

EDEN I & R, Inc.

2-1-1 Alameda County Monthly Narrative Report: November 2009

Noteworthy Updates

In November 2-1-1 Resource Specialists handled 7,794 calls, and distributed over 10,570 health, housing and human service referrals! Many of these referrals related to the surge in calls from people seeking Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP)/ Stimulus Fund assistance. 2-1-1 is the central phone number being used to pre-assess and refer potential recipients of the federal housing assistance dollars. Through word of mouth publicity only, on the first Monday of the month, 2-1-1 handled 361 HPRP/Stimulus Fund-related calls (a total of 2,115 calls for the month). This tremendous increase in call volume necessitated the reassignment of all available agency staff to help in this effort. We are proud to be a part of the effort, and overall the countywide Stimulus funding partnerships have been working extremely well due to continuous communication via in person meetings, conference calls and emails.

The holiday season started with 2-1-1 being used as the central phone number for holiday-related resources such as Toys 4 Tots, food baskets, and Thanksgiving meals.

The tax season preparation also started with the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program gearing up again to help low-income working people receive their appropriate refunds. Once again 2-1-1 is the number for people to call to get information about eligibility for the program as well as access to the VITA sites countywide.

The statewide 2-1-1 partners spent the month planning for important events (e.g. a statewide 2-1-1 Summit and 2-1-1 Annual conference) that will help solidify plans including: disaster preparedness and response efforts, especially for counties without 2-1-1 as yet; statewide shared data for public policy planning and funding purposes; and continued support for the passage of legislation to help fund national and statewide 2-1-1 efforts.

Locally Eden I&R continued to test our disaster preparedness capabilities by testing our HAM radio communications, and the call switching capabilities, with our sister 2-1-1 phone centers.

Call Information

Call Examples	~ A Spanish speaking Fremont resident called seeking information on re-negotiating the terms of his mortgage. He was referred to ECHO Housing for mortgage counseling and to Centro de Servicios for translation of his current mortgage terms.
	~A staff member from Avalon Apartments in Emeryville called seeking information on services for a senior in need of care and case management. She was referred to Bay Area Community Services, Center for Elder Independence and to the Alameda County Senior Information Hotline.
	~ A recently unemployed Castro Valley resident called seeking employment services. He was referred to EastBay Works One-Stop Career Center and was also given information on how to apply for food stamps and rent assistance programs.
	~ An Oakland resident called seeking information regarding her mother's conservatorship. She was referred to Legal Assistance for Seniors and the Alameda County Public Guardian office.
	~ A single mother from Hayward called seeking rent assistance after an unexpected loss of child support payments. She was referred to rent assistance programs, to Alameda County Social Services to apply for CalWORKs and food stamps and to the Alameda County Department of Child Support Services.
	~ A Spanish speaking Pleasanton resident called seeking information on labor law. She believed she had been wrongfully terminated from her job for medical reasons. She was referred to the Employment Law Center of the Legal Aid Society, to the Worker's Advocacy Project of Centro Legal de la Raza and to Centro de Servicios. She also received referrals to employment programs and food stamp information.
	~ A Piedmont family called seeking information on youth development and enrichment programs. They received referrals to the Leadership Training Program through Jewish Youth for Community Action, YMCA of the East Bay, and Youth Uprising.
Staff Inservice Training Sessions	~ HRPR/Stimulus Fund HMIS, Status Update and In-House Training.

