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211 LA Thanks Board of Supervisors for Delaying Action on Award of 2-1-1 Services to Unqualified Corporation

LOS ANGELES, CA (July 11, 2022) — 211 LA, a not-for-profit agency that answers calls to the 2-1-1 calling code and connects people to the social services they need, today thanked the LA County Board of Supervisors for delaying a proposal to award a contract for 2-1-1 services to Deloitte Consulting, a for-profit corporation that has never run a 2-1-1 call center and is utterly unqualified to do so.

“We are grateful the supervisors have recognized the need to pause and consider the impacts to the community of this proposal, which would decimate the ability of county residents to connect to the services they need to address problems including homelessness, hunger, and crises,” said Amy Latzer, the Chief Operating Officer of 211 LA, which has provided information and referral (I&R) services for more than 40 years. “Awarding the 2-1-1 contract to Deloitte, with its history of call center failure, cost overruns, and rampant litigation, would be a disaster for the people of Los Angeles.”

The County of Los Angeles has put the 2-1-1 contract out to bid twice in the last 5 years, despite a report from the County’s own consulting firm praising 211 LA for its excellent performance and high rates of user satisfaction.

The latest RFP, released in 2021, was written to emphasize experience in technology platforms as opposed to demonstrating a record of delivering 2-1-1 services to a complex, diverse, and technology-challenged population. While the vast majority of callers to 2-1-1 need a human connection to assess their issues and connect them to the services that will help, Deloitte proposed answering 88% of calls through automation. Practically, this means that most callers will not have the opportunity to speak with a live person who can identify and connect them to the services they need for their unique situation.

Further, the RFP process lacked a public process where all stakeholders involved in social service delivery could provide input in how to design a system that can advance the County's interest in making 2-1-1 service more efficient, working with the County' ongoing data modernization efforts while maintaining or preferably increasing the current level of 2-1-1 services. The current proposed award will clearly not achieve these goals.

"211 LA believes the Supervisors should simply cancel this RFP process and start afresh," said Victoria D. Stratman, president of the 211 LA Board of Directors. "We stand ready to sit down with representatives of the County chief executive officer, the County chief information officer, and the board of supervisors, the County departments that work with 211 LA as a long-time partner, and the many important stakeholders who want to see a better, stronger 211 LA. We are confident that a public process will result in 2-1-1 services that can help alleviate poverty and other social ills in Los Angeles County."

For more information, see Save211LA.org or contact 211LA through the representatives listed above.

About 211 LA County

211 LA (or 211 LA County) is the hub for community members and community organizations looking for all types of health, human, and social services in Los Angeles County. 211 LA has served Los Angeles County for 40 years, using industry-leading technology to provide critical services to Angelenos in need. The resource hub has always provided culturally competent and dynamic services attuned to the pulse of Los Angeles, and leading the way to combat hate fits with the critical needs of today. 211 LA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, whose services are funded through partnerships with the LA County Board of Supervisors, CEO, and Departments; with contracts with the State of California, LAHSA, SoCal Gas, Southern California Edison, AARP, and others; and with grants from foundations including the National Institute of Health (NIH).