

# Request for Proposal (RFP)

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*Illinois Uncovered Counties Phase 1*



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## Contact Information

For questions about this proposal, please contact:

Gina Gallo  
Contract Manager  
[contracts@211illinois.org](mailto:contracts@211illinois.org)

## Timeline

Dates	Description
May 7, 2024	211 Illinois will distribute the RFP publicly.
May 7 – May 13, 2024	Potential Vendors may submit questions in writing by visiting our website. Go to the Inform section and click on the RFP section. You will need to register for our partner portal.
May 15, 2024	Publish answered questions via email and on the 211 Illinois website in the RFP section.
May 17, 2024	A letter of intent (LOI) from the Vendor is due in 211 Illinois by 4 pm CST. Submit your LOI via our Partner Portal. Go to the Inform section and click on the RFP section. You will need to register for our partner portal. Approved LOIs will be invited to apply.
May 27, 2024	Vendor RFP responses are due to 211 Illinois by 4 pm CST. Proposals must be submitted electronically via our Partner Portal.
May 31 – June 6, 2024	The evaluation committee will assess the proposals received based on the scope of work. 211 Illinois will also conduct reference checks.
June 7 – June 12, 2024	The top-scoring proposals will proceed forward. Vendors will be invited to a virtual 30-minute interview.
June 12 – June 14, 2024	Final selection of Vendor(s) will be made.
June 15 – June 17, 2024	Notifications of awards will be made via email and on the 211 Illinois website.
June 21 - June 24, 2024	All contracts or amendments will be executed. Vendors must sign contracts by June 24, 2024.
June 28, 2024	Start-up costs for year one (1) will be paid out in one lump sum for all executed contracts or amendments.

## About 211 Illinois

Created in 2009, 211 Illinois was designated as the lead entity to drive 2-1-1 service expansion across Illinois. Established in 2010 in Illinois state legislation (2-1-1 Service Act), we provide oversight and guidance to the 211 Illinois Statewide Network and work to

sustain and grow 2-1-1 services across Illinois. Our vision is for a fully integrated, funded, sustainable, and high-quality 211 Illinois Statewide Network available to everyone in Illinois. This vision cannot be achieved without strong local support and a commitment to funding and marketing 2-1-1 services.

211 Illinois coordinates, funds, and guides the 211 Illinois Statewide Network toward achieving high-quality service delivery. We invest in contact center training and education, support and drive I&R and contact center best practices, and invest in the core 2-1-1 services across Illinois. These activities lead to service alignment and continuity of 2-1-1 services statewide. 211 Illinois designates the 2-1-1 number to a provider and works with the Local Exchange Carriers (LEC) to route the 2-1-1 dialing code across Illinois.

We also collaborate statewide with our United Way, Health Department, and Government partners to advocate, market, promote, and outreach to the local community about 2-1-1 services. We provide technical assistance and guidance to local, state, and federal partners to educate them about the impact of the 211 Illinois Statewide Network on Illinois residents, including education and advocacy for 2-1-1 services and the 211 Illinois Statewide Network.

You can learn more about us by visiting our website at [211illinois.org](https://211illinois.org).

## What is 2-1-1?

211 is a twenty-four (24) hour, seven (7) day a week helpline. We are a go-to resource that connects millions with locally available help. Empathetic and respectful experts answer live inquiries from people by phone, text, and online, discussing their needs and referring them to local support.

In 2023, the 211 network:

- Responded to **more than 15.3 million** phone calls, texts, web chats, emails, and in-person requests for help.
- Made **more than 19 million** total referrals to help.

211 Illinois is aligning and standardizing our statewide network. In 2022, we added two (2) additional contact centers bringing us to six centers today. In 2023, the 211 Illinois Statewide Network:

- Responded to **more than 122,173** phone calls, texts, web chats, emails, and in-person requests for help.

- Made **more than 150,000** total referrals to help.

In Illinois, we still have thirty (30) uncovered counties without 2-1-1 services.

## RFP Introduction

211 Illinois seeks proposals from experienced vendors who operate 24-hour call centers with a history of providing information and referral (I&R) services in the United States. We are releasing a series of 2-1-1 service RFPs in several phases. This phase 1 RFP is to select existing or new contact center partners to provide 2-1-1 information and referral services to Illinois residents in twelve (12) uncovered counties.

