

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Commission, on ) Application No. C-3099/  
its own motion, seeking comment on ) PI-77  
the request by United Way of the )  
Midlands to be assigned the use of ) GRANTED  
"211" in the City of Lincoln and )  
Lancaster County for access to )  
First Call for Help (FCFH), a )  
comprehensive information and )  
referral service. ) Entered: March 30, 2004  
)

BY THE COMMISSION:

On February 3, 2004, the Commission opened a docket to consider the request by United Way of the Midlands for use of "211" as the dialing code for services in the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County. This service is a comprehensive information and referral service.

The Commission previously assigned "211" to United Way of the Midlands for use in Douglas and Sarpy Counties by order entered February 20, 2002, in Application No. C-2621. In that application, the Commission held a workshop and a hearing to facilitate the potential implementation of a "211" system. Additionally, United Way of the Midlands applied for authority to use "211" in Dodge and Cass Counties, and that application was granted on July 23, 2002, in Application No. C-2732. On February 10, 2004, the Commission granted requests by United Way of the Midlands for use of "211" in Hall, Hamilton, Howard and Merrick Counties in Application No. 3061/PI-75 and in Dodge, Washington and Saunders Counties, in Application No. C-3066/PI-76.

A hearing on the above-captioned matter was held March 17, 2004, at 10:00 a.m. in the Commission Hearing Room, Lincoln, Nebraska.

At the hearing, Ms. Jamesena Grimes Moore, vice president of volunteer community services for United Way of the Midlands, testified regarding the status of the "211" pilot program generally. She testified that with the addition of the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County to the pilot program, 60 percent of Nebraska's population will be served by the "211" service. She further testified that the United Way has an ultimate goal of providing "211" service to all Nebraskans and is currently looking to expand the program into the Scottsbluff, Kearney and North Platte areas. She further testified regarding efforts to publicize the "211" service. Ms. Moore also testified that the "211" movement has gained momentum nationally. "211" is a critical piece of the infrastructure for disaster preparedness and an effective response system.

Sandra Rupp, Executive Director of the United Way for Lincoln and Lancaster County, testified regarding the effort it will make locally to publicize the availability of "211" service, including bus advertisements, radio advertisements, listings within the "blue pages" and commitments of media support.

Robin Mahoney, of the United Way for Lincoln and Lancaster County, testified that the call center established in Omaha will be used to handle calls received in the Lincoln and Lancaster County areas. Steve Beal, Health Director from the Lancaster County Health Department, further testified that it will supply the County's service profiles database to the Omaha call center to facilitate Lancaster County referrals.

No other parties testified. Letters of support from Mayor Coleen Seng; Bruce Dart, Health Director for the Lincoln-Lancaster Health Department; Kit Boesch, Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Services Department; Rick Carter, Executive Director of the Human Services Federation; and Doug Ahlberg, Director of Lincoln/Lancaster County Emergency Management were offered in further support of United Way's request.

#### O P I N I O N   A N D   F I N D I N G S

The Commission finds that use of "211" by United Way of the Midlands should be expanded to the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County.

As with the preceding applications, "211" calls can be routed to 866-813-1731. The contact person for United Way of the Midlands is Jamesena Grimes Moore, who can be reached at 402-522-7930. The contact person for United Way for the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County is Sandra Rupp, who can be reached at 402-441-7150.

Consistent with the original applications, it is the Commission's preliminary belief that individual carrier costs for "211" access will not be significant. If, however, a carrier seeks recovery of costs associated with routing "211" calls for expansion of "211" access to the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County, the Commission requires that plans for cost recovery be submitted to the Commission for approval.

The Commission will make available suggested language for directory listings and bill inserts. Affected telephone companies must use, at minimum, the information contained in these materials to inform their customers of the availability of "211" service. Affected telephone companies include those that serve the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County. The public must have easy directory access to 211 and other public interest numbers in order to maximize the benefit of such

designations of scarce numbering resources. The Commission strongly urges all carriers to require their directory publishing companies to display all public interest numbers such as 211, 511, 711 and 911 in a common and easily accessible location in the directory such as inside the front cover.

The Commission finds that July 1, 2004, should be the deadline for "211" routing for the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County.

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that "211" is hereby, designated for use by United Way of the Midlands for a referral service in the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that **July 1, 2004**, is the deadline set by the Commission for implementation of "211" routing for the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County.

IT IS FINALLY ORDERED that carriers seeking recovery of costs associated with routing "211" calls for the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County submit cost recovery plans to the Commission for approval.

MADE AND ENTERED in Lincoln, Nebraska on this 30th day of March, 2004.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Chairman

ATTEST:

Executive Director