

STATE OF MICHIGAN

BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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In the matter, on the Commission's own motion,)
regarding the designation of a state 2-1-1 coordinating)
agency pursuant to Section 214 of the Michigan)
Telecommunications Act.)
_____)

Case No. U-14725

At the November 19, 2015 meeting of the Michigan Public Service Commission in Lansing,
Michigan.

PRESENT: Hon. John D. Quackenbush, Chairman
Hon. Sally A. Talberg, Commissioner
Hon. Norman J. Saari, Commissioner

ORDER

On March 14, 2006, the Commission designated Michigan 2-1-1 (a wholly owned subsidiary of the Michigan Association of United Ways) to serve as the statewide 2-1-1 coordinating agency until March 31, 2007. MCL 484.2214(5). In addition, the Commission granted Michigan 2-1-1 the right to continue to serve as the 2-1-1 coordinating agency for two one-year renewal periods, subject to review and approval by the Commission. The two one-year renewal periods were approved on March 21, 2007 and March 11, 2008, respectively.

On March 18, 2009, the Commission found that Michigan 2-1-1 should continue to serve as the statewide 2-1-1 coordinating agency until March 31, 2010 and granted Michigan 2-1-1 the ability to serve as the statewide 2-1-1 coordinating agency for an additional two years, subject to annual review and approval by the Commission. The Commission approved the renewals on March 18, 2010 and March 17, 2011, respectively. In the latter order, the Commission expressed

its concern that the funding commitments described in Michigan 2-1-1's business plan might not be sustainable and predictable. Therefore, the Commission required that the next annual application, due February 1, 2012, should include additional information on funding sources. The Commission stated that as long as Michigan 2-1-1 evidences significant progress in achieving permanent funding and 2-1-1 availability goals, the Commission would look favorably upon Michigan 2-1-1's continued designation as the 2-1-1 coordinating agency.

On January 27, 2012, Michigan 2-1-1 filed its progress report as required by the Commission's March 17, 2011 order. Michigan 2-1-1 stated that it made considerable progress toward a fully integrated system, despite the lack of authority to require community resource referral entities to apply for 2-1-1 designation or to participate in the system. The report also cited progress towards implementing a statewide, web-hosted telecommunications routing system.

The Commission issued an order on March 8, 2012, finding that Michigan 2-1-1's request for designation as the 2-1-1 coordinator for a three-year period should be granted with certain conditions. First, by January 15 of each year, Michigan 2-1-1 shall file in this docket a letter stating the outcome of its most recently completed internal financial audit. Second, should any issue arise that would directly or indirectly affect Michigan 2-1-1's ability to continue serving, including issues with regard to funding, programming, or technical difficulties, Michigan 2-1-1 shall notify the Commission Staff (Staff).

Michigan 2-1-1 filed financial information required by the March 8, 2012 order on January 15, 2013. On November 6, 2015, Michigan 2-1-1 filed its next progress report (2015 report). In the 2015 report, p. 1, note 2, Michigan 2-1-1 states: "While Michigan 2-1-1 initially filed the outcome of its internal financial audit on January 15, 2013, due to personnel and legal counsel changes, the current Director of Michigan 2-1-1 was not aware of the filing requirements in the March 8, 2012

order, and therefore the subsequent filings were not made. Michigan 2-1-1 responded immediately when notified of the requirements of the order in August 2015.” Michigan 2-1-1 filed consolidated financial audit reports for 2013 and 2014 on September 28, 2015.

The 2015 report describes the demographic use of the services provided, current funding levels, future funding considerations, updates on 2-1-1 coverage throughout the state of Michigan, and changes regarding the organization’s governance model.

As to funding, the 2015 report, p. 3, indicates that Michigan 2-1-1 “continues 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 statewide system.” Michigan 2-1-1 describes its current use of state funds from the Department of Health and Human Services. In addition, the report delineates work that Michigan 2-1-1 has done to obtain funds and in kind services from the private sector. It notes the substantial assistance provided by the Michigan Association of United Ways, in addition to funds obtained from government sources and grants. The 2015 report also discusses progress made towards sustainable funding through its approval for a U.S. Department of Agriculture SNAP (food stamps) Outreach Grant, and suggests, “...this funding should be a reliable source of support for the foreseeable future, as long as the service continues to meet performance expectations.” 2015 report, p. 6. The report also cites the success of its plans to capitalize on grant opportunities with the Michigan Health Endowment Foundation and the Veterans Transportation Community Living Initiative, which Michigan 2-1-1 states will open the door to long-term funding contracts and the provision of additional services.

The 2015 report states that 80 of Michigan’s 83 counties have completed the affiliation process to become part of the statewide 2-1-1 coordinated system, with plans for the additional counties to submit further applications for assignment later in 2015. While the report cites

“encouraging progress toward sustainable support for 2-1-1,” the 2015 report also cites lack of local funding support as a challenge moving forward. 2015 report, p. 7. Several counties in the state have suspended local funding, leading to severely limited services in their communities, and others have expressed interest in receiving their 2-1-1 service through different regional affiliates. 2015 report, p. 9.

