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ALEXANDRIA, Va., March 16, 2023 – United Way Worldwide released its annual *211 Survey*, which found that Americans are continuing to struggle with housing and utility costs three years after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report, which compiled data from 18 million calls to the confidential 211 hotline in 2022, also found significant increases in healthcare and hunger requests compared to pre-pandemic levels. The 211 network, supported by United Way Worldwide, receives an average of 50,000 calls per day from people in need of support and is America’s most powerful tool for identifying and responding to community needs.

“The 211 network gives us an unparalleled ability to identify and address real-time needs within the communities we serve,” said Angela F. Williams, President and CEO of United Way Worldwide. “211 not only allows us to maximize our impact—and provide rapid support the moment it’s needed on the ground—but it also compiles the data necessary to predict upcoming challenges in our rapidly shifting world. I hope that policymakers use this data to better understand and support our neighbors in need.”

The 211 network received 18 million requests and made a total of 19 million referrals for local services in 2022. A total of 4.9 million referrals were for housing services – up from 4.4 million in 2021, making housing the most common request. Utility assistance was the second most common category, with 2.6 million referrals, up from 2.4 million the year prior. While total requests related to food dropped slightly to 2.5 million in 2022, hunger remains a top three concern across the country. Referrals for healthcare assistance also remain significantly elevated from pre-pandemic levels, even as they dropped to 1.6 million requests in 2022 from a high of 9.5 million in 2020.

This year’s survey does hint at encouraging signs of progress. While 211 call volume remains significantly higher than pre-pandemic, the number of overall requests to 211 centers decreased slightly in 2022, indicating that communities may be gradually recovering from the height of the pandemic. However, this report reflects the anxiety many Americans continue to experience after

the expiration of COVID-19 safety-net programs like eviction relief and housing assistance – particularly in the midst of price increases. Housing remains a particularly acute concern: 95 percent of 211 leaders surveyed reported unmet needs related to housing in their communities.

“In the face of tremendous community need, I couldn’t be more grateful to the thousands of people who make 211 possible,” said Josh Pedersen, Senior Director of 211. “211 employees worked around the clock last year to connect millions of Americans with the resources they need. Their work is invaluable, and serves as a real-time testament to United Way’s fight for the health, education, and economic mobility of every person in every community.”

Whether a community member is experiencing a personal crisis, economic hardship, or natural disaster, trained 211 specialists connect them to available resources – from crisis and emergency counseling, disaster assistance, food, health care and insurance assistance, stable housing and utilities payment assistance, employment services, veteran services and childcare and family services. With over 2,000 expert call center operators, the free and confidential 211 network is available to assist 99% of the U.S. population and all of Canada in more than 180 languages.

About United Way

With global reach and local impact, United Way is made up of neighbors helping neighbors – serving 48 million people every year with more than 1,100 local affiliates around the world. As one of the world's largest privately funded nonprofits, United Way works with 1.5 million volunteers, 6.8 million donors, and 29,000 corporate partners to not only respond to real-time emergencies but also help communities build back better. United Way Worldwide exists to fight for a more equitable, healthier, and resilient future for everyone in the midst of our changing world. Learn more at [unitedway.org](http://www.unitedway.org) (<http://www.unitedway.org>) and follow us @United Way and #LiveUnited.

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