

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Illinois Uncovered Counties Phase 2



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Contact Information

For questions about this proposal, please contact:

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Timeline

Dates	Description
November 1, 2024	211 Illinois will distribute the RFP publicly.
November 1 - 10, 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.
November 7, 2024	211 Illinois will host and record a webinar regarding the RFP and the partner portal.
November 12, 2024	Publish answered questions via email and on the 211 Illinois website in the RFP section.
November 25, 2024	Vendor RFP responses are due to 211 Illinois by 4 pm CST. Proposals must be submitted electronically via our Partner Portal.
December 2 – December 10, 2024	The evaluation committee will assess the proposals received based on the scope of work. 211 Illinois will also conduct reference checks.
December 10 – December 16, 2024	211 Illinois will send any evaluation committee questions regarding proposals to applicants.
December 11 – 18, 2024	The top-scoring proposals will proceed forward. Vendors will be invited to a virtual 30-minute interview.
January 6 – 10, 2025	Final selection of Vendor(s) will be made.
January 10, 2025	Notifications of awards will be made via email and on the 211 Illinois website.
January 31, 2025	All contracts or amendments will be executed. Vendors must sign contracts by January 31, 2025.
February 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025	Start-up and year one (1) costs will be paid out via reimbursement based on work completed 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.

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.

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. This phase 2 RFP is to select existing or new contact center partners to provide 2-1-1 information and referral services in the eighteen (18) remaining uncovered counties in Illinois.

The RFP responses may include plans for select counties below or all eighteen (18) counties. The eighteen (18) remaining counties for bid in this RFP are as listed.

County	Population
Adams	65,737
Bond	16,725
Brown	6,244
Christian	34,032
Clay	13,288
Coles	46,863
Cumberland	10,450
Edwards	6,245
Effingham	34,668
Fayette	21,488
Hancock	17,620
Jasper	9,287
Lawrence	15,280
Montgomery	28,288
Morgan	32,915
Richland	15,813
Scott	4,949
Wabash	11,361
TOTAL	391,253

Proposed vendors should submit an application to 211 Illinois via the partner portal no later than November 25, 2024, at 4 pm CST. 211 Illinois has \$150,000 available to support all uncovered counties in this phase two 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 registered business in good standing with the IRS, the State of Illinois, and the state in which your headquarters operates.

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"> • 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. 	10
Call Center Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate 24/7/365 • Handle live inquiries through live calls, texts, and emails. 	25

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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. ● Outline tracked and reported 211 service performance metrics internally or to local funders. ● Provide data sharing timely and ensure appropriate data uploads to 211 Illinois. ● Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around the Service Delivery. 	
Data Curation and Database Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curate, index, and maintain a resource directory that meets Inform USA standards, 211 Illinois practices and meets local community needs. ● Create, adhere to, and publicize local inclusion/exclusion criteria and adhere to the statewide inclusion/exclusion guidelines. ● Create, adhere to, and publicize a local style guide. ● Collect minimum data elements for each conversation answered. ● Meet the database quality assurance indicators set by Inform USA. ● Outline implemented protocols for working with and curating data on local nonprofit and government services. ● Must adhere to Inform USA Standards around the Resource Database. 	25
Disaster Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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. 	10

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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. 	
Organizational Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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. 	15
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Start up and year one (1) budget ● Three year operational budget ● Audited Financials ● References 	15

Proposal Guidelines

Vendors are requested to submit proposals into the 211 Illinois portal by November 25, 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 January 31, 2025. Start-up and year one (1) costs will be paid out in one lump sum no later than June 30, 2025. 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.

Appendix

Attachment A: Sample 211 Illinois Uncovered Counties Phase 2 Application