

**REPORT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Marketing and Promoting the
Statewide Information Referral
(I&R) System and the Proposed
2-1-1 Telephone Number**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 84

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
2005**



**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

November 1, 2005

TO: The Honorable Mark R. Warner
Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia

The Honorable Vincent F. Callahan, Jr., Chair
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable John H. Chichester, Chair
Senate Finance Committee

The Honorable Harry B. Blevins, Chair
Virginia Commission on Youth

Item 362 F. 3 of the 2005 Appropriations Act addresses marketing and promoting the Statewide Information and Referral (I&R) System and the proposed 2-1-1 telephone number. It requires the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) to work with I&R providers and other public and private partners to develop strategies to market and promote I&R and 2-1-1, and to report on those plans by November 1, 2005.

Information and Referral is a fast, free and confidential way for citizens of the Commonwealth to locate hundreds of services in their communities. The system, which has a toll-free telephone number at (800) 230-6977, connects callers with trained professionals who can provide referrals to a wide variety of health and human services in their communities. I&R has a Web site for citizens who want to research information on their own, and the address is <http://www.vaandr.com/homeie.htm>. I&R has been in place for 25 years, but its use is expected to expand dramatically when the 2-1-1 telephone number is implemented. Planning for implementation is under way, with a date for roll-out yet to be determined. Roll-out is targeted for early 2006, pending technical adjustments by telephone companies and funding for 24-hour staffing. The 2-1-1 number is being implemented nationwide.

The Statewide Information and Referral System provides information and referral on basic human needs; physical and mental health resources; work initiatives; support for seniors and those with disabilities; support for children, youth and families; volunteering in communities; nutrition programs; tax credits; jobs and more. I&R/2-1-1 is an invaluable resource to citizens on a routine basis, but also plays an important role following natural disasters or other emergency situations. The number of calls increased dramatically following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and Hurricane Isabel.

The VDSS Division of Public Affairs coordinates the I&R system, which facilitates continuous promotion of I&R to the citizens of Virginia. I&R is carried out by a sole source contractor and five subcontractors, all of which are non-profit agencies located across the state.

The VDSS, in conjunction with providers, developed a 2004-06 communications/marketing plan for I&R (Appendix A) and a 2005-06 communications/marketing plan for 2-1-1 (Appendix B). Both provide for print products, news releases, media contacts, radio and print public service announcements, promotions on the Web, exhibits, promotional items, speaking engagements and other no-cost or low-cost methods of disseminating information.

The VDSS and I&R providers are working with other public and private partners to carry out these communications/marketing plans. There are no available funds for promoting and marketing the plan that would provide for the purchase of radio or television air time, ads in newspapers, billboards, bus boards, and other more costly types of marketing and promotions. However, a budget package is being prepared to request additional funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony Conyers Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anthony Conyers Jr.
Commissioner

Attachments

Appendix A

Information and Referral Communications/Marketing Plan July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2006

GOAL: To meet the requirements of the Code of Virginia § 63.2-222 – Develop and implement a statewide publicity effort

OBJECTIVE: To make citizens of the Commonwealth more aware of I&R and increase their use of I&R

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>Coordination of the 2004 National Alliance of Information and Referral System (AIRS) Conference in Norfolk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit • Promotional items • Posters • Brochures • Fact sheet 	<p>As the 2004 host state for the National AIRS Conference, participate and coordinate promotional items, collateral materials and workshops sessions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete • Workshop presentations archived online at www.airs.org 	10/1/2003	3/31/04
<p>Develop exhibit for AIRS conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Approve photos ~ Purchase high resolution photos • Produce layout • Produce exhibit 	<p>Attractive, informative and functional exhibit (use AIRS Conference, Virginia Energy Fair, State Fair, etc.)</p>	Complete	1/26/04 1/26/04 1/22/04 3/5/04 3/15/04	3/5/04 2/2/04 3/5/04 3/12/04 3/31/04

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>Develop feature article for 2004 AIRS conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News & Views (VDSS employee publication) • Retool for public and distribute statewide, mentoring local I&Rs • Distribute press release promoting AIRS conference statewide 	Produced and distributed newsletter story and article	Complete	3/2/04 4/12/04 4/5/04	4/1/04 5/15/04 4/19/04
<p>Develop new informational brochure for 2004 AIRS conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content • Design • Printing • Distribution 	Attractive brochure with new cover that keeps message fresh and provides details of I&R services and how to access I&R	Complete	1/26/04 3/5/04 3/15/04	3/5/04 3/12/04 3/31/04
<p>Develop new fact sheet for 2004 AIRS conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content • Design • Printing • Distribution 	New, attractive informational fact sheet that keeps message fresh and provides details of I&R services and how to access I&R	Complete	1/26/04 3/5/04 3/12/04	3/5/04 3/12/04 3/31/04

