



Requirements & Timeframes to become or expand a 2-1-1 Call Center



This document outlines the process, requirements, and likely timeframes in order to establish or expand a 2-1-1 Call Center in Michigan. The following steps are listed in sequential order and should be completed as numbered. Please keep in mind that the timeframes listed are guidelines only and will vary widely depending on the unique circumstances for each call center. For some steps, there are templates that can be used and these are attached as Appendices where applicable.

1) Michigan 2-1-1 Assurance of Eligibility

<30 days

This step is also referred to as “Front End Alignment. Applicant submits their proposed plan of 2-1-1 coverage to Michigan 2-1-1 Board for their verification that the plan is in alignment with Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan. (See Appendix A.) The applicant will receive a written response from Michigan 2-1-1 Board.

2) Community Collaborative Designation

30-60 days

Written documentation of Community Collaborative designation of the organization identified to provide 2-1-1 services for the county(ies) is required. This can be in the form of meeting minutes or in a separate letter (preferred).

3) Michigan Alliance of Information & Referral Systems (MI-AIRS) Endorsement **2 – 10 months**

A) Applicant submits a letter or e-mail of intent to the MI-AIRS 2-1-1 Committee Chairperson indicating the readiness for the assignment of a liaison and intention to submit an application by a specific date. (This allows MI-AIRS to recruit a Review Team for the application.)

The MI-AIRS liaison serves as the intermediary between applicants for endorsement and the MI-AIRS Board of Directors. The liaison:

- Is a MI-AIRS Board member appointed by the MI-AIRS Board of Directors.
- Is assigned to an organization that applies for 2-1-1 call center establishment or expansion with a letter of intent to the MI-AIRS Board of Directors or 2-1-1 Committee Chairperson.
- Is identified to the applicant by the 2-1-1 Committee Chairperson, via e-mail.
- Contacts the applicant to answer or research answers to questions or concerns they may have about the MI-AIRS endorsement process.
- Remains in contact with the applicant throughout the application review process for questions/consultation.

- Coordinates the 3-person volunteer Review Team assigned to each application; schedules, attends, and records findings from Review Team meetings.
- Communicates team findings to applicant (can be multiple times).
- Communicates responses from applicant to Review Team (can be multiple times).
- Tracks and documents progress of applications through the MI-AIRS process.
- At the direction of the Review Team, communicates their recommendation to the 2-1-1 Committee Chairperson for their communication to the MI-AIRS Board for action.

B) The applicant submits an application to MI-AIRS for endorsement of the county(ies) to be added to service area. The application, including instructions for completion and submission, can be found online at:

<http://www.mi-air.com/endorsement.html>.

Upon satisfaction of all standards, the Review Team shares their findings with the rest of the MI-AIRS Board. To provide endorsement, the MI-AIRS Board must approve (by vote) the application for endorsement according to the MI-AIRS bylaws.

4) Michigan 2-1-1 Board Recommendation

<30 days

The now MI-AIRS endorsed call center (Applicant) submits a letter (can be done electronically) to the MI 2-1-1 Board requesting recommendation to the Michigan Public Service Commission for designation as the 2-1-1 Call Center for requested county(ies). The criteria used are based upon alignment with Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan. (See Appendix B.)

5) Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) Designation

60-90 days

Endorsed/recommended call center (Applicant) makes application to the MPSC for designation as the 2-1-1 call center for the area specified. This application process includes the publication of legal notices, a public comment period, etc. The application must be filed by an attorney. If approved, the MPSC will order the telecommunications (telephone) companies serving the specified area to enable 2-1-1 dialing. The order usually provides the telecommunications companies 30 days in which to comply, but does not require them to do so without charge. (See Appendix C.)

These requirements will all be initiated and submitted by the call center. Each community will have specific tasks to complete with regard to database population, Community Collaborative designation, support letters to the MPSC, Memorandums of Understanding, etc. All of these processes are in place to assure quality delivery of 2-1-1 service for all Michigan communities.

Appendix A

Template for *Michigan 2-1-1 Assurance of Eligibility* letter:

To be completed on letterhead of organization seeking to become a Michigan 2-1-1 Call Center or seeking to expand coverage of existing Michigan 2-1-1 Call Center. Can be submitted via email to smiller@uwmic.org.

