



Northern Virginia Regional Commission

NEWS RELEASE

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Especially During Tough Economic Times

2-1-1 Connects Those in Need to Help For the Northern Virginia Region

It seems no one in Northern Virginia is free from the impacts of the economic downturn, the credit crisis, home foreclosures and layoffs. Faced with those disasters, more people than ever are seeking information about health and human services and other assistance but don't know where to call. Now there is one convenient number which is answered seven days a week around the clock: **2-1-1**. The call is free and confidential.

Like 9-1-1 for emergencies, 2-1-1 is the Federal Communications Commission-designated national three-digit telephone number for information about health and human services. 2-1-1 VIRGINIA operates throughout Northern Virginia and all other parts of the state 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. CrisisLink, a nonprofit agency providing "hotlines" for the region since 1969, provides 2-1-1 service for Northern Virginia.

CrisisLink's 2-1-1 program maintains a comprehensive database of over 4,400 programs and services, and provides referrals to vital health, human and social services that can be accessed by dialing "2-1-1" or via the Internet at www.211metrodc.org and www.211virginia.org. Northern Virginia local governments continue to provide their own ten-digit numbers for information and referral so area residents can use these local numbers, which may be familiar to them, or just dial the easy-to-remember 2-1-1 number.

The Northern Virginia Regional Commission worked with local governments, the 2-1-1 VIRGINIA state network and others to develop the 2-1-1 system for Northern Virginia. The 2-1-1 database used by CrisisLink to help callers locate services they need was built by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and contributes the information published in the popular *Quick Guide* to human services, the region's most recognizable human services information resource. Callers to 2-1-1 may request referrals to services for abuse and neglect, HIV/AIDS, disabilities, domestic violence, health care, housing, mental health, senior citizens, and shelters, among others.

For more information about CrisisLink and 2-1-1, check out www.crisislink.org or contact Carol Loftur-Thun, CrisisLink's Executive Director, at 703.527.6603.

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