 

# Tompkins County/ Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council Special Community Mobility Projects

Application for 2018 Grants

Due to ITCTC on Friday, Nov 3, 20170 4 pm

#### Contact Information:

Name: Nicole Roulstin

Agency: Human Services Coalition Address: 171 East MLK Jr/State St #133 Phone#: 607-273-8686

Email: nroulstin@hsctc.org Website: 211tompkins.org

1. **Project Name:** FISH Call Center Support Project

#### Project Description:

2-1-1 Tompkins/Cortland is a comprehensive helpline that assists individuals from Tompkins and Cortland counties with their human service needs. 2-1-1 has been in operation since 2007 (and previously as Information and Referral since 1978) and is a program of the Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County. The 2-1-1 helpline handles calls, emails, chats and walk-ins. Calls are handled 24 hours a day/7 days a week, with local staffing available Monday­ Friday from 8:30 am-5 pm to respond to chat, walk in and email requests. In 2018 2-1-1 will be phasing in a texting platform whereby community members can reach our local 2-1-1 by sending a text message to 898211 (TXT211)

FISH (Friends in Service Helping), a volunteer organization, offers necessary and critical transportation to doctors, dentists, the hospital, clinics and medical-related social service appointments in the central New York region. FISH is largely, though not entirely, restricted to older adults, persons with disabilities, or low-income residents with no other means of medical transportation. FISH operates with an all volunteer staff of drivers and ride coordinators/schedulers; its funding consists of grants and donations.

Since 2012, 2-1-1 Tompkins/Cortland has been taking ride requests for the FISH medical transportation program. In the past 12 months, 2-1-1 has handled 1022 calls and taken 766 ride requests for FISH. Through Special Community Mobility grant funds we propose to continue the provision of ride requests and program support services for the FISH Volunteer Medical Transportation Program. 2-1-1 continues to support the FISH pilot program to provide out of county medical transportation to regional medical centers. 2-1-1 is not only a cost savings for the FISH program but also connects callers to other transportation resources and can connect FISH clients with programs such as food pantries, health insurance assistance and housing, among others.

The 2-1-1 contact center, in support of the FISH program, supports the approved mobility project of the Tompkins County Coordinated plan, the "promotion, enhancement, and facilitation of access to transportation services, including the integration and coordination of services for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and low-income individuals." Each day the call center takes ride requests for FISH, both in and out of Tompkins County. 2-1-1 has developed a process for handling "short-term" requests, where the need for medical transportation is less than the

four business days preferred by FISH. Each day 2-1-1 sends the requests to the scheduled FISH Phoner. 2-1-1 also continuously handles troubleshooting calls, where clients have not received a response from FISH to their requests, or other issues that arise such as lack of drivers, changes to ride requests, and other client concerns. 2-1-1 staff will begin creating the monthly driver schedule for FISH in 2018. This includes contacting each of the volunteer drivers and finding out their availability for each month, or allowing the drivers to sign up for a given day of that month.

The 2-1-1 call center manager participates in all FISH board meetings and annual FISH events, giving all the FISH p rsohnel an opportunity to discuss ways to improve the operations of FISH to best serve the clients.

2·,-1-1 coordinates a number of other initiatives beyond FISH call center support. The call center schedules appointments for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA) during tax season as a contract with Alternative's Federal Credit Union (AFCU) which now includes Cortland county. 2-1-1 also implements scheduling for the New York State of Health navigator program.

Type of Project (Please Check One}:

Operating Assistance: Mobility Management:

[ ]

[ X ]

Other Capital Project: [ ]

1. **Describe the proposed project** goals **and objectives. Is it a new** or continuing project? How will the project

**be implemented?**

, The goal of the FISH Call Center Support Project is to continue to provide customer-friendly, efficient and effective prdgram suppbrt services to the FISH Volunteer Medical Transportation Program.

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**Objectives:**

i'nhrough trained 2-1-1 Community Service Specialists using an online reservation form, screen for eligibility and record pertinent ride request information from Tompkins County residents in need of rides to medical appointments and other eligible medical-related locations.