We seek proposals from vendors for start-up costs for year one (1) in one or more of the twelve counties listed below. RFP responses may include plans for selected counties or all twelve (12) counties. The twelve (12) counties for bid in this RFP are as listed.

County	Population
Boone	53,448
Bureau	33,244
Cass	13,042
Henderson	6,387
Henry	49,284
McDonough	27,238
Mason	13,086
Mercer	15,699
Pike	14,739
Rock Island	144,672
Schuyler	6,902
Warren	16,835
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>394,576</b>

Proposed vendors should submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) no later than May 17, 2024, at 4 pm CST. In the submitted LOI, please note how you meet the minimum vendor qualifications and which counties above will be included in your response.

Full responses are due to 211 Illinois no later than May 27, 2024, at 4 pm CST. 211 Illinois has \$150,000 available to support all uncovered counties in this phase one RFP.

## Vendor Qualifications

Selected vendors must meet the minimum vendor qualifications outlined below.

- Contact center has been operating and answering inquiries for more than sixteen (16) months.
- Contact center operates twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
- Accredited by or proof the Vendor is seeking accreditation through Inform USA.
- A corrective action plan must not be in place with 211 Illinois or any state or local funding or community partner in your local service areas.
- A registered business in good standing with the IRS, the State of Illinois, and the state in which your headquarters operates.

Please outline in your LOI how you meet the minimum qualifications above. 211 Illinois will verify the minimum qualifications above as part of the application review process. Vendors with unverified minimum qualifications will not be selected.

In your full application, fully address how your organization meets the scope of work outlined.

## Scope of Services

Items	Description	Points
Statewide Network Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work collaboratively with 211 Illinois around accessibility, accountability, and alignment to ensure and maintain 100% coverage of 211 services in Illinois.</li> <li>• Attend and actively participate in all 211 Illinois statewide committee meetings and projects.</li> <li>• Continuous data participation in the United Way 211 National Database Platform, 211 Counts, 211 Illinois online resource directory, and all 211 Illinois data and outcome reporting projects.</li> <li>• Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around Cooperative Relationships.</li> </ul>	10
Call Center Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operate 24/7/365</li> <li>• Handle live inquiries through live calls, texts, and emails.</li> <li>• Provide multilingual support to non-English speakers, including people who are deaf or hard of hearing and those who are hard of hearing.</li> <li>• Record 100% of all conversations for quality and feedback review.</li> <li>• Collect minimum data elements for each conversation answered.</li> </ul>	25

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conduct customer satisfaction and follow-up needs outcome surveys to assess services and community effectiveness.</li> <li>● Provide contract metrics reports and data uploads to 211 Illinois on time.</li> <li>● Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around the Service Delivery.</li> </ul>	
Data Curation and Database Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Curate, index, and maintain a resource directory that meets Inform USA standards, 211 Illinois practices and meets local community needs.</li> <li>● Create, adhere to, and publicize local inclusion/exclusion criteria and adhere to the statewide inclusion/exclusion guidelines.</li> <li>● Create, adhere, and publicize a local style guide.</li> <li>● Collect minimum data elements for each conversation answered.</li> <li>● Meet the database quality assurance indicators set by Inform USA.</li> <li>● Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around the Resource Database.</li> </ul>	25
Disaster Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Capacity to scale during local or statewide disaster events.</li> <li>● Participate in any 211 Illinois requested statewide disaster or emergency training, meetings, preparation, or response.</li> <li>● Collaborate with 211 Illinois and state and local emergency operation centers (EOCs) to collect, disseminate, and generate referrals based on temporary disaster records.</li> <li>● Provide reports to 211 Illinois and state and local emergencies about activities before, during, or after a local disaster or emergency.</li> <li>● Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around Disaster Preparedness.</li> </ul>	10
Organizational Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement and maintain contact center and resource directory technology to effectively manage operations and report on all contracted activities.</li> <li>● Employ and maintain staffing models based on forecasted volume projections, staffing ratios, and database complexity.</li> <li>● Implement 211 Illinois training guidelines to ensure appropriate onboarding and professional development of staff.</li> </ul>	15

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Market 211 services collaboratively with 211 Illinois and local marketing partners.</li> <li>● Provide contract deliverables and reimbursements to 211 Illinois on time.</li> <li>● Acquire and maintain Inform USA Platinum Membership, accreditation, certification, and Learn Platform.</li> <li>● Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around Organizational Effectiveness.</li> </ul>	
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Budget and costs</li> <li>● Audited Financials</li> <li>● References</li> </ul>	15

## Proposal Guidelines

Vendors are requested to submit proposals into the 211 Illinois portal by May 27, 2024, no later than 4 p.m. CDT. Late submissions will not be accepted. The Vendor (s) are responsible for all costs associated with preparing proposals and presentations.

