

STATE OF MICHIGAN

BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the matter, on the Commission's own motion, )  
Regarding designation of a state 2-1-1 coordinating ) Case No. U-14725  
Agency pursuant to Section 214 of the Michigan )  
Telecommunications Act )

**MICHIGAN 2-1-1 PROGRESS REPORT FOR**  
**THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

Pursuant to the Commission's order of March 14, 2006 in this proceeding, Michigan 2-1-1, the agency designated by the Commission to be the State 2-1-1 coordinating agency, submits this report on the progress of Michigan 2-1-1 in meeting its availability and funding goals.

**Development and Implementation of Endorsement Process**

Michigan 2-1-1 developed and implemented an endorsement process in August, 2006 to ensure that new 2-1-1 call centers and counties served be part of a statewide coordinated 2-1-1 system. The endorsement requires the applicant to have received formal endorsement by Michigan Alliance of Information and Referral Systems and that service provisions be consistent with the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan approved by Michigan 2-1-1 Inc., in January 2006.

Through the endorsement process, the applicant agrees to:

- Submit an application to the MPSC (MPSC) for 2-1-1 Call Center designation within 60 calendar days of Michigan 2-1-1, Inc.'s endorsement
- Work collaboratively with other Michigan 2-1-1 Call Centers to provide and promote 2-1-1 on a statewide basis
- Actively participate in and promote the implementation of the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan
- Designate a representative to regularly attend and participate in Operating Council meetings
- Designate a representative to regularly attend and participate in the Data Managers Workgroup
- Provide Michigan 2-1-1, Inc. with annual updates / reports regarding the scope of its 2-1-1 service delivery.

## **Organizational Development**

Michigan 2-1-1 was incorporated as a wholly owned subsidiary of Michigan Association of United Ways in August, 2006. Three new members were added to the Michigan 2-1-1 Board in September 2006 (see board roster, attached hereto as Exhibit 1). Michigan 2-1-1 also established the Michigan 2-1-1 Operating Council and statewide system development taskforces in 2007 (See below).

### **Michigan 2-1-1 Statewide System Development**

#### **Michigan 2-1-1 Operating Council**

The Michigan 2-1-1 Operating Council was established in August, 2006 by the Michigan 2-1-1 Board according to Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan. Comprised of Call Center directors representing identified regional call centers and representatives of the Resource Managers Workgroup, the Council addresses the day-to-day operations of Michigan's 2-1-1 system. Their initial focus will be on identifying processes for the collection and sharing of statewide data, emergency preparedness and consistent call center operations.

#### **Resource Managers Workgroup**

The Resource Managers Workgroup, comprised of Resource Managers from 2-1-1 Call Centers, comprehensive I & Rs and specialized I & Rs, has been meeting monthly for over two years and receives oversight from the Michigan 2-1-1 Operating Council. Their mission is to ensure the quality of Michigan's resource databases, standardize taxonomy indexing, prioritize the scope of records, standardize record structure and content, develop and implement a standardization process that meets defined quality assurance criteria practices as outlined by MI-AIRS and AIRS, support and network with fellow resource managers. The Workgroup has made substantial progress toward their mission and has also provided capacity to other MI 2-1-1 workgroups.

### **After-Hours Taskforce**

This Taskforce is charged to look at after-hours 2-1-1 service delivery and standardization of contractual agreements, as it relates to implementation of the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan. Currently the Taskforce is in the process of defining the scope of service, identifying specialty services provided by the different regional call centers, and reviewing selection criteria and contracts from other states. Serving on the taskforce are representatives from 2-1-1 Call Centers and Crisis Call Centers.

