

Medical Home: Basic Needs of Food, Shelter/Housing, Utilities, Health Care, and More

An effective primary care medical home results in better health outcomes. (For more information on medical home, see the “Medical Home: What is It?” fact sheet.) An essential part of the medical home model is treating the whole patient, including assessing and addressing whether basic needs are met and accessible, and ensuring safety.

In Indiana a person may dial 2-1-1 on their phone to be connected to a local resource directory, which may provide information about food, shelter or housing, utilities, health care services, crisis and emergency management, and more. Alternatively, text your zip code to 898211 to contact a highly-trained Community