1. Send ride request information in a timely and efficient way (by email) to appropriate FISH personnel.
2. Screen those in need of medical transportation for other human service needs and provide appropriate Referrals. Share other medical transportation resources with them in case FISH cannot fulfill their request. Provide information about FISH for callers who do not know about the service.
3. Provide support and troubleshooting for FISH riders when they have not heard about their ride request, rescheduling their appointment, etc.
4. Provide FISH and other interested parties with data on medical transportation requests, etc.
5. Participate in FISH agency annual meeting, volunteer appreciation, board meetings

How will the project serve and benefit target populations (low income, seniors or persons with disabilities)? FISH states that they serve "elderly citizens who may be frail or who no longer drive, and Tompkins County residents who have limited transportation options and resources." 2-1-1 services as a whole are open to any person, however, the vast majority of the programs in the 2-1-1 database are nonprofit, with a mission to serve individuals with low to moderate income levels.

2-1-1 Tompkins/Cortland created a customized database and webpage with programs serving individuals with developmental disabilities. These resources are categorized by needs such as housing and transportation. With this

project, 2-1-1 staff can use the specialty database for a person with a disability to find other transportation resources beyond the FISH program.

#### How will the project coordinate with existing transportation services in the service area?

2-1-1 is well connected to all local services, especially transportation. Both 2-1-1 and FISH personnel participate in the monthly Tompkins County Coordinated Transportation meetings. Much of the conversations at these meetings involve improving efforts to coordinate with other participating agencies to meet transportation needs of the community.

2-1-1 has a continued partnership with Way2Go at Cornell Cooperative Extension, and renewed their contract in 2017 with 2-1-1 being the "One Call, One Stop" destination for transportation resources in Tompkins County. 2-1-1 provides Way2Go with quarterly reports, including an in-depth look at FISH transportation. The report includes the origin and destination of each ride request through FISH. Also in the report are all transportation related calls and any unmet needs from those calls (where the person calling was unable to receive assistance) and an explanation for the unmet need. Examples include agency not open at time of request, caller ineligible for service, or caller refused referral offered by 2-1-1 staff. 2-1-1 includes a narrative with the Way2Go report, highlighting unique transportation calls and noteworthy unmet needs for that quarter.

With this ongoing partnership with FISH, 2-1-1 is consistently looking for new opportunities and partnerships that will support and strengthen the services offered by FISH. One potential future partnership is with the staff and volunteers at Love Living at Home (LLH.) Love Living at Home is a membership program for seniors who wish to continue to stay in their homes but are in need of different daily living supports, including transportation. LLH has a fair number of volunteer drivers who assist members with rides to various destinations including doctor's appointments. It makes sense to explore a potential partnership with FISH, where both agencies would benefit by having a larger pool of volunteer drivers to increase the number of successful trips for FISH clients and Love Living at Home members alike.

1. **Project Budget** (Present the budget including assumptions.)

***Budget Assumptions:***

**Phone Staff hours-taking requests and scheduling rides:** 1250 annual calls X $2.58 /call

We anticipate receiving 1,250 requests for year 2018. $21.50 is the average hourly rate for a call specialist plus fringe, and the average length of a FISH Call is 7 minutes or 12% of an hour. 12% of $21.50 is $2.58

Phone Staff rider troubleshooting: 11 contacts/week X 52 weeks X $5.38/contact Troubleshooting averages 15 minutes total or 25% of an hour - 25% of $21.50 is $5.38

Monthly Driver Scheduling: 5 hours per month (estimate provided by FISH) X $32.00/hr = $1920.

Program Coordination & Supervision: 3.50 hours/week X 52 weeks X $32.00/hour (hourly rate for call center manager plus fringe) is $5,824

IT Service and Support: (!Carol database platform and technical support) 1250 calls+ 572 troubleshooting calls is about 13% of total calls in 2-1-1 call center, total cost of iCarol technical service/support is $10,000. 13% of $10,000 is $1,300 **Admin Overhead:** 18% figure is based on 2-1-1 program budgeted non personnel expenses