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>Media opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to seek opportunities in conjunction with contractors and sub-contractors • TV news background phone banks • Noon news segments 	<p>Media contacts that result in print and broadcast coverage of I&R</p>	<p>Activities ongoing. Completed interviews with NPR and other broadcast outlets in Virginia; answered phones on Call 12</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>7/30/06</p>
<p>News releases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for opportunities to promote I&R through news releases/Web sites, etc. 	<p>Prepare and distribute articles to raise awareness of I&R</p>	<p>Activities ongoing: Awareness through VDSS internal/external Web sites; incorporation of I&R talking points in media releases; use of I&R telephone number in constituent correspondence</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>7/30/06</p>
<p>Determine target audiences for print, public service announcements (PSAs), news releases, feature articles, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection • Preparing artwork • Ordering • Distribution 	<p>Communications tools that are appropriate for target audiences</p>	<p>Target audiences determined, production and distribution of collateral materials ongoing</p>	<p>6/1/02</p>	<p>7/30/06</p>

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>Series of PSAs for broadcast media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content • Content approval by state staff • Content approval by contractor • Distribution 	<p>Produce and distribute at least four PSAs</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>6/1/04</p>	<p>7/30/06</p>
<p>Public service ads for print media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content • Design • Production • Distribution 	<p>Produce and distribute at least two ads</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>8/1/05</p>	<p>7/30/06</p>
<p>I&R internal outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to seek opportunities to raise awareness of I&R within VDSS, state agencies, Virginia Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (VAIRS) and the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) 	<p>I&R awareness letter from the Secretary of HHR to agency heads stating I&R should be the single source of information clearinghouse</p> <p>Participate in the Virginia Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (VAIRS) meetings</p> <p>Ongoing trainings provided to regional I&R directors and their staff to improve customer service delivery</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>I&R external outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to seek opportunities to raise awareness of I&R to target external audiences throughout the state, including: general public, stakeholders, non-for-profit organizations, key influencers and community volunteers 	Coordination of I&R booth at the 2004 Virginia State Fair	Complete	9/23/04	10/3/04
	Coordination of I&R Booth at the 2004 Energy Fair	Complete	10/8/04	10/9/04
	Provide professional information and referral services via toll-free telephone number	Provided professional information and referral services via toll-free telephone access to 37,971 Virginians from 1/1/2005 to 3/31/2005	1/1/05	3/31/05
	Provide professional information and referral services via statewide Web site (www.vaiandr.net)	Provided professional information and referral services via Web site, which received 3,398 hits from 1/1/2005 to 3/31/2005	1/1/05	3/31/05
	Continually update Virginia's I&R database	Formally updated 4,200 resources in the statewide I&R database, which reflects 15 percent of the statewide I&R database	1/1/05	3/31/05

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
	<p>Coordinate I&R booth at 2005 Virginia State Fair</p> <p>Coordinate local educational outreach programs to raise awareness of regional I&R centers</p>	<p>Planning</p> <p>Conducted neighborhood and county-wide information and referral educational outreach sessions in: Augusta, Charlottesville, Danville, Falls Church, Fluvanna, Lynchburg, Norfolk, Richmond, Roanoke, and Spotsylvania</p>	<p>7/15/05</p> <p>1/1/05</p>	<p>10/2/05</p> <p>3/31/05</p>
<p>Promotional items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection • Preparing artwork • Ordering • Distribution 	<p>Attractive items to create awareness of I&R</p>	<p>Distributed 15,985 items statewide in FY 2004-05</p>	<p>1/26/04</p>	<p>7/30/06</p>
<p><i>This information represents a working plan. Dates identified are targets and are subject to change, based on external factors (funding, personnel, etc). This plan must be flexible, particularly when dealing with the media.</i></p>				

Appendix B

I&R – 2-1-1

Communications/Marketing Plan
July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2006

GOAL: To meet the requirements of the Code of Virginia § 63.2-222 – Develop and implement a statewide publicity effort

OBJECTIVE: To make citizens of the Commonwealth more aware of I&R and increase their use of I&R

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>2-1-1 – Graphic Identity Material Development <i>(Posters, Letterhead, Media Release Template, Brochure, Folder)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design • Production • Distribution 	<p>Coordinate the design and production of standard graphic materials to visually support the launch of 2-1-1</p>	<p>Branding 2-1-1 Virginia's identity materials, including a brochure, poster and folder.</p>	<p>11/15/04 11/15/04</p>	<p>6/30/06 6/30/06</p>
		<p>Letterhead, outer envelopes, media release and news advisory templates have been developed and are pending production</p>	<p>11/15/04</p>	<p>6/30/06</p>
		<p>Materials will be distributed to all I&R providers prior to their local 2-1-1 launch</p>	<p>11/15/04</p>	<p>6/30/06</p>

