

Written by Kathy

Thursday, 06 April 2023 16:57 - Last Updated Thursday, 13 April 2023 19:35

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[Clevelandurbannews.com](https://www.clevelandurbannews.com) and [Kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com](https://www.kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com)

CLEVELAND, Ohio– Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb announced this week in a statement that United Way of Greater Cleveland (United Way) has been chosen to spearhead the city's 311 call center in serving as the non-emergency answering service after normal business hours (Monday - Friday before 7:30 am and after 5:30 p.m.), on weekends, holidays and during surge periods.

The city's 311 system allows residents to call 311 to file non-emergency complaints such as reporting potholes and housing code violations and to request information on public services. It was created to minimize such a burden on Cleveland City Council, a 17-member city governance body led by Blaine Griffin, a Black east side councilman who was elected council president by his city council peers in 2022 when Bibb, 35 and the city's fourth Black and second youngest mayor, officially became mayor.

The mayor said that the partnership with United Way expands the city's staffing capacity and is part of a larger project to modernize 311. Earlier this year city council approved the

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administration's proposal to invest \$4 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to make technology upgrades to 311 and improve communications with residents.

"We promised to be an administration that answers the call and this partnership with United Way of Greater Cleveland will help us do that better, extending high-quality customer service 24/7," said Mayor Bibb, a political neophyte and progressive mayor who won a nonpartisan runoff election for an open mayoral seat in November of 2021 over then council president Kevin Kelley with some 63 percent of the vote.

Since 2004 United Way has operated its free and confidential 211 service 24/7/365 and is currently available in five counties across Ohio, including Cuyahoga, Geauga, Ross, Darke and Belmont. United Way is uniquely familiar with city services and already provides over 7,000 referrals to city of Cleveland departments and divisions each year.

"Last year United Way 211 answered more than 160,000 calls for help, connecting residents with access to information and community resources. United Way is excited to partner with the City of Cleveland to staff the 311 line after hours and during holidays and weekends, and we look forward to supporting the ongoing needs of Cleveland residents," said United Way of Greater Cleveland's president and CEO Sharon Sobol Jordan.

All United Way 211 navigators have received training and onboarding from the City and started taking calls Monday evening.

The city will maintain its 311 call center operations during business hours and coordinate closely with United Way during high-demand citywide events to improve surge capacity and responsiveness. 311 receives approximately 200,000 calls for help every year. Approximately 80 per cent are calls for information including recreation center schedules, program or contact information. Twenty percent of calls are service requests such as pothole reports, tree-trimming requests or building violations.

About United Way of Greater Cleveland

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Founded in 1900, United Way of Greater Cleveland is a local, independent nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting poverty across the Greater Cleveland area. The largest private-sector investor of health and human services, United Way invests in efforts that address poverty using a two-pronged approach. The first prong focuses on the daily issues affecting those living in poverty, the Community Hub for Basic Needs. The second drives research and innovation through the Impact Institute, a think tank with an action plan, focused on identifying long-term solutions to break the cycle of poverty. For more information, visit [unitedwaycleveland.org](https://unitedwaycleveland.org) and [twitter](#).  
[com/UnitedWayCLE](https://www.unitedwaycleveland.org/UnitedWayCLE)

## About United Way of Greater Cleveland 211

United Way of Greater Cleveland's 211 provides free, confidential information and resources to help people struggling with a broad range of personal, health and/or financial issues. United Way of Greater Cleveland 211 currently serves five counties across Ohio and operates a statewide hotline.

United Way's resource information line was created in 1923 and began operating 24 hours a day in 2004. People can reach 211 by phone, online chat, in person at community events or from dedicated phone lines at Cleveland Public Library branches to speak to a Navigation Specialist.

United Way 211 has access to a multilingual language line with 150 languages and assists people with hearing or speech impairments.

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(216) 659-0473. Email: [editor@clevelandurbannews.com](mailto:editor@clevelandurbannews.com). We interviewed former president Barack Obama one-on-one when he was campaigning for president. As to the Obama interview [CLICK HERE TO READ THE ENTIRE ARTICLE AT CLEVELAND URBAN NEWS.COM, OHIO'S LEADER IN BLACK DIGITAL NEWS](https://www.clevelandurbannews.com/ohios-leader-in-black-digital-news)

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