Date

Michigan 2-1-1
1627 Lake Lansing Rd. Suite B
Lansing, Mi 48912

_____ (name of organization) proposes to offer 2-1-1 service delivery from a 2-1-1 Call Center located in _____ (name of city) to the following counties:

_____.

Prior to making application to the Michigan Alliance of Information and Referral Systems, we need to confirm that the proposed 2-1-1 service delivery aligns with the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan.

We understand that a formal recommendation from Michigan 2-1-1 is required by the Michigan Public Service Commission and that Michigan 2-1-1 will only provide that recommendation for service delivery in alignment with the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan.

Please confirm alignment of the proposed service provider's location and proposed service delivery area so that we may proceed with approval from our Community Collaborative(s) and our application to the Michigan Alliance of Information and Referral Systems.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Appendix B

Template for *Michigan 2-1-1 Board Recommendation* request letter

To be completed on letterhead of organization seeking Michigan 2-1-1 Board Recommendation. Mail a hard copy to Michigan 2-1-1, Inc. and email to: smiller@uwmich.org and nlindman@uwmich.org.

Date

Michigan 2-1-1, Inc.
1627 Lake Lansing Rd., Suite B
Lansing, MI 48912-3789

The purpose of this letter is to request a recommendation by Michigan 2-1-1 to the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) supporting _____ application for designation as a 2-1-1 Call Center. _____ application to the Michigan Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (MI-AIRS) was approved on _____ (a copy of the MI-AIRS endorsement letter is attached). The recommendation of Michigan 2-1-1, Inc. is required as part of the application to the MPSC for designation as a 2-1-1 Call Center. This request for a recommendation is consistent with the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan.

_____ submits that:

- _____ is identified in the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan as a potential location for a regional call center and that is the location of this entity.
- _____ offers 24/7/365 service with AIRS certified staff.

_____ agrees to:

- Submit an application to the MPSC for 2-1-1 Call Center designation within 60 calendar days of Michigan 2-1-1's recommendation;
- Work collaboratively with other Michigan 2-1-1 Call Centers to provide and promote 2-1-1 on a statewide basis;
- Designate a representative of _____ to regularly attend and participate in 2-1-1 Operating Council meetings;
- Designate a representative of _____ to regularly attend and participate in the Resource Managers' Workgroup;
- Provide Michigan 2-1-1, Inc. with annual updates/reports regarding the scope of 2-1-1 service delivery for _____.
- Actively participate in and promote the implementation of the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan

Thank you for your consideration of the request. The contact person for _____ is _____ who can be reached at _____.

Sincerely,

Appendix B, cont.

Process for *Michigan 2-1-1 Board Recommendation* request letter

The request letter shall have the MI-AIRS Call center endorsement letter as an attachment. Request letters submitted without an MI-AIRS endorsement letter will not be accepted for review. Within three business days, the request letter will be sent to the Michigan 2-1-1, Inc. Board Members for their review. Within 14 days of the receipt of the request the President of MI 2-1-1 will convene a regular or special meeting of the MI 2-1-1 Board to act upon the request.

1. The Michigan 2-1-1, inc. Board will take action on the request for recommendation as promptly as possible.
2. The criteria to be utilized in review of the request for recommendation is outlined in the applicant's letter of request as follows:
 - Identification in the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan as a potential location for a regional call center;
 - Provision of 24/7/365 service with AIRS certified staff.Applicant's agreement to:
 - Submit an application to the MPSC for 2-1-1 Call Center designation within 60 calendar days of Michigan 2-1-1's recommendation
 - Work collaboratively with other Michigan 2-1-1 Call centers to provide and promote 2-1-1 on a statewide basis
 - Actively participate in and promote the implementation of the Michigan 2-1-1 Business Plan
 - Designate a representative to regularly attend and participate in 2-1-1 Operating Council meetings
 - Designate a representative to regularly attend and participate in the Resource Managers Workgroup
 - Provide Michigan 2-1-1, Inc. with annual updates / report regarding the scope of 2-1-1 service delivery
5. Within three business days of the Michigan 2-1-1, Inc. Board action on the request, a letter noting the Board's decision will be sent to the applicant via regular postal mail and electronically. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the Michigan Public Service Commission.

