

2-1-1, 3-1-1, 4-1-1, and 7-1-1: Community Assistance and Useful Information at Your Fingertips

2-1-1 and 3-1-1

2-1-1 is the nationwide abbreviated dialing code for free access to health and human service agencies' information. 3-1-1 is the nationwide abbreviated dialing code for *non-emergency* police and government agencies.

How 2-1-1 and 3-1-1 Work

Calls to 2-1-1 are free and are routed by the local telephone company to a local or regional calling center approved by the Ohio Council of Information and Referral Providers (OCIRP). The 2-1-1 center's referral specialists question callers, access databases of resources available from private and public health and human service agencies, match the callers' needs to available resources and link or refer them directly to an agency or organization that can help.

Calls to 3-1-1 work the same way, except calls are answered by the local municipality or governmental agency.

Examples of Referrals and Calls

2-1-1 Referrals

Basic needs resources- food and clothing banks, shelters, rent and utility assistance

Physical and mental health resources- health insurance, crisis intervention, support groups, drug and alcohol intervention and rehabilitation

Work Support - financial assistance, job training, transportation and education assistance

Support for the elderly or disabled- adult day care, meals, home health care and transportation

Children and family support- child care, low-income educational programs, summer camps, mentoring and tutoring

3-1-1 Calls

Situations that do not involve a crime in progress or an immediate threat to life, bodily injury, or major property damage or loss

Reporting a stray or barking dog

Reporting a pothole or inquiring about city street maintenance

Parking ticket information

Any other non-emergency questions for the local police or government

Benefits of 2-1-1 and 3-1-1 in Ohio

The 2-1-1 and 3-1-1 shortcuts provide an easily recognizable number that connects individuals and families in need with appropriate agencies and organizations. 3-1-1 also reduces the amount of non-emergency calls to 9-1-1, keeping police, firefighters and ambulance services free to respond quickly to emergency calls. In case of an emergency, you should still call 9-1-1.

The abbreviated dialing eliminates long and sometimes frustrating searches, provides an accurate and efficient database and referral system, and helps the elderly, disabled, non-English speaking, and illiterate people to connect to their communities.

The 2-1-1 code can also match individuals who wish to donate time or money with services in their area.

4-1-1

4-1-1 is the local number dialed for local directory assistance (also called directory information). It is a nationwide abbreviated dialing code, but in some cases you may need to dial 555-1212 or 1-55-1212 for long distance assistance. Directory assistance includes published phone numbers for individuals and businesses around the country.

How 4-1-1 Works

Calls to 4-1-1 are forwarded to an operator or automated answer system that can assist customers in obtaining the local telephone number(s) they wish to call. Customers who do not want their local phone number published in the directory can opt-out through their local phone company. There may be a charge for using 4-1-1 service and an additional charge to have a non-published number.

Wireless 4-1-1

There has been recent discussion regarding a national telephone directory for wireless phone numbers. Although this directory has not yet been created, the following Q&A clears up some common misunderstandings:

Q. When would a national telephone directory for wireless phone numbers be available?

A. No directory has been created yet, and it is not known whether one will actually be created. While five of the seven largest wireless companies support moving forward with a plan to offer a wireless directory, Verizon and Sprint are opposed to such an initiative.

Q. If the industry moves ahead with a plan for a national directory, will wireless numbers be listed without consent?

A. No. The plan proposed by the wireless industry would include a customer's number in a directory only with the customer's permission.

Q. If my wireless number is listed for directory service in a national directory, will it cost anything?

A. Under the wireless industry's plan for a directory, there would be no fee to opt in or out of the directory and 4-1-1 database.

Q. Does the federal do-not-call list apply to wireless phones?

A. Any number, wireless or wireline, can be placed on the do-not-call. Go to DoNotCall.gov or call 888-382-1222 to register your number.

7-1-1

7-1-1 is assigned nationwide for access to Telecom Relay Services (TRS). TRS allows persons with a hearing or speech disability to use the telephone. These consumers use special telephone devices known as a text telephone (TTY) or a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD).

How 7-1-1 works

If you want to call someone who uses a TTY/TDD, pick up your phone, dial 7-1-1, and you will be automatically connected to the TRS operator. The operator will connect you to the TTY/TTD user and read aloud the text typed by the TTY/TDD user.

When a TTY/TDD user dials 7-1-1, an operator places the call to the voice user, and then relays the conversation by transcribing spoken content for the TTY user and reading text aloud for the voice user.

Where can I get more information about 7-1-1?

Call the Federal Communications Commission at (888) CALL-FCC (voice) or (888) TELL-FCC (TTY).

If you would like to know more about the PUCO or have utility-related questions or concerns, contact the PUCO at:

(800) 686-PUCO (7826)

(800) 686-1570 (TDD/TTY)

In Columbus only:

(614) 466-3292

(614) 466-8180 (TDD/TTY)

www.PUCO.ohio.gov