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Resource Information And Technology Updates	
Services Database	~ Six (6) new agencies were added to the services database this month.
	~ The services database contains 988 agencies and 2,468 programs.
	~ The process of proofreading the 640 agencies in the 2010 Big Blue Book continues.
Housing Database	~ The Housing database contains 71,300 total housing units.
	~ 1,126 new units were added to the database this month.
	~ Housing Subscriptions (mail, PDF & OHIP) with the inventory of available units in Alameda County were sent to Community Based Organizations in Alameda County and San Francisco County.
Online Services Website	~ Eden I&R's online social service resource directory websites at www.alamedaco.info and www.211alamedacounty.org received 254,438 hits from 30,735 visits.
Technology	~ Through EveryOne Home Eden I&R worked with local Housing Authorities for their remote access to Eden I&R's Housing Database so that they can update information about funding and restrictions for subsidized housing supported by their agencies.
	~ Provided initial data set to Healthy Cities for use in the statewide web resource.
	~ Made components of Client database for 2-1-1 to act as a point of entry for the HPRP/Stimulus Fund program live.
	~ Updated phone system to better manage extremely large call volume that resulted from the start up of the HPRP/Stimulus Fund Program.
	~ Staff participated in regional conference call with other Bay Area 2-1-1 providers to discuss technical aspects of disaster preparedness and backup plans for answering each other's calls.
	~ Staff completed routine maintenance and trouble-shooting of work stations and servers such as the installation of software and Operating system updates, virus and spy ware scans, hardware maintenance, etc.
	~ Staff completed routine maintenance and updating of databases, call center software, and web site.

Outreach/Public Information Activities	
Meetings	~ Staff attended a regional conference for organizations associated with the Earned Income Tax Credit program of the IRS in preparation for beginning to utilize 2-1-1 for callers seeking tax assistance.
	~ Staff attended the quarterly All Partners meeting of the Bank On Oakland program. 2-1-1 is used to promote and refer people in Oakland to local banks in order to establish personal bank accounts. The program helps low-income people save money on such things as check cashing services, and will encourage financial savings.
	~ The Executive Director met with Oakland Police Captain Dave Downing. He stated that after taking a tour of the agency, and seeing the breadth of services provided, that he wanted to make sure that the Oakland police officers were made aware of the resources available to them and the people they serve. Captain Downing took 2-1-1 materials to distribute to the police officers as well as to display in neighborhood stations.
	~ The Executive Director met with representatives from San Joaquin Valley who are interested in starting a 2-1-1 center in that county. Information about how to respond to the CPUC's designation process was exchanged as well as the many facets of how to manage a 24/7, multilingual call center.
	~ Multiple HPRP/Stimulus Fund countywide meetings were held in person and over the phone to discuss the surge in interest by the public to participate in the program, and the capacity of the Housing Resource Centers to individually deal with the tremendous need. The 2-1-1 call center's pre-assessment process became a double process: phone call assessments using the 2-1-1 client database, and then another entry of individual data into the HMIS system which was then shared with the HRC staff.
	~ The Executive Director provided an agency tour for two representatives from Comerica Bank who were extremely impressed by the breadth of services provided to the public. As a result, 2-1-1 outreach materials will now be available for the Bank branch employees and their customers.
	~ Staff continues to participate in Community Living Review Team Meetings convened by Alameda County Behavioral Health Services and EveryOne Home to discuss requirements for Board & Care Facilities and Transitional Housing.