Your application should address the scope of work in detail. However, you will not have unlimited space to respond. Please be clear, concise, and thoughtful in your responses. When completing your final submission, you will be required to provide the following information.

- Contact information
- Counties of interest
- Timeline for project implementation and outline of year one (1) activities.
- Narrative addressing how you will implement and sustain the scope of work.
- Project Budget
- Last two (2) years, audited financial reports
- Three (3) references. If outside Illinois, please provide two (2) local references and one (1) from Illinois reference, where possible.

The sample letter of intent and application forms can be found in the appendix.

## Contract Terms

All contracts or amendments will be executed, and Vendors will be required to sign contracts no later than June 24, 2024. Start-up costs for year one (1) will be paid out in one lump sum no later than June 28, 2024. All selected vendors will also be required to



complete a data-sharing agreement. As part of contract execution, the Vendor will be required to participate in the following activities.

Item	Description
Implementation Calls	211 Illinois will establish a meeting schedule with the selected Vendor (s) to ensure that services are established and operational according to the contract terms.
Quality Assurance Monitoring	211 Illinois will continuously monitor the Vendor's performance and adherence to the contract terms throughout year one (1) to address any issues or concerns.
Customer & Community Satisfaction Surveys	The Vendor will provide service evaluation and community feedback results to 211 Illinois at least quarterly. 211 Illinois will assess the Vendor's effectiveness in meeting contracted goals.
Performance Metrics	<p>The Vendor should set goals for the following metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Customer Satisfaction (CSR) – 90% or above.</li> <li>● Wait Time – 90 seconds or less.</li> <li>● Abandonment Rate – 15% or less.</li> <li>● Average Talk Time – 6 – 9 minutes</li> </ul>

## Appendix

Attachment A: Sample 211 Illinois Uncovered Counties Letter of Intent

Attachment B: Sample 211 Illinois Uncovered Counties Application



## 23-24 211 Illinois Uncovered Counties Phase 1 - Letter of Intent

Organization Name \*

Limit: 300 characters

Organization Address \*

Organization City \*

Organization State \*

Organization Zip Code \*

Organization Website

**Name of Preparer \***

First Name

Last Name

**Title of Preparer \***

**Email Address of Preparer \***

**Phone Number of Preparer \***



**Which Illinois county/counties is your organization proposing coverage for? (select all that apply) \***

- Boone
- Bureau
- Cass
- Henderson
- Henry
- McDonough
- Mason

Mercer

Pike

Rock Island

Schuyler

Warren

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## Vendor Qualifications

This section lists the minimum vendor requirements to proceed to the application process. Please answer each question indicating that your organization has fulfilled these requirements.

**Has the Contact Center been operating and answering inquiries for more than sixteen (16) months? \***

Yes

No

**List the date your organization answered its first conversation. \***

**Does your contact center currently operate twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week without outsourcing service? \***

Yes

No

**Has your organization achieved or is in the process of achieving Inform USA accreditation? \***

Yes

No

**List the date of expiration of your current Inform USA accreditation (or expected date of accreditation if currently pursuing). \***

**Is your organization on a corrective action plan with 211 Illinois, a state, or local partner? \***

Yes

No

**Is your organization registered and in good standing with the State of Illinois? \***

Yes

No

**Upload a certificate or screenshot of your Certificate of Good Standing. \***

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpl, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff

I certify that our organization meets the minimum vendor requirements. \*

I certify that our organization can meet or exceed the scope of work outlined in the RFP. \*

Save Draft

Submit Form

Drafts may be visible to the administrators of this program.



