

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Alaska 2-1-1: Alaska's Resource Hub for Help Reaches Milestone**

*Referrals for basic needs up in Southeast*

**Anchorage, AK** – The number of Southeast Alaska residents calling Alaska 2-1-1 seeking assistance in 2016 stayed consistent with 2015 according to newly released call data by Alaska 2-1-1. Referrals related to basic needs support – food, housing and shelter, rent and utility assistance – comprised 30% of the total referrals, up from 25% the previous year, making it the top need.

#### **Other top Southeast referrals in 2016:**

- Organizational/Community/International Services at 14%
- Health care at 13%
- Employment & Income Boosts at 12%

The top unmet needs in the Southeast were Rent Payment Assistance, Transportation – Airfare and Utility Service Payment Assistance.

For purposes of 2-1-1 data, Southeast covers requests from Haines, Ketchikan Gateway, Juneau, Petersburg, Sitka, Wrangell and Yakutat Boroughs, Municipality of Skagway, Hoonah-Angoon, Prince of Wales-Hyder, and Valdez-Cordova Census Areas.

**Alaska 2-1-1 hit a major milestone** when Alaska caller number 200,000 phoned the 2-1-1 help line seeking assistance. The 200,000<sup>th</sup> call came on February 2, 2017 from an Anchorage resident seeking healthcare information.

“Alaskans know they have a place to turn for help and this milestone reflects that,” said Sue Brogan, Vice President, Income/Health, United Way of Anchorage. “We’re here for everyone. No matter where you live in the state you can count on 2-1-1 to help with life’s challenges and opportunities.”

Alaska 2-1-1 helps with more than basic needs. In addition to basic needs and healthcare information, Alaskans can find the resources and referrals needed to live better lives:

- Finding an after school program for a child
- Help with care for an aging parent
- A support group for a loved one
- Job training
- Free tax preparation services
- Literacy classes
- ...and much more

Statewide in 2016, Alaska 2-1-1 made 43,010 referrals, 3,101 more than last year. Trained specialists answered 29,178 calls, assessing needs and connecting callers to the right resources. Online searches of the 2-1-1 database grew by 35%.

“As a statewide resource hub, Alaska 2-1-1 is in a unique position to provide snapshots of the type of information callers are looking for and what services are and aren’t available,” said Brogan. “This in-depth real time data can be used to inform planning, use resources more effectively and efficiently and drive action locally, regionally and at a statewide level.”

### **Help starts with Alaska 2-1-1.**

- 24/7 online access to 2-1-1 website at [www.Alaska211.org](http://www.Alaska211.org)
- Call 2-1-1 or 800-478-2221 Monday through Friday from 8 am – 5 pm to speak directly with a trained specialist
- Download the Alaska 2-1-1 APP

February 11, 2017 is National 2-1-1 Day and the perfect day to get to know this useful tool and recognize the impact of this vital service. The 2016 Alaska 2-1-1 Annual Report featuring regional snapshots is attached and can be viewed at [www.Alaska211.org](http://www.Alaska211.org).

**INTERVIEW AVAILABILITY: Sue Brogan will be in Juneau today, Wednesday Feb 8, and available for interviews after 1pm.** She can be reached by cell at 907.748.6039. She will be presenting on Alaska 2-1-1 at a Lunch and Learn for Legislators from Noon until 1pm in the Butrovich room (203/205).

### **About Alaska 2-1-1**

Alaska 2-1-1 is an integrated communication system that connects Alaskans in need to help. Trained information and referral specialists have access to the most comprehensive database of community-based organizations, government agencies and nonprofits throughout the state of Alaska. Information can be provided in almost any language. Calls are confidential and free of charge. Operated by United Way of Anchorage Monday-Friday, 8am to 5pm, dial 2-1-1 or 800-478-2221, find us online at [www.Alaska211.org](http://www.Alaska211.org).

Download the App! Apple <http://apple.co/1TszTMi> Android <http://bit.ly/1TYOYrr>

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