

Analysis
Department of Administrative Services
211info Services Report

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Request: Acknowledge receipt of a report on 211info services.

Recommendation: Acknowledge receipt of the report.

Analysis: The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) was required by a budget note in HB 5008 (2013) to report the Joint Committee on Ways and Means during the 2014 session on state agency help lines and existing contracts with 211info.

Budget Note:

"The Department of Administrative Services shall work with other state agencies to identify all information and referral services for state government, with a primary focus on help lines (for example, 1-800 numbers). The Department will submit a report to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means during the 2014 legislative session summarizing the purpose, scope, and cost of each service. For each state agency currently using 2-1-1 the report shall also provide information on the service(s) being provided, including but not limited to, contract provisions, utilization, benefits, costs, and budget. Finally, the report shall include an analysis of potential cost savings or efficiencies that might be achieved by broader use of 2-1-1."

To identify areas where existing state agency work could be transferred to 211info DAS surveyed all state agencies on existing information and referral lines. DAS reports the survey found 72 state programs at 17 state agencies (including the Judicial Department) use 106 phone lines to field information requests, referral for local resources, reporting an emergency, and filing a complaint. The most frequent type of calls were information requests, which were at least twice as common as any of the other three. Using FY 2013 actual telephone billing information, the 72 programs spent 8,526,100 minutes and \$196,200 in phone billings to handle an estimated 2,131,525 phone calls covering one of the four areas identified above, assuming an average call length of four minutes. DAS estimates that 32%, or around \$63,000, of the \$196,200 was paid from the General Fund.

The Department reports that there are eight programs at five state agencies with existing contracts with 211info. The reported total FY 2014 budget for 211info is \$2,485,000, of which \$1,047,450 comes from Oregon state agency contracts. After reviewing data and conducting interviews with 211info personnel, DAS concluded 211info is meeting their mission and organization objectives. However, DAS reports that state would have to invest in operations and administration of 211info to ensure any future transition of state programs is successful. Furthermore, DAS recommends that only programs that closely match 211info's current mission should be considered for transition.

The Legislative Fiscal office recommends acknowledging receipt of the report.