## 23-24 211 Illinois Uncovered Counties Phase 1 - Application

### Contact Information

Name of Preparer \*

First Name

Last Name

Title of Preparer \*

Email Address of Preparer \*

email@example.com

Phone Number of Preparer \*



Is the person preparing this the main contact for this application? \*

Yes

No

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## **General Information**

**Which Illinois county/counties is your organization proposing coverage for? (select all that apply) \***

Boone

Bureau

Cass

Henderson

Henry

McDonough

Mason

Mercer

Pike

Rock Island

Schuyler

Warren

**Does your organization currently provide 211 services in Illinois? \***



Yes

No

**What channels of 211 services do you currently provide? (check all that apply) \***

Phone

Email

Text

Chat

**What I&R software do you currently use? \***

iCarol

RTM

Wellsky

Visionlink

Other

**Enter the name of the I&R software here: \***

**What phone system do you currently use? \***

Amazon Web Services

Five9

Genesis

Nice/InContact

TalkDesk

Twilio

Other

Enter the name of the phone system here: \*

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## **Application Narrative**

Please thoroughly answer the questions in each section below based on the scope of work outlined in the RFP. The scope of services listed in the RFP is outlined for reference in the header of each section.

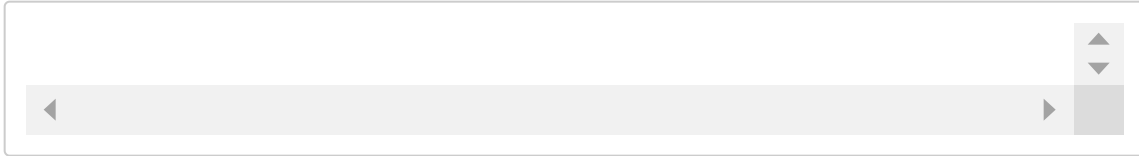
### **Statewide Network Participation**

- Work collaboratively with 211 Illinois around accessibility, accountability, and alignment to ensure and maintain 100% coverage of 211 services in Illinois.
- Attend and actively participate in all 211 Illinois statewide committee meetings and projects.
- Continuous data participation in the United Way 211 National Database Platform, 211 Counts, 211 Illinois online resource directory, and all 211 Illinois data and outcome reporting projects.
- Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around Cooperative Relationships.

**Detail how your organization will work collaboratively with 211 Illinois and other 2-1-1 statewide partners to ensure coverage and**

consistency of services across Illinois and how your organization would fulfill the requirements above. \*

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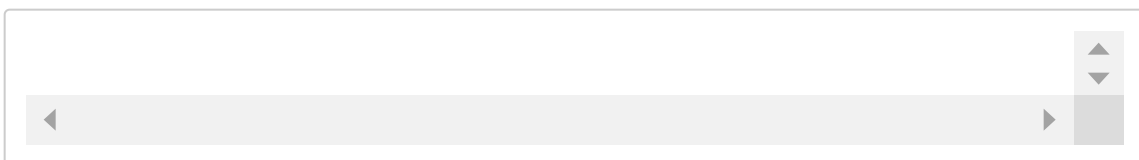
Limit: 1000 words

## Call Center Operations

- Operate 24/7/365
- Handle live inquiries through live calls, texts, and emails.
- Provide multilingual support to non-English speakers, including people who are deaf or hard of hearing and those who are hard of hearing.
- Record 100% of all conversations for quality and feedback review.
- Collect minimum data elements for each conversation answered.
- Conduct customer satisfaction and follow-up needs outcome surveys to assess services and community effectiveness.
- Provide contract metrics reports and data uploads to 211 Illinois on time.
- Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around Service Delivery.

**Detail your organization's experience providing contact center services 24 hours a day and using a multi-channel approach. Include information about how you ensure access, quality, and satisfaction. \***

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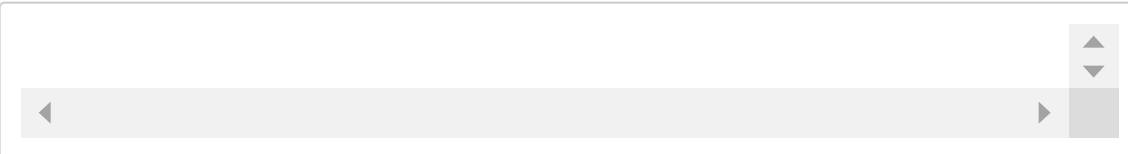
Limit: 2000 words

## Data Curation & Database Management

- Curate, index, and maintain a resource directory that meets Inform USA standards, 211 Illinois practices, and meet local community needs.
- Create, adhere to and publicize local inclusion/exclusion criteria and adhere to the statewide inclusion/exclusion guidelines.
- Create, adhere, and publicize a local style guide.
- Collect minimum data elements for each conversation answered.
- Meet the database quality assurance indicators set by Inform USA.
- Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around the Resource Database.