### **Statewide Database Project & Taskforce**

A grant to the Michigan Molecular Institute and Michigan Technological University, by the Herbert and Grace Dow Foundation, has provided the capacity to develop a dynamic, customized open-source software platform for non-profit organizations. 2-1-1 was selected to be the first recipient because it has the potential to have the greatest impact. Since spring 2006 the Taskforce has been working to identify system and design requirements. The MTU Project Team has been working on translating these requirements into a platform that will provide the capacity for a statewide 2-1-1 database, compatible with state government systems, which will have ease of use and utility for the foreseeable future. Taskforce members (state government, MTU, MMI, Resource Managers, Call Center representatives) have been providing feedback on the product development throughout the process and observed the first demonstration of the product at its October, 2006 meeting. Refinements will occur based upon that look. It is possible that a 'finished' product will be available in the first half of 2007. If it can meet the needs of the 2-1-1 system, this project can save the 2-1-1 system thousand of dollars and elevate the quality and efficiency of what we do.

### **Telecommunications Taskforce**

This Taskforce is part of the 2-1-1 Statewide Database Project and is led by the Department of Information Technology (DIT). A telecommunications solution is required to

provide interconnectivity of Michigan's 2-1-1 system. Load balancing, emergency and disaster back-up, and call routing all demand that we have a telecommunications backbone capable of meeting our needs. Additionally, a technology solution that will allow the portability of data, large-scale data transfers, and system interoperability is necessary to interact with state government technology. Currently, each of the 2-1-1 Call Centers has differing telecommunications systems that do not interrelate. The taskforce is looking at what can be done in a time of transition and what can do we do for the long-term. Utilizing the state backbone is one of the options being investigated. DIT has been able to bring various experts to the table. Next steps include identifying the state's data migration policy, updating the information on current technology use in the 2-1-1 Call Centers, identifying a strategy for bringing cellular carriers on board and leveraging resources.

#### **Emergency Preparedness Taskforce**

Comprised of state government representatives from Department of Community Health and Michigan State Police, along with Michigan 2-1-1 Regional Call Center directors, this group is looking at ways that the Michigan 2-1-1 system can be used during times of disaster and emergency. The Taskforce is currently reviewing the use of 2-1-1, in times of emergency or disaster, by other states. The group had the opportunity to learn from Melissa Flornouy, Director of the Louisiana Non-Profit Association about the value that 2-1-1 added following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Next steps include drafting a plan for 2-1-1's use, by state government.

#### **Statewide Data Collection Workgroup**

Developing a process for the collection and reporting of statewide 2-1-1 data is the charge of this group. The purpose is to identify, for a larger audience the needs and unmet needs of Michigan 2-1-1 callers. Current work includes a review of common data elements

utilized by each 2-1-1 Call Center, identification of the stakeholder group, and the development of a tool to be used to collect and report data.

### **2-1-1 Availability**

2-1-1 availability is expanding and building out according to the statewide system defined within the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan. In February, 2006, the fifteen counties across the Upper Peninsula gained 2-1-1 availability through a regional call center in Escanaba. On November 1, 2006, the Ann Arbor call center introduced 2-1-1 availability for Washtenaw, Monroe and Livingston Counties. In February 2007, expansion of service is expected for Ingham, Eaton, Clinton and Hillsdale Counties through the Jackson 2-1-1 call center. With the addition of these counties, 2-1-1 availability will have expanded from eight counties to twenty-eight, serving 70% of the population of Michigan in February 2007, up from 56% in February 2006.

Looking forward, local financial commitments are in place to continue 2-1-1 expansion in 2007 according to the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan. Manistee, Mason and Oceana Counties have secured local funding for 2-1-1 service through expansion of the Muskegon call center. Of the seven proposed regions in the Business Plan, the 22-county region in the northeast Lower Peninsula is the only one that does not yet have an active 2-1-1 Call Center. Midland is endorsed by the Business Plan to lead development in this region. The United Way of Midland County and 6 local foundations have committed funding for a full-time 2-1-1 development director in 2007 with the objective to launch a 2-1-1 Call Center serving a core area of 3 to 7 counties. The existence of Michigan 2-1-1 as a statewide coordinating body is critical to expanding availability as a sustainable system through regional 2-1-1 call centers.

