

Subject/Title: Inclusion/Exclusion Policy

Policy #: 211NH-06 created 12/11/07 updated 06/08/09

Purpose: The 211NH Resource File (“database”) contains information about service providers that enhance the quality of individual and community life in the state of New Hampshire. 211NH does not endorse, rate, recommend, or evaluate resources, programs or providers and therefore does not assume, warrant, or guarantee quality of services. Any information provided about a service listed in the database has been provided solely by the agency offering said services. Inclusion of an agency or organization does not imply endorsement by 211NH or United Ways of New Hampshire. Inclusion in the 211NH database is provided free of charge to all organizations.

211NH reserves the right to remove or exclude any organization from its database for any reason. Inclusion is a privilege rather than a right, and agencies will be considered for inclusion based on the following criteria:

General Terms for Inclusion:

1. Provides a health or human service for the residents of the state of New Hampshire
2. Is licensed or certified, where applicable.
3. Has a consistently available contact person, location, and telephone number. Access through an answering machine is acceptable.

In addition to the above criteria, agencies must also meet one or more of the following criteria in order to be considered for inclusion in the 211NH database.

Criteria for Inclusion:

1. Services are available and accessible to residents who cannot afford private sector services.
2. Non-profit organizations providing health, education, social service, recreation, legal or consumer protection services may be included.
3. Government agencies (federal, state, county, city), which offer services in the area of health, welfare, recreation, or education, may be included. No attempt will be made to list all governmental agencies or departments.
4. Inclusion of services available only to a limited target population will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
5. Organizations (such as churches, social clubs) that offer a service to the community at large, not just to their own members may be included.

6. Private (For-Profit) agencies that provide services/goods not readily available through public or non-profit agencies may be included. Inclusion is based upon uniqueness of service, lack of comparable services available through not-for-profit agencies or groups, and degree of need for the service may be included.
7. Professional societies and registries that can refer individuals to their members in good standing may be included may be included.
8. Organizations offering services parallel to a non-profit service to which clients are referred and fees paid by the governmental agency. (i.e. offering homemaking services to qualified clients and are paid by social service agencies) may be included.
9. Organizations that are not eligible for 501© 3 status, but meet all state licensing requirements, including (but not limited to) hospitals, health clinics, chemical dependency treatment programs, and community counseling agencies may be included.
10. Supervisory unions and school districts within the state of New Hampshire, school readiness programs that serve the whole family (such as Head Start) and alternative private schools that serve children or youth with disabilities or behavioral/emotional disorders may be included
11. Advocacy groups may be included.
12. Elected representatives and/or their staff offices may be included.
13. Organizations outside of the state of New Hampshire may be included provided they offer a service to residents of New Hampshire and such services are not readily available within New Hampshire; or services are more convenient to residents of New Hampshire than resources located within the state.
14. Agencies that have been in operation for less than 6 months may be included on a trial basis, with ongoing monitoring, to ensure accuracy of service information provided. Agencies in operation less than 1 year will be required to submit tax identification number.
15. Toll free lines operated by government or non-profit organizations may be included.

211NH reserves the right to refuse or discontinue listings for organizations that have had serious complaints filed against them by any of the following: any regulatory body, other organizations in the database providing similar services, or with 211NH itself.

211NH reserves the right to exclude from its database any organization that it has adequate reason to believe may spread hatred or have a philosophy that could be hurtful to the well-being of individuals, groups or the

community as a whole. Potential grounds for exclusion or removal from the database may include, but is not limited to, service non-delivery, fraud, misrepresentation, discrimination, or criminal activities.

Organizations that operate without a formal office (i.e. clubs and support groups) must also supply information on their state, regional or national headquarters for inclusion in the database.

Criteria for Exclusion:

1. Commercial business or for-profit agencies not described in the inclusion criteria.
2. Agencies that violate federal, state or local laws or regulations.
3. Agencies promoting or permitting discrimination based on protected classes of citizens. Included are agencies that deny service on the basis of race, sexual orientation, religious belief, national origin or other inherent characteristic that violates federal, state, or local laws and regulations.
4. Organizations (e.g. churches, social clubs) that only offer services to their own members.
5. For-profit medical facilities, including but not limited to, private practitioners, dentists, mental health facilities etc. that are readily available in the non-profit sector, unless the facility offers free or sliding scale services.
6. Agencies that do not offer direct service or information about direct services.
7. Organizations that are unable to accept referrals for 3 month will be considered for removal.
8. Stand alone mutual support groups with no oversight from an organization with a board of directors.

Quality of Referral

211NH does not evaluate the quality of services provided by organizations in the database. 211NH staff assist callers in their selection of an appropriate agency or agencies by offering relevant information about fees, location, and services provided, etc. When appropriate and possible, three different referrals are offered to three distinct agencies. If callers make complaints about an organization, 211NH informs callers of the appropriate agency to handle the complaint, and offers information and referral with an alternative agency. 211NH discontinues referrals to a program until a determination has been made by the agency handling the complaint. If a significant number of similar and serious complaints are received about an organization, 211NH may remove the agency from the database.

Controversial Activities

Some organizations provide services or advocate on issues that may be controversial in nature. Information about an organization's policies, views or issues which will assist potential consumers in selecting a resource should be included in that agency's record. This may include religious observances which are required in order to obtain services, or the organization's point of view on issues. Whenever possible, the database includes organizations that represent a variety of points of view on any given issue in order to provide callers with a choice of options.

Organizations Which Engage in Fraudulent or Questionable Practices

Organizations, which may be defrauding the public, violating laws or engaging in questionable fundraising or administrative practices, may not be listed in the database. If there is any question of the legitimacy of any organization, 211NH will base its decision regarding inclusion/exclusion on information obtained from the following sources:

The New Hampshire Department of Justice – Consumer and Antitrust Bureau
Better Business Bureau
Licensing bodies

Complaint Handling Procedures:

211NH staff may receive complaints about agencies and organizations which have been included in their database or which have been excluded from it. All complaints are confidential, and are acknowledged and investigated.

1. The 211NH staff member takes the information from the complainant and forwards documentation to a member of management.
2. 211NH management investigates the complaint and makes a decision using the inclusion/exclusion criteria. Feedback is given to the complainant
3. The complainant may appeal the ruling in writing to the 211NH Director.

Ensuring Uniform Application of Exclusion/Inclusion Criteria

On a quarterly basis, the Resource Database Manager will provide the Call Center Director a listing of all new organizations included in the resource database as well as a listing of all agencies that were not permitted inclusion in the resource database. The Call Center Director will review the lists to ensure that uniform application of the above criteria listed in this procedure has been applied. If discrepancies are found, the

211NH Resource Database Manager will contact the applying organization for second consideration in the resource database.