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Meetings	~ The Housing Outreach Coordinator attended Rental Property Owner briefings facilitated by the Oakland Housing Authority and the Rental Housing Association of Northern Alameda County to explain the benefits of listing their rental properties with 2-1-1.
	~ Staff attended the first in a series of Affordable Housing Week (AHW) planning meetings with the Oakland Housing Authority.
	~ Staff attended a tenants meeting facilitated by Oakland Housing Authority to assist tenants possibly being displaced from an abated building on Hillside Ave in Oakland.
	~ Staff attended UASI meeting for the development of the Bay Area region-wide Disaster Spontaneous Volunteer plan.
	~ Staff attended the Nor Cal VOAD meeting facilitated by American Red Cross.
	~ Staff attended the Alameda County Volunteer Management Group meeting.
	~ Staff participated in the quarterly meeting of the Program Coordinating Committee of the Alameda County Housing Authority.
	~ Staff attended the Kaiser Permanente East Bay Community Benefit Grant Program Orientation meeting focused on their 2010 grant cycle.
	~ The Executive Director participated in a statewide conference call with fellow board members of the California Association of Information and Referral Services (CAIRS) during which the primary focus was statewide and federal funding support. Toward that end, a 2-1-1 Summit was being planned for next month that will move toward statewide consensus about how best to achieve those goals.
	~ The Bay Area 2-1-1 Partnership had its monthly meeting that focused on disaster preparedness, data sharing, fundraising and current client needs/resources.
~ As a result of many 2-1-1 statewide meetings and discussions, it was agreed upon that 2-1-1 centers (including 2-1-1 Alameda County) would sign an agreement with Healthy Cities in order to share our I&R data on a statewide system. This compilation of data will provide statewide and local resource information in new mapping formats. The information can/will also be used in public policy making decisions. Eden I&R signed the MOA this month.	
Fairs/Events/ and Outreach	~ Staff hosted a booth at the Veteran's Health and Resource Fair in Fremont, the Alameda County Health/Safety & Fitness Fair in Oakland, and HUD's Combined Federal Campaign Fair in San Francisco (many employees in this office are Alameda County residents) to promote the 2-1-1 service to the public.
	~ 2-1-1 materials were distributed to the Tri-Valley Haven Food Pantry, Tri-City Volunteers, Viola Blythe Center, Salvation Army Tri-City Corps, League of Volunteers, McGee Avenue Baptist Church, Salvation Army Hayward, Christ Episcopal Church, and Alameda Food Bank for their Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners/baskets.
	~ The Oakland Tribune printed and posted two articles online about 2-1-1: "Alameda County residents can dial 211 for Thanksgiving meals, volunteer opportunities" and "For a list of Alameda County food banks, food drives, free meals and volunteer opportunities, dial 211."
	~ 2-1-1 flyers and magnets were distributed to every Spectrum Meals and Wheels homebound clients in the Tri-Valley area.
	~ Thousands of 2-1-1 materials were distributed to 17 Alameda Unified School District schools and the district office for distribution to students/families and staff.
	~ A new Comcast PSA was tapped, that will air in December, that focuses on using 2-1-1 to refer individuals to the Bank On Oakland program and to screen individuals for eligibility for food stamps.
	~ Staff facilitated an Affordable Housing Workshop for the Center for Independent Living.
	~ 2-1-1 staff began to register Berkeley residents for that city's Toys 4 Tots program sponsored by the Berkeley Police Department.
	~ The Executive Director was a featured speaker at the Regional Association of Continuity Planners (ACP) meeting in San Ramon. ACP members are corporate representatives whose primary purpose is keeping their businesses running after a disaster. Kaiser Permanente requested the presentation about 2-1-1 and the many ways in which 2-1-1 acts as THE public communication system in concert with the Office of Emergency Services. Several counties and corporations were represented at the meeting.
	~ The Executive Director attended the Oakland African American Chamber's annual event which featured Don Perata. Mr. Perata was one of the first elected officials to support Eden I&R as the 2-1-1 call center for Alameda County. He was personally thanked again for his ongoing support.
	~ Staff attended the Annual Meeting of East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO).

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Fairs/Events/ and Outreach	<p>~ The Executive Director was a featured speaker at the Central Labor Council's delegate meeting. About half of the people in attendance had heard about 2-1-1 and had very positive feedback about their experiences with the service. For those people who were unaware of the communication system, a detailed PowerPoint presentation explained what resources were available to the delegates and their members. Hundreds of 2-1-1 PR materials were distributed.</p> <p>~ November was a very stressful month due to large increases in client needs. As a result the Executive Director arranged for the McKinnon Body Therapy Center, located in Oakland, to provide in-kind neck, shoulder and back massages for staff. This was very much appreciated by all! We thank the McKinnon Body Therapy Center for its support.</p>
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