Get help.™ | 211KC.ORG

NECESITAS AYUDA? Marque 211 o visite a 211kc.org

ENCUENTRA AYUDA PARA:



Y MUCHO MÁS.

<mark>grati</mark>s. Confidencia<mark>l. Disponible 24/7 — 365 dìas al año.</mark>

Tambien puede llamar a (816) 474-5112 o gratis a (866) 320-5764; o por correo electrónico 211kc@uwgkc.org. Hablamos español.





Greater Kansas City

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201 HERP STARTS STARTS HERE

UNITED WAY 211 PROVIDES FREE, CONFIDENTIAL ACCESS TO SERVICES 24 HOURS A DAY, SEVEN DAYS A WEEK

United Way's team of dedicated, caring Community Resource Navigators are here for you. They listen, discover your needs, and determine which services can best serve you.

211 CAN HELP CONNECT YOU TO:

HELP FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL OR FAMILY NEED, WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN



Get connected. Get help.™ | 211KC.ORG

GET CONNECTED

UNITED WAY ANSWERS OUR COMMUNITY'S CALL.

Every hour of every day, residents of the 23 counties surrounding Kansas City call United Way 211 in search of essential human services--housing, utility assistance, food pantries, legal aid, community health clinics, tax preparation, help for aging parents and so much more.

United Way's 211 service is available to ALL members of our community--whether you've fallen on hard times, just received a medical diagnosis and don't know where to turn or need mental health resources, 211 is available to YOU.

Simply **dial 211** to connect with caring Community Resource Navigators who are trained to navigate a database of more than 7,000 community services.

United Way 211 also serves as a key link for emergency response coordination during disasters by connecting volunteers and donors with opportunities to help neighbors needing assistance.

It is **FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL**. You can also search a database of resources online at **211KC.org.**

Simply dial 2-1-1, or toll free at (866) 320-5764. Locally, you can call (816) 474-5112 to reach support.

