

MASS 2-1-1 PRESS RELEASE

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MASS2-1-1 ANNOUNCES RESOURCES FOR WORKERS IMPACTED BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

JANUARY 14, 2019-- As the government shutdown enters its 24th day, the effects are starting to be felt by the 420,000 federal employees working without pay and the 380,000 federal employees who have been furloughed. Last week, thousands of federal employees missed their first paychecks of 2019. Just as significant, during shutdown, janitors, security guards, and other federal contractors receive no back pay.

In response, the United Way of Tri-County and its community partners are preparing for **an expected uptick in calls to 2-1-1** from those seeking assistance with rent and mortgage payments, utility bills and groceries. In the Metrowest/495 Corridor the United Way of Tri-County's 3 food pantries and 2 hot meal Cafés are open and available to any federal employee who is effected by the partial government shut down. Log on to www.uwotc.org or www.mass211.org for further information.

“United Way and Mass 2-1-1 are committed to helping the communities impacted by the federal government shutdown,” said Paul Mina, President and CEO of the United Way of Tri-County and Mass2-1-1. “Furloughed federal employees and government contractors in need of social services and individuals with questions about availability of public benefits can call 2-1-1 to get help.

Mass 2-1-1; the Commonwealth's 3-digit non-emergency hot line service will anchor United Way's community support by providing information about local social services, including the availability of public benefits and corporate assistance programs. Mass 2-1-1 specialists can help those in need connect to food pantries, health care services and utility and eviction prevention assistance. Callers also can receive information on mental health counseling, transportation, job training, substance use recovery services, child care and volunteer opportunities.

Mass 2-1-1 is a free, confidential referral and information service that connects people from all communities to a specialist who can help find local health and human services, 24 hours a day, seven days a week answering calls in over 140 languages. . For more information visit www.Mass211.org.

At a national level, United Way Worldwide announced Friday that that it will lead the formation of the **United for U.S.** coalition, a joint effort by corporate partners, organized labor, the United Way network and nonprofits

to assist furloughed federal workers and others impacted by the ongoing government shutdown. **United for U.S.** will address these needs by bringing together United Way’s deep community knowledge with organized labor and our corporate partners who want to help those in need during the extended shutdown.

“No organization is better positioned than United Way to bring critical resources together for those who need help. Our reach into every U.S. community and our deep relationships with all sectors allow us to create the safety net that will assist our neighbors maintain the fabric of our communities,” said Mary Sellers, U.S. President, United Way Worldwide. “We are thankful for the support of our corporate partners, organized labor and local United Ways, who stand ready to provide vital services to those in need.”

Wells Fargo and Bank of America are two of United Way’s closest corporate partners offering support to those affected. Wells Fargo will waive fees for customers who have direct deposit from the federal government, or at the customer’s request, and will offer short and long-term assistance for those who need extra time to make payments. Bank of America is offering personalized financial assistance through its Client Assistance Program. United Way is inviting other corporate partners to join the coalition's efforts.

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