



# INCLUSION/EXCLUSION POLICY

## Policy Overview

### Disclaimer

This inclusion/exclusion policy is reviewed annually by the 211info Board of Directors. 211info accepts no liability for the incorrect usage of the data by its subscribers. It will, however, make every effort to train users and provide technical assistance whenever necessary.

### Policy

This policy provides the criteria for inclusion in the database maintained and used by 211info.

The database provides information about a broad range of community service organizations according to standards set by 211info and the Alliance of Information and Referral Services (AIRS). The AIRS Standards are the foundation of 2-1-1 service delivery and the prime benchmark of quality information and referral service.

Information in the database is used to help 2-1-1 callers and website visitors to navigate the maze of social services. The inclusion/exclusion policy incorporates fair and open decision-making that serves the broadest needs of the community. Inclusion in the database does not constitute an endorsement of or liability for any agency, program or service.

### Human services

211info uses the AIRS definition of human services:

“Activities that help people to become more self-sufficient, sustain independence, strengthen family relationships, support personal and social development and ensure the well-being of individuals, families, groups and communities. Specific human services include ensuring that people have access to adequate food, shelter, clothing and transportation; financial resources to meet their needs; consumer education and decision support; criminal justice or legal services; education and employment; health and mental health care including substance abuse services; and environmental protection; both routinely and in times of disaster or other emergencies. Human services also facilitate the capabilities of people to care for children or other dependents; ensure that protective services are available to those who are vulnerable; provide for the support of older adults and people with disabilities; offer social, faith-based and leisure-time activities; provide for the cultural enrichment of the community; and ensure that people have the information they need to fully participate in community life.”



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## Inclusion Guidelines

The database emphasizes agencies whose services are directed toward the solution of human service problems. 211info endeavors to list only agencies that follow regulatory or licensing standards. If there are no licensing standards, an agency must operate in a manner consistent with the implied standards of its field of service.

Preference is extended to nonprofit and governmental agencies in all human resource areas. If a demonstrated need is not being met sufficiently by the nonprofit sector, a for-profit agency may be included.

Preference is given to for-profit service providers that offer a sliding-scale fee and/or perform pro bono services. Any for-profit organization listed must have as its primary goal the resolution of a human service need and operate in accordance with the regulatory guidelines applicable to its field. Listing preference is given to for-profits registered with a regulatory or oversight organization. Consumer protection and basic business services that are either government designated or contracted are included.

General inclusion requirements:

- Organization must show evidence of an established service site.
- Organization must have demonstrated provision of service.
- Organization must have accessible program hours or an answering machine announcing current hours of availability.
- Organizations that are primarily or exclusively web-based will be evaluated against these standards and on a case-by-case basis.

Exceptions to the inclusion requirements may be made for support groups or seasonal programs. Exceptions may also be made for health care providers that offer no-cost, sliding-scale fee or Oregon Health Plan/Open Card services.

Organizations may be placed on a six-month probationary inclusion if they have not provided continuous services for the previous six months.

Central clearinghouses or resource-specific information and referral providers, such as child care referral agencies, are given inclusion and referral preference over any specific resources addressing the same need.

### Database inclusion procedure

Agencies complete the agency information survey and attach additional information as applicable. Completed agency information surveys are reviewed by the corresponding regional resource hub manager in consultation with the Statewide Resource Coordinator for accuracy and completeness. Informational text offered by an agency may be altered to conform to style guidelines.

211info and regional hubs may solicit agencies to be added to the database, or agencies may request consideration for inclusion.



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## Exclusion Guidelines

211info reserves the right to exclude from its database any organization it has reason to believe may spread hatred or have a philosophy that could harm the well-being of individuals, groups or the community as a whole. Among the potential grounds for exclusion or removal from the database are service non-delivery, fraud, misrepresentation, discrimination or criminal activities. Discrimination is defined as treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, an individual on the basis of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, veteran status, or mental or physical disability, or any other status protected by applicable law. 211info reserves the right to refuse to list or to discontinue listings for any agency at the discretion of the 211info Statewide Resource Coordinator or the Data Management Working Group.

Trade associations are excluded. Individuals are excluded with the exception of heads of governments, such as mayors or governors, and certain types of health care providers serving low-income people.

Organizations are excluded under these circumstances:

- For-profit businesses that do not otherwise fit the inclusion guidelines.
- Private practitioners that do not otherwise fit the inclusion guidelines.
- Organizations denying service to any inquirer on the basis of prejudice.
- Organizations purposefully misrepresenting their mission or engaging in illegal fund-raising or operating practices.
- Organizations failing to respond to update requests.
- If 211info becomes aware of evidence that organizations that have had serious complaints lodged against them with any regulatory body, with other organizations in the database providing similar services or with the 211info itself.
- Organizations proselytizing as condition for service.
- Organizations providing services solely to their membership.
- Organizations providing free or low-cost services whose primary purpose is to market their main for-profit business.

Exception may be made to exclusions upon review by the hub advisory committees to meet otherwise unmet community needs, if criteria or requirements are clearly described in the service description as well as to service participants.



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## Appeals

Any agency that is found to be ineligible for inclusion in the database may appeal the decision. Agencies and organizations that do not meet the inclusion criteria will be informed in writing by a 211info partner agency. The letter will explain the reasons for the exclusion and will include a copy of the Inclusion/Exclusion Policy.

To appeal an exclusion letter, respond in writing and present new information that addresses the reason for the exclusion. The appeal will be reviewed and responded to in writing within 30 days of receipt of the appeal. In some cases, organizations may receive a six-month provisional inclusion status if 211info decides that a follow-up review is needed.