

For Immediate Release

For more information:
Chris Medici
United Way of Rhode Island
(401) 444-0652
Chris.medici@uwri.org

United Way 2-1-1 in RI Designated Emergency Information and Referral Center

(August 26, 2011) In response to Governor Lincoln Chafee's declaration of a state of emergency, *United Way 2-1-1 in Rhode Island (2-1-1)* has been designated the emergency information and referral center for the state. Residents are encouraged to dial 2-1-1 for information regarding basic needs such as the availability of food and shelter to those affected by the storm. United Way of Rhode Island is also urging Rhode Island residents to prepare for the possibility that Hurricane Irene will significantly impact Rhode Island.

"We are in close contact with the federal, state and local emergency management officials in order to stay current with the latest developments regarding Hurricane Irene," said Anthony Maione, president and CEO, United Way of Rhode Island. "*United Way 2-1-1 in Rhode Island* has activated its contingency plan to ensure we have sufficient staff in place to handle an increase in call volume. In the meantime, 2-1-1 will continue to operate 24/7 and is available to provide information that Rhode Islanders need."

United Way 2-1-1 In Rhode Island is funded by United Way of Rhode Island, Hasbro Children's Fund and the State of Rhode Island. It is based at United Way of Rhode Island, 50 Valley Street, Providence, Rhode Island. Callers can speak confidentially with an Information and Referral professional who will assess the caller's needs and then provide information regarding which social service provider is most appropriate to handle the issue that prompted the call. And 2-1-1 help is available in 175 languages and dialects.

From any phone, at any time, dial 2-1-1 toll-free for information regarding:

- basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter
- health care
- childcare
- counseling
- crisis intervention
- senior services/elder care
- disability services
- and much more...

2-1-1 can also be found at www.211ri.org.

50 Valley Street
Providence, RI 02909
tel 401.444.0600
fax 401.444.0635
www.LIVEUNITEDri.org



Since its launch in June 2007, 2-1-1 has handled more than 400,000 calls from Rhode Islanders seeking information about food, shelter, housing, and family-related issues.

2-1-1 was also actively involved in the response to the March 2010 flood crisis. As a result, 2-1-1 handled 33,000 calls in 30 days. Additionally, 2-1-1 staff and volunteers called back more than 15,000 people to check on their status and to see if more help was needed.

About United Way of Rhode Island

United Way of Rhode Island has been working to improve the quality of life in Rhode Island communities for over 80 years. UWRI's mission is to mobilize the caring power of the community to improve the lives of people in need and address the issues Rhode Islanders care most about. United Way's goal is to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place. We believe that all Rhode Islanders deserve the opportunity to have a better life, as when any one of us succeeds, we all succeed. At United Way, we refer to this as advancing the common good. For more information, visit www.LIVEUNITEDri.org.

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