

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pikes Peak United Way's 2-1-1 helpline to serve as vaccine information hub

Feb. 3, 2020 — Beginning this week, Pikes Peak United Way's 2-1-1 helpline will serve as a centralized phone number to help direct community members to COVID-19 vaccine providers.

When people call 2-1-1, they will be prompted by an automated system to select a vaccine provider from a list of options. They will then be transferred to that provider. Callers also will have the option to speak with one of 2-1-1's trained call takers, who will be able to answer general questions about the vaccine. For specific medical advice, community members are asked to call their primary care physician.

2-1-1 is a free, confidential, multilingual referral hotline staffed by trained information specialists from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. PPUW's six 2-1-1 staff members serve callers in 12 Colorado counties, including El Paso and Teller counties.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, PPUW has partnered with El Paso County Public Health to help provide our community with clear, accurate information and crucial resources.

In March 2020, PPUW's 2-1-1 call-takers began serving as call navigators for El Paso and Teller county's health departments, answering questions that the public had in response to COVID-19. At its peak last spring, calls to the helpline were up more than 200%. Between March and June, our trained call-takers helped more than 12,000 people.

"Pikes Peak United Way 2-1-1 has been a dedicated public health partner throughout the pandemic, helping connect residents with resources and information such as economic and food assistance, mental health support, and advice about how to protect themselves and their families from COVID-19," said Susan Wheelan, El Paso County Public Health Director.

"We are continuously working to streamline processes to better serve El Paso County communities, making it easier for people to get timely access to needed resources. The 2-1-1 hotline is a trusted and recognized phone number in our community and will connect seniors to helpful information on how and where to get vaccinated."

To learn more about who is in which phase, and how to receive a vaccine, visit elpasocountyhealth.org/how-will-i-get-the-vaccine.

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Pikes Peak United Way Mission: To enhance youth success and family stability in the Pikes Peak region by leading and lifting the most vulnerable in our community with mentorship, life resources and real job opportunities. Our signature programs and partner agencies intently focus on connecting youth and their families to resources at the front end of their life journey to ensure access to fundamental needs of food, shelter and learning resources for all.
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