FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PA 211 and United Way Launch Texting Campaign to deliver vetted information to Pennsylvanians

United Way of Pennsylvania and PA 211 launched an informational campaign by text to keep Pennsylvanians connected to verified sources of information on COVID-19. The campaign includes fraud prevention tips, information to help people access individual payments from the federal stimulus, and statewide resources to help households struggling with a loss of income.

To opt into the campaign, individuals should text PACOVID to 898-211.

"Over the weekend of March 28, PA 211 received many calls from Pennsylvanians wondering how they would access the individual payments included in the CARES Act which became law on Friday," according to Debbie Reihart, PA 211 Executive Director.

“CARES Act financial relief will be important to many PA households, but we recognize that now is also a time when scammers are actively trying to confuse Americans who understand that individual payments are coming to many, but don’t understand exactly how or when this will happen. We are using the PACOVID texting campaign to get accurate, verified information to Pennsylvanians about how the individual payments will flow, and to prevent fraud,” said Kristen Rotz, President of United Way of Pennsylvania.
“The PACOVID texting campaign will push timely, verified information to subscribers throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Individuals who are struggling to meet their basic needs are also able to have a live, two-way conversation with a 211 resource navigator by texting or calling 211 from anywhere in Pennsylvania,” Rotz said.

Pennsylvanians can get help from 211 in the following ways:
1) Opt in to receive timely, vetted information by texting PACOVID to 898-211
2) Text your zip code to 898-211
3) Visit www.uwp.org/211gethelp for statewide, regional and local resources.
4) Call 211 from any land line or mobile phone

Text and web site are the quickest way to access help while 211 experiences higher-than-usual call volumes. Standard messaging rates may apply for text messaging.

Pennsylvania 211 is a statewide telephone, text and self-serve web search for health and human resources that is available 24/7/365. In 2019, PA 211 received more than 200,000 unique contacts. 211 is a national network serving more than 95 percent of the US population.

United Ways have been long-standing supporters and the national leader of the 211 movement in partnership with AIRS (Alliance of Information and Referral Systems). As the largest private funder of the 211 network in Pennsylvania, United Ways continue to strengthen and support 211 as another way to build stronger communities and create opportunities for all.

To reach PA 211, text your zip code to 898-211 or dial 211 from your phone. A guided search for community resources is also available at https://www.uwp.org/211gethelp/. PA 211 call volume and needs information can be accessed at www.pa.211counts.org

# # #