**Detail your organization's data curation and resource directory management services, including your approach to working with local service providers, your data curation protocols, and how you improve database quality. \***

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Limit: 2000 words

## Disaster Preparedness

- Capacity to scale during local or statewide disaster events.
- Participate in any 211 Illinois requested statewide disaster or emergency training, meetings, preparation, or response.
- Collaborate with 211 Illinois and state and local emergency operation centers (EOCs) to collect, disseminate, and generate referrals based on temporary disaster records.
- Provide reports to 211 Illinois and state and local emergencies about activities before, during, or after a local disaster or emergency.
- Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around Disaster Preparedness.

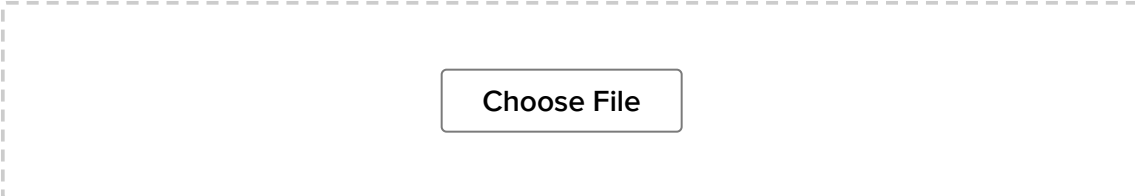
Describe your organization's previous disaster experience and your capacity to scale services during local or statewide disaster events. \*

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Limit: 1000 words

**Upload your organization's COOP.**

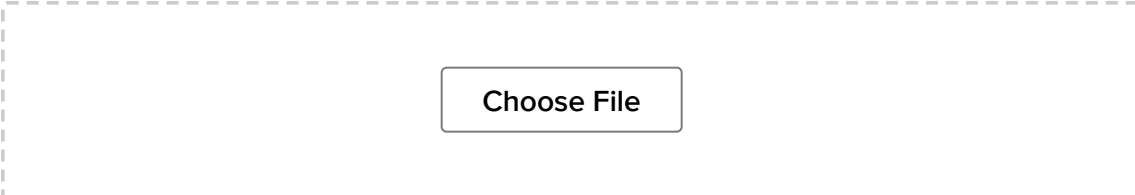


Choose File

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpf, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff

**Upload your organization's emergency operations plan.**



Choose File

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpf, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff

## **Organizational Effectiveness**

- Implement and maintain contact center and resource directory technology to effectively manage operations and report on all contracted activities.
- Employ and maintain staffing models based on forecasted volume projections, staffing ratios, and database complexity.

· Implement 211 Illinois training guidelines to ensure appropriate onboarding and professional development of staff.

· Market 211 services collaboratively with 211 Illinois and local marketing partners.

· Provide contract deliverables and reimbursements to 211 Illinois on time.

· Acquire and maintain Inform USA Platinum Membership, accreditation, certification, and Learn Platform.

· Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around Organizational Effectiveness.

**Describe your organization's approach to ensuring organizational and program stability. Include how you approach staffing models, onboarding, and professional development. \***

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Limit: 2000 words

**Describe your plans for implementing and sustaining 211 services in the county/counties for which you are applying. Please include your timeline for making the 2-1-1 services operational. \***

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Limit: 500 words

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## **Budget**

Enter the start-up and year one costs for covering the county/counties in which you're applying. \*



	A	B	C
1	Expense Category	Start-Up Costs	Year One Costs
2	Staffing (including fringe benefits)		
3	Training & Development		
4	Technology		
5	Marketing & Outreach		
6	Other		
7	TOTAL	0	0

Provide a budget narrative explaining the budget costs for the start-up and year one costs for the counties in which you're applying. \*

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Limit: 500 words

Please upload the last two years of your audited financial statements. \*

Select up to 2 files to attach. No files have been attached yet. You may add 2 more files.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpl, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff

**Please provide contact information for three references. If outside Illinois, please provide two local references and one from Illinois, where possible.**

Limit: 200 words

Save Draft

Submit Form