The Michigan 2-1-1 report describes the activities of the Michigan 2-1-1 Operating Council, the Resource Managers Workgroup, and the Board of Directors. The report also states that each of the Michigan 2-1-1 Centers are accredited by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems; and discusses its accomplishment in consolidating eight regional databases into a single statewide, searchable database and migrating call centers to a shared call routing and contact management platform, resulting in cost-savings for the system and opening the door to new funding and contracting opportunities.

The 2015 report further states that 2-1-1 is available through Charter Telephone, Comcast Telephone, Vonage, and other VoIP providers as well as cell phone providers, with occasional access problems reported by pay-as-you-go TRAC phone users. The report notes that AT&T Michigan will only make 2-1-1 available to its U-verse customers if the customer proactively contacts the company to request activation. Michigan 2-1-1 states that it will work with its partners to secure access for wireless prepaid phone users and AT&T U-Verse customers who must contact the company to receive the service. The report also cites future plans to engage stakeholders in developing business plan updates to address further buildout, including alternate methods of contacting 2-1-1 such as text, chat, or video calls, while continuing to foster its standing relationships with state agencies.

Michigan 2-1-1 requests that the Commission designate it as the coordinating agency for another three-year period.

The Commission finds that the request for designation as the 2-1-1 coordinator for a three-year period should be granted with the same conditions. First, by January 15 of each year, Michigan 2-1-1 shall file in this docket a letter stating the outcome of its most recently completed internal financial audit. Second, should any issue arise that would directly or indirectly affect Michigan 2-1-1's ability to continue serving, including, without limitation, issues with regard to funding, programming, or technical difficulties, Michigan 2-1-1 shall notify the Staff. Should the gravity of the situation warrant it, the Commission may revisit the designation granted in this order at any point in the next three years. The next regular progress report shall be due by February 1, 2018. With these conditions, and in accordance with Section 214(5) of the Michigan Telecommunications Act, MCL 484.2214(5), the Commission finds that Michigan 2-1-1 should continue to serve as the statewide 2-1-1 coordinating agency until March 31, 2018.

While the Commission recognizes the financial and technological progress described in the 2015 report, it continues to be concerned that the funding commitments remain less than certain. This review and renewal process was initiated to enable Michigan 2-1-1 to actively seek long-term funding sources and to more fully develop interdependent relationships with all human service providers within the state. The Commission seeks to ensure that Michigan 2-1-1 remains viable and effective, and is capable of garnering sufficient financial resources to continue to act as the statewide 2-1-1 coordinating agency in the future.

By February 1, 2018, Michigan 2-1-1 shall file in this docket a report with current information on funding, advances made in 2-1-1 availability in Michigan, and any other relevant information

on its progress. At that time, the Commission will consider whether another three-year designation should be authorized.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

A. Michigan 2-1-1 is designated as the statewide 2-1-1 coordinating agency until March 31, 2018, under the conditions outlined in this order.

B. By January 15 each year, Michigan 2-1-1 shall file a letter in this docket explaining the outcome of its most recently completed internal financial audit.

C. By February 1, 2018, Michigan 2-1-1 shall file updated information on funding, advances made in 2-1-1 availability in Michigan, and any other relevant information on its progress.

The Commission reserves jurisdiction and may issue further orders as necessary.

Any party desiring to appeal this order must do so by the filing of a claim of appeal in the Michigan Court of Appeals within 30 days of the issuance of this order, under MCL 484.2203(12). To comply with the Michigan Rules of Court's requirement to notify the Commission of an appeal, appellants shall send required notices to both the Commission's Executive Secretary and to the Commission's Legal Counsel. Electronic notifications should be sent to the Executive Secretary at mpscedockets@michigan.gov and to the Michigan Department of the Attorney General - Public Service Division at pungp1@michigan.gov. In lieu of electronic submissions, paper copies of such notifications may be sent to the Executive Secretary and the Attorney General - Public Service Division at 7109 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing, MI 48917.

MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

John D. Quackenbush, Chairman

Sally A. Talberg, Commissioner

Norman J. Saari, Commissioner

By its action of November 19, 2015.

Mary Jo Kunkle, Executive Secretary

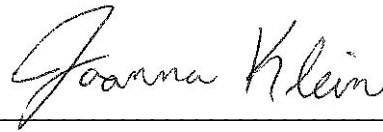
P R O O F O F S E R V I C E

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

Case No. U-14725

County of Ingham)

Joanna Klein being duly sworn, deposes and says that on November 19, 2015 A.D. she served a copy of the attached Commission order by first class mail, postage prepaid, or by inter-departmental mail, to the persons as shown on the attached service list.



Joanna Klein

Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 19th day of November 2015

Lisa Felice
Notary Public, Eaton County, Michigan
My commission expires on April 15, 2020

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Michael C. Rampe
Miller Canfield Paddock & Stone PLC
One E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 900
Lansing MI 48933

P R O O F O F S E R V I C E

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

Case No. U-14725

County of Ingham)

Lisa Felice being duly sworn, deposes and says that on November 19, 2015 A.D. she electronically notified the attached list of this **Commission Order (Commission's Own Motion) via e-mail transmission**, to the persons as shown on the attached service list (Listserv Distribution List).

Lisa Felice

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this 19th day of November 19 2015

Gloria Pearl Jones
Notary Public, Ingham County, MI
My Commission Expires June 5, 2016
Acting in Eaton County

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