Appendix C

Process for *MPSC designation*

When	What	Who	Date Completed
Anytime prior to submission	Contact all telecoms serving your call area to learn the number of switches that will required call translation. Obtain map of switches for call area. Contact telecoms and determine / negotiate cost of call translation (SBC has a standard rate of \$750/each) - others vary from \$0 - \$1000. Negotiate MOU's with adjoining counties to determine how callers from other counties will be handled. Obtain / prepare listing off all telephone exchanges that will be served in the call coverage area. (Karen Norcross at MPSC can give this information; also visit http://www.nanpa.com/nas/public/assigned_code_query_step1.do?method=selectNpas)		
Anytime prior to submission	Subscribe to MPSC list serve for public notices, meeting agendas and meeting minutes. You will electronically receive notices in addition to getting YOUR notices by mail.		
After submitting MI-AIRS application	Prepare envelopes for mass mailing to all human service agencies in the coverage area as well as all telecoms with switches in the coverage area and Michigan's Attorney General.		
After submitting MI-AIRS application	Contact legislators to notify them of your application, educated them about the process and let them know that you will be asking for a letter of support during the public comment period.		
After submitting MI-AIRS application	Develop form letter to all agencies that will accompany the legal notice for the public comment period. You'll have to wait to put a date on it. See Appendix D		
After submitting MI-AIRS application	Develop draft support letter for use by citizens, legislators, agency directors in support of you MPSC application. Make sure that later you insert your 'case number' and that the letters are directed to the MPSC with copies to your attorney.		
After submitting MI-AIRS application	Contact county clerk's office to learn the 'newspaper of record' for the call coverage area		
After submitting MI-AIRS application	Contact all 'newspapers of record' and speak with the person in charge of legal notices to learn about costs & deadlines for publishing legal notices		
After submitting MI-AIRS application	Develop application for MPSC designation (need an attorney) – feel free to use the applications of those call centers already live with 2-1-1. You will need numerous		

	attachments.		
Following endorsement by MI-AIRS	Submit application to MPSC		
Following endorsement by MI-AIRS	Orchestrate grassroots campaign to obtain positive public comment. Assign board members 3 or 4 names each of community leaders to ask for letters, supply the draft letter of support you wrote earlier.		
About 1 week after submitting the MPSC app.	Your attorney will receive a letter directing that legal notices be published and that letters be sent to all human service agencies, etc. If you subscribed to the list serve – you'll receive it before the attorney does. Legal notices will need to be published in the 'newspaper of record' for 1 day. You will receive form the MPSC what needs to be published. All you have to do is date it. You need to have 'affidavits of publication' mailed, by the newspapers, to your attorney and to the MPSC within 2 days of publication. Mail all agencies the legal notice and the letter you prepared earlier. You will need a listing of all entities to whom you mailed this along with an 'affidavit of mailing' that is notarized.		
Public Comment period	Have available the MPSC application and space to review it in your office.		
Public Comment period	Remind board members to write their own letter of support and to follow-up with the contacts they were to make for additional public comment.		
Public Comment period	Remind legislators to write their letters of support. Most are more than willing to do this if you have laid the groundwork.		

Appendix D

Template for *Letter for Public Comment*

Date

Dear _____:

_____ has filed an application with the Michigan Public Service Commission requesting that the call center be assigned the telephone digits “2-1-1” for _____ Counties. 2-1-1 is an abbreviated dialing code that allows callers to access Health and Human Services information the same way 9-1-1 allows callers to reach emergency services and 4-1-1 allows callers to connect with general information. **The assignment of the 2-1-1 dialing code will designate CALL 2-1-1 as the information and referral answering point for _____ Counties.** Qualified Call Specialists are available 24/7/365 to speak to callers about their health and human service needs. This next step is an important development for our region as the launch of the three-digit dialing code will allow even easier access to this valuable community service.

Enclosed please find the **Notice of Opportunity to Comment**. This notice invites you to review our application to the MPSC, copies of which are available at the _____ office, located at _____. We also hope you will use this occasion to make public comment by the _____ deadline. This may be done via a letter or an email as described in the notice. **Be certain to reference Case No. _____.** The community has supported the development of 2-1-1 and served as the foundation of this program’s success from its inception. Your continued support is vital to the endorsement of our application. We appreciate any action you take to back our efforts, and we have included a sample letter of support. If you should have any questions, do not hesitate to contact _____. You may reach _____ via email _____ or by telephone at _____.

Sincerely,