

STATE OF MICHIGAN

BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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In the matter of the application of)
UNITED WAY FOR SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN)
2-1-1 PARTNERSHIP, a program of the United)
Way for Southeastern Michigan, to be assigned)
the telephone digits 2-1-1 and be designated as)
the community resource information and referral)
answering point for Washtenaw and Monroe)
counties.)
_____)

Case No. U-15654

In the matter of the application of the)
UNITED WAY REGIONAL CALL CENTER)
to be assigned the telephone digits 2-1-1 and)
designated as the community resource information)
and referral answering point for Livingston,)
Monroe, and Washtenaw counties.)
_____)

Case No. U-14935

At the December 4, 2008 meeting of the Michigan Public Service Commission in Lansing,
Michigan.

PRESENT: Hon. Orjiakor N. Isiogu, Chairman
Hon. Monica Martinez, Commissioner
Hon. Steven A. Transeth, Commissioner

ORDER

The abbreviated dialing number 2-1-1 may be assigned by the Commission to community resource information and referral service answering points for various geographic areas within the state. MCL 484.2214. On September 11, 2008, United Way for Southeastern Michigan 2-1-1 Partnership (UWSEM) filed an application under Section 214 of the Michigan Telecommunications Act, MCL 484.2214, for designation as the 2-1-1 answering point for Washtenaw and

Monroe counties. UWSEM has previously been designated the community resource information and referral answering point for Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. *See*, August 16, 2005 order in Case No. U-14541. In fulfillment of the requirements of MCL 484.2214(3), the application includes written endorsements from the Michigan Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (MI-AIRS), Michigan 2-1-1, the Community Collaborative of Washtenaw County, and the Monroe County Human Services Collaborative Network (the state-endorsed multipurpose collaborative bodies for Washtenaw and Monroe counties).

In the September 26, 2006 order in Case No. U-14935, the Commission designated the United Way Regional Call Center (UWRCC) as the 2-1-1 answering point for exchanges in Washtenaw and Monroe counties. On September 11, 2008, in Case No. U-14935, UWRCC filed a request to transfer the designation of the 2-1-1 answering point for Washtenaw and Monroe counties to UWSEM. UWRCC indicates that the two call centers have worked together to plan for the transfer.

UWSEM and UWRCC request that the following rate centers be transferred to UWSEM: Gregory, Chelsea, Manchester, Tipton, Clinton, Saline, Milan, Ann Arbor, Whitmore Lake, Dexter, Ypsilanti, Willis, Britton, Dundee, Petersburg, Lambertville, North Sylvania, Lost Peninsula, Temperance, Erie, Ida, Monroe, Newport, Carleton, and Maybee.

On September 25, 2008, the Commission's Executive Secretary issued a letter directing UWSEM to publish a notice of opportunity to comment in newspapers of general circulation in Washtenaw and Monroe Counties and to mail the notice to the Attorney General, local exchange carriers, and all human resource agencies in Washtenaw and Monroe counties. UWSEM has complied with these requirements.

United Way for Southeastern Michigan, United Way of Washtenaw County, Gabby's Ladder, Inc., Washtenaw County Council of Veterans, Sigecom LLC, Catholic Charities of Monroe County, City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw Children's Dental Clinic, Monroe County Library System, Washtenaw Housing Alliance, Center for Civil Justice, Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County, Planned Parenthood, Monroe County Intermediate School, Washtenaw County Department of Human Services, Southeastern Michigan Veterans Service Center, Ypsilanti Public Schools, Generations Together, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Washtenaw and Monroe Counties, Central Michigan 2-1-1, GreenPath, Inc., Frenchtown Senior Citizens, Inc., University of Michigan Health Systems, Monroe County Health Department, Dexter Community Schools, Northfield Township Senior Center, Lincoln Golden Ages Center, Migrant Health Promotion, Probate Court Judge Costello, and three university students filed comments in support of UWSEM's application. Several other community agencies filed comments in support of UWRCC's request for the transfer.

Verizon North Inc. and Contel of the South, Inc., d/b/a Verizon North Systems, and MCImetro Access Transmission Services LLC, d/b/a Verizon Access Transmission Services (collectively Verizon) filed comments addressing technical aspects of the application. Verizon indicates that it does not object to the application as long as UWSEM utilizes its existing 800 number for 2-1-1 calls to both Washtenaw and Monroe counties. Verizon also notes that the 2-1-1 assignment should be done on an exchange basis rather than a county basis. Verizon further notes that the Pinckney rate center has already been assigned to the Jackson 2-1-1 Call Center, in the October 21, 2008 order in Case No. U-15619.