#### Show Itemize expenses and revenues (add rows as needed)?

**Exr:>enses**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phone Staff Hours-taking requests Program info to interested callers | 1250 calls at $2.58 Per call | $3,225 |
| Rider Troubleshooting | 11 calls/week at$5.38 per call | $3,077 |
| Monthly Driver Scheduling | 5 hrs/mo at $32.003.50 hrs/week |  | $1920 |
| Program Coordination and Supervision | $5,824 ($4104 requested, $1820 match) |
| IT Service and Support | See assumptions | $1,300 |
| Admin Overhead | 18% of above | $2762 |
| TOTAL |  | $18,108 (16,288 requested) |

Revenues

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Special Community Mobility Project Funding | $16,288 |
| Program Coordination and Supervision -MATCH(Tompkins County and other local funding) | $1,820 |
| TOTAL | $18,108 |

How will Federal funds will be matched?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FISH Special Community****Mobility Proposal** | Local Funds Tompkins County | Total |
| Personnel | $12,226 | $1,820 | $14,046 |
| Admin | $2,762 |  | $2,762 |
| IT | $1,300 |  | $1,300 |
| **TOTAL** | **$16,288** | **$1,820** | **$18,108** |

**Local Funds:** The 2-1-1 Call Center receives local funds from the Tompkins County Legislature and other sources. These funds support call center infrastructure including our database and call screen operations and personnel.

#### Project Evaluation

2-1-1 is committed to continuous evaluation of our program to improve services for clients. At the end of.each business day, the call center manager reviews each ride request taken for FISH and checks for errors and/or missing information prior to communicating the information to FISH personnel. The manager also collects and submits quarterly reports of number of FISH calls and ride requests to the FISH Executive Director and the Tompkins County ChiefTransportation Planner.

2-1-1 assesses and monitors the effectiveness of this program by conducting quarterly quality assurance surveys, call specialists ask every caller for a two week period to take a call back with a few questions about the service. Because of the high call volume of FISH callers, these clients are well represented in each survey period. The 2-1-1 specialists ask the clients if they received the ride that they requested. FISH callers are also given the opportunity to express both praise and concern of the FISH program. Both positive and negative feedback is shared with FISH.

The last quality assurance survey was conducted in August of 2017. Overall within the survey period, 82% of participants received the help they needed directly from the referrals provided by 2-1-1. The reasons that callers surveyed have not received the help needed range from the person simply has not called the referrals given to issues like the agency referred is currently closed, or out of funding.

Here are some of the comments given by FISH clients:

"I am grateful that we have a community rich with resources and FISH has been a great help." "Both 2-1-1 and FISH are great services."

"You people are wonderful and I don't know what I'd do without you." "FISH responded to my concerns immediately."

### Certification by Chief Executive Officer of Applicant

I hereby certify all information and data in this application are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and are supported by our records. I certify, as applicant, we will comply with all applicable Federal requirements.

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|  | Title:*E* | *r:uf/u* |
|  | Dae: |

Send to Fernando deAragon, ITCTC, 121 E. Court St, Ithaca, NY 14850 or by email fdearagon@tompkins­ co.org before 4 pm on Nov 3, 2017.

For technical assistance contact Dwight Mengel, Tompkins County DSS, at: 607-274-5605, Dwight.mengel@dfa.state.ny.us before Oct 20.

FISH

310 Comstock Rd.

Ithaca, NY 14850

October 31, 2017

Nicole Roulstin, CIRS Call Center Manager

2-1-1 Tompkins/Cortland Help-line

Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County, Inc. 171 East MLK Jr./State Street #133

Ithaca, NY 14850-5543

Dear Nicole,

I am writing in support of the Human Services Coalition's redesignation as 2-1-1 Help line for contact by FISH clients.

Tompkins County residents in need of free transportation to medical and health services call 2-1-1 and are referred to FISH. Although nearly 800 rides in county in 2016 and in the first *9* months of 2017 sixty people had rides to out of county medical facilities, this does not represent the number of calls processed. Nor does it represent the amount of time 2-1-1 staff spend educating clients on transportation options and assisting clients and FISH volunteers resolve issues as they arise.

FISH appreciates the support that the 2-1-1 help line provides. Sincerely,

Eleanor Carey

Executive Director, FISH eleanorl 941@live.com