

Heart of Florida United Way 2-1-1	
Operating Procedures	Policy: Inclusions/Exclusion Guidelines

PURPOSE: Heart of Florida United Way 211 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 resource file has been provided solely by that agency. Inclusion of an agency or organization does not imply endorsement by United Way 211.

The Heart of Florida 211 reserves the right to remove or exclude any organization from its file for any reason. Inclusion is a privilege rather than a right, and agencies will be considered for inclusion on a case-by-case basis. Inclusion in the 211 database is provided free of charge to all organizations.

The database contains information about service providers that enhance the quality of individual and community life.

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 provide 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), which offer a service to the community at large, not just to their own members.
6. Private (For-Profit) agencies or individuals (such as physicians and psychologists) that provide a community service either free, or with a sliding fee scale. Services for which a fee is charged may not be listed in the directory unless it meets the criteria in #7 (see below).
7. Private (For-Profit) agencies that provide services/goods not readily available through public or non-profit agencies. 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.
8. Professional societies and registries that can refer individuals to their members in good standing may be included.
9. Organizations offering services parallel to a non-profit service to which clients are referred and fees paid by a governmental agency. (i.e. offering homemaking services to qualified clients, and are paid by social service agencies).
10. Self-help support groups.
11. Advocacy groups.
12. Elected representatives (federal, state or local)
13. Organizations outside of our geographic parameters that provide a service not available locally.
14. Agencies that have been in operation less than 6 months will be included on a trial basis, with ongoing monitoring of the accuracy of the information provided.
15. Toll free lines operated by government or non-profit organizations.

Agencies or organizations that have been in existence or listed with 211 for a minimum of one year and are expected to continue operation may be considered for the Directory of Community Resources.

The Heart of Florida 211 reserves the right to refuse or discontinue listings for organizations that have had serious complaints lodged against them with any regulatory body.

Organizations that operate without a formal office (i.e. clubs and support groups) must also supply information on their state, regional or national headquarters to be included in the resource file.

Exclusionary Criteria:

1. Commercial business or for-profit agencies not described above.
2. Agencies that violate federal, state or local laws or regulations.
3. Agencies promoting or permitting discrimination based on protected classes of citizens.
4. Organizations (e.g. churches, social clubs) which only offer services to their own members.
5. For-profit medical facilities.

Quality of the Referral

The Heart of Florida 211 does not evaluate the quality of services provided by organizations in the resource file. I&R specialists assist callers to select an appropriate agency or agencies by offering relevant information about fees, location, and services provided, etc.

If callers make complaints about an organization, 211 informs callers of the appropriate agency to handle the complaint, and offers information and referral with an alternative agency.

211 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, 211 may remove the agency from the resource file.

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, for example, religious observances which are required in order to obtain services, or the organization's point of view on issues. Whenever possible, the resource file includes organizations which represent a variety of points of view on any given issue in order to provide callers with a choice of options.

Complaint Handling Procedures

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

1. The staff member takes the information from the complainant.
2. 211 Advisory Board 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 211 Advisory Board.

Effective Date: July 1, 2004

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