The Commission's role in making 2-1-1 determinations is clearly spelled out by Section 214. The Commission is required to consider whether the applicant has: (1) the recommendation of

Michigan 2-1-1, Inc.; (2) the recommendation of the relevant state-endorsed community collaborative bodies; (3) established a framework to provide sufficient resources to operate the 2-1-1 number 24 hours per day, seven days per week; and (4) met standards for 2-1-1 service adopted by MI-AIRS. MCL 484.2214(3), (4).

In support of its application, UWSEM points out that it has successfully served as the 2-1-1 answering point for Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties for several years. UWSEM states that it has funding to support the expansion. UWSEM states that it has an agreement in place with Huron Valley Ambulance to answer calls 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, from Washtenaw and Monroe county exchanges. UWSEM's application complies with the statutory requirements.

The Commission finds that UWSEM's application should be granted, and UWRCC's request to relinquish its corresponding 2-1-1 designation should also be granted. The Commission designates UWSEM as the 2-1-1 answering point for the following rate centers in Washtenaw and Monroe counties: Gregory, Chelsea, Manchester, Tipton, Clinton, Saline, Milan, Ann Arbor, Whitmore Lake, Dexter, Ypsilanti, Willis, Britton, Dundee, Petersburg, Lambertville, North Sylvania, Lost Peninsula, Temperance, Erie, Ida, Monroe, Newport, Carleton, and Maybee.

The Commission recognizes that while many activities undertaken by non-profit agencies are based on geographic boundaries such as cities and counties, telecommunications service historically has been based on exchanges, which are not defined by city or county boundaries. As in previous orders, the Commission finds that exchange boundaries should be used when determining the geographic area of a 2-1-1 designation.

The Commission concludes that service platform issues should initially be determined between UWSEM and the carriers, with the cost of the service being a competitive issue rather than a matter subject to regulatory resolution. The Commission notes that UWSEM's application

and the MI-AIRS standards¹ provide assurance that 2-1-1 callers will not be assessed toll charges. The Commission will be involved in service platform issues (such as the use of current 800 numbers) only to the extent that implementation of the 2-1-1 service requires interconnection between carriers, or the parties establish another basis for Commission jurisdiction. All carriers should note that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires carriers to participate in completing calls to the 2-1-1 center.²

The Commission lacks jurisdiction under MCL 484.2401 to require payphone providers and wireless carriers to provide access to 2-1-1 service. The Commission encourages them to work with all parties to provide their customers with access to 2-1-1 service.

Any change to the geographic area of this designation requires Commission approval. Changes to the geographic area include making the assigned geographic area smaller (i.e., omission of exchanges) or larger (i.e., expansion to a regional area with additional exchanges). Modifications of the geographic area that may occur due to the assignment of the 2-1-1 dialing pattern in adjacent counties also require Commission approval.

Approval of the application is provisional, in part, due to the FCC's ability to recall the 2-1-1 abbreviated dialing number.³ In addition, the Commission retains the right to withdraw its approval should the statute change. The Commission also notes that certain other circumstances could warrant rescinding the 2-1-1 assignment, such as failure to meet the MI-AIRS standards, or a change in standing with the county multipurpose collaborative bodies or Michigan 2-1-1. The approval granted by the order cannot be transferred to another entity without the Commission's

¹Application for MI-AIRS endorsement as a 2-1-1 Call Center, Standard II, Requirement 2.

²In the Matter of the Use of N11 Codes and Other Abbreviated Dialing Arrangements, *Third Report and Order and Order on Reconsideration*, CC Docket No. 92-105 (FCC00-256), ¶ 21.

³*Id.*

approval. The relinquishment of the 2-1-1 assignment requires Commission approval. Should UWSEM be unable to continue providing 2-1-1 service to the designated area, it shall apply to the Commission before discontinuing the service.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

- A. United Way for Southeastern Michigan 2-1-1 Partnership is designated as the 2-1-1 answering point for the listed exchanges in Washtenaw and Monroe counties.
- B. United Way for Southeastern Michigan 2-1-1 Partnership shall provide sufficient resources to operate the 2-1-1 telephone number 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.
- C. All providers of basic local exchange service within the exchanges identified in the application that are wholly or partially within Washtenaw and Monroe counties shall take the necessary steps to allow their customers to access United Way for Southeastern Michigan 2-1-1 Partnership through the use of the 2-1-1 telephone number.

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

Any party desiring to appeal this order must do so in the appropriate court within 30 days after issuance and notice of this order, under MCL 462.26.

MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Orjiakor N. Isiogu, Chairman

Monica Martinez, Commissioner

Steven A. Transeth, Commissioner

By its action of December 4, 2008.

Mary Jo Kunkle, Executive Secretary