## Funding

Michigan 2-1-1 will continue to seek funding from all available sources, both public and private, in order to meet its goal of building sustained and predictable funding for the entire 2-1-1 system. Although much of the specific funding detailed below is targeted for specific purposes, Michigan 2-1-1 will make every effort to obtain funding for its operations from a multitude of private and public sources, including local government agencies. Moreover, there are currently 14 local United Ways that provide funding for the statewide operation of Michigan 2-1-1. All of them support current or developing 2-1-1 service. In addition, UPCAP Services (the 2-1-1 provider in the Upper Peninsula) is a non-United Way 2-1-1 provider that has provided financial support for statewide operations. All 2-1-1 agencies support statewide operations with in-kind support through significant staff time, travel cost, and other contributions.

**Foundation funding** - A \$200K grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to the Michigan Association of United Ways (MAUW) will continue to fund the Michigan 2-1-1 Director position through 2007. Development of a statewide 2-1-1 database solution is the flagship project of a \$2.1 million grant from the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation to the Midland Information Technology Consortium and Michigan Tech.

**Michigan Association of United Ways funding** - In May, 2006, the Michigan Association of United Ways re-directed funding of one full-time employee to a Public Policy Director position. The primary focus of this position is to work with Michigan 2-1-1 in aligning the statewide system with publicly funded health and human services and to garner funding from the State of Michigan and garner funding from various sources. In addition to providing staffing and overhead, MAUW supports Michigan 2-1-1 through asking members to designate five percent of their membership dues to Michigan 2-1-1.

**State of Michigan funding** - The Michigan Department of Community Health provided \$32,000 in funding for a study identifying potential State department use of 2-1-1. The 2006-07 State of Michigan Budget includes \$100,000 for a 2-1-1 demonstration project within the Department of Human Services Budget. The project will demonstrate 2-1-1's use for supporting DHS caseworkers in serving clients.

The Department of Human Services Budget, Section 307 of the Public Act 345 of 2006, provides:

"Of the money appropriated in part 1 for demonstration projects, 100,000.00 shall be distributed as provided in subsection (2). The amount distributed under this subsection shall not exceed 50% of the total operating expenses of the program described in subsection (2), with the remaining 50% paid by local United Way organizations and other nonprofit organizations and foundations.

(2) Money distributed under subsection (1) shall be distributed to Michigan 2-1-1, a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of this state that is exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the internal revenue code, 26 USC 501(c)(3), and whose mission is to coordinate and support a statewide 2-1-1 system. Michigan 2-1-1 shall use the money only to fulfill the Michigan 2-1-1 business plan adopted by Michigan 2-1-1 in January 2005.

(3) Michigan 2-1-1 shall report annually to the department and the house and senate standing committees with primary jurisdiction over matters relating to human services and telecommunications on 2-1-1 system performance, including, but not limited to, call volume by community health and human service needs and unmet needs identified through caller data and customer satisfaction metrics."

**Federal funding** – Potential future funding through the proposed Calling for 2-1-1 Act requires a statewide coordinating body. *The Calling for 2-1-1 Act of 2007* (HR 211/S211), was recently introduced by Representative Anna Eshoo (D-CA) and Senators Elizabeth Dole (R-NC) and Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress. It authorizes \$150 million for years one and two and \$100 million for years three through five through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to help implement and sustain 2-1-1 nationwide. Original bill co-sponsors from Michigan include Senators Levin & Stabenow and Congressmen Ehlers, Rogers & Upton.

**Conclusion**

Michigan 2-1-1 believes it has made substantial progress toward reaching the goals identified in its January 2006 Business Plan, including securing sustained and predictable funding and making 2-1-1 service as ubiquitous as 911 and 411. Michigan 2-1-1 continues to work toward meeting the January 1, 2008 operational date for the central routing system connecting regional community resource information and referral answering points, as required by Section 214(7) of the Michigan Telecommunications Act. The regional call centers are directly involved in the planning process for the central routing system and as a result, are adequately informed of how they will be participating in the statewide routing system.

By coordinating all 2-1-1 operations in the state, Michigan 2-1-1 is proving it can facilitate cost efficiencies on the local level so that all of Michigan's residents can gain improved access to health and human services through abbreviated three digit dialing. Michigan 2-1-1 looks forward to continued success in achieving its goals.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: February 1, 2007

By: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Michigan 2-1-1 Board of Directors

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