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>2-1-1 – Facilitator’s Guide Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design • Production • Distribution 	<p>Coordinate the contents and production of a standardized “How To” guide, which will assist regional I&R Directors in launching 2-1-1 locally</p>	<p>Drafted 2-1-1 Facilitator’s Guide, in the editing phase, production of the guide is pending</p>	<p>11/15/04</p>	<p>6/30/06</p>
<p>2-1-1 - News Release Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare news releases announcing changes and improvements in I&R • Prepare news releases on the launch of 2-1-1 • Prepare news releases announcing 2-1-1 kick-off events, etc. • Prepare in advance news releases on the successes, changes and improvements in 2-1-1 	<p>Prepare and distribute a minimum of six articles</p>	<p>Drafts of news releases, announcing the changes and improvements to I&R are currently in the editing phase.</p> <p>I&R service announcements have been broadcast on the VDSS internal/external Web sites</p>	<p>7/01/04</p>	<p>6/30/06</p>
<p>2-1-1 - Media Opportunity Identification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities to promote awareness of 2-1-1 in conjunction with contractors and subcontractors • Coordinate regional 	<p>Coordinate media relations strategies and tactics that result in print and broadcast coverage of 2-1-1 launch</p>	<p>VDSS works closely with the directors of Virginia’s I&R centers to identify and prepare for regional media opportunities to</p>	<p>7/01/04</p>	<p>6/30/06</p>

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>editorial board visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to participate in regional television news background phone banks Identify morning and noon news interview opportunities on regional television and radio programs Develop Op/eds promoting the benefits of 2-1-1 system. Coordinate letters to the editor on the benefits of 2-1-1 and the positive impact to the community Encourage local departments to pass up success stories to pitch to media as new markets open 		increase awareness of 2-1-1 in Virginia		
<p>2-1-1 – Target Audience Determination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>State</i> <i>Regional</i> 	<p>Identification of communications tools (news releases, PSAs, Op/eds, feature articles, etc.) that are appropriate for target audiences</p>	<p>VDSS in partnership with Information & Referral and the Directors of Virginia’s I&R centers are currently identifying target local audiences</p> <p>Sample news advisories, Op-eds, media releases have been developed and</p>	7/01/04	6/30/06

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
		are included in the 2-1-1 Facilitator's Guide		
<p>2-1-1 – PSA Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content • Content approval by state staff • Content approval by contractor • Production • Distribution 	Produce and distribute a minimum of four PSAs	Drafted scripts for 2-1-1 Virginia public service announcements, including a Spanish language version, scripts are currently in the editing phase and production is pending	7/01/04	6/30/06
<p>2-1-1 - Public Service Print Ad Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content • Design • Production • Distribution 	Produce and distribute two PSA print ads	Creating 2-1-1 Virginia's public service print ads	7/01/04	6/30/06
<p>2-1-1 – Launch Event Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate an event plan for each region's kick-off with press conference and state official making the first call • Maintain consistent communications regarding the status of factors 	Coordinate a successful launch event in each region with media coverage	VDSS has met with the I&R providers in Southwest Virginia, Central Virginia, Tidewater, Richmond and Northern Virginia to select locations and to determine event kick-off logistical needs	10/01/04	6/30/06

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>impacting the determination of launch dates for each region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify local officials and VIPs who will present/attend kick-offs in each area 				
<p>2-1-1 - External Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and placement of 2-1-1 updates on VDSS public Web site Development of permanent 2-1-1 information link on the VDSS public site Distribution of 2-1-1 posters/materials to LDSS offices Re-tool News & Views/newsletter stories for public Web site. Update fact sheets and backgrounders as needed Coordinate with Regional I&R Directors the distribution of media and informational kits with backgrounders, brochures, promotional items, etc., for local press and identified partners Consult with Regional I&R Directors regarding 	<p>Assist Regional I&R directors with the implementation of external communications in conjunction with 2-1-1 launch</p>	<p>Developed I&R information for VDSS internal and external Web sites</p> <p>Ongoing communications and coordination with I&R providers to update I&R materials launching 2-1-1 in Virginia</p> <p>VDSS has provided ongoing consultation to I&R providers regarding local promotion of 2-1-1</p>	<p>7/01/04</p>	<p>6/30/06</p>

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>regional opportunities to promote 2-1-1 through co-op marketing with utility companies, banks, food stores, etc.</p>				
<p>2-1-1 – Promotional Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection • Ordering • Distribution 	<p>Select attractive, functional items to create awareness of 2-1-1 program launch</p>	<p>Ordering underway</p>	<p>7/01/04</p>	<p>6/30/06</p>
<p>2-1-1 - Internal Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and placement of 2-1-1 updates on VDSS online • Advertise 2-1-1 on local agency Web sites at other HHR agencies • Prepare newsletter material for other HHR agencies • <i>News & Views</i> article • Article in <i>Commonwealth Currents</i> • Coordinate messages and information with key leaders at other agencies to bring them on board with the idea • Letters to HHR agency heads • Work with Public Affairs division at DHRM to 	<p>Promote internal audience awareness of 2-1-1 and encourage cross-promotion of 2-1-1 throughout all agencies</p>	<p>VDSS has changed the on-hold phone message to inform target audiences about the 2-1-1 launch.</p>	<p>7/1/04</p>	<p>6/30/06</p>

Strategies (Methods) and Activities (Action Steps)	Function, Evaluation Or Measurement	Status	Begin Date	End Date
<p>promote 2-1-1 through their communications efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a promotion kit for local areas to use in promoting 2-1-1, include a list of places they can put 2-1-1 information, example press releases, and more. 				
<p><i>This information represents a working plan. Dates identified are targets and are subject to change, based on external factors (funding, personnel, etc). This plan must be flexible, particularly when dealing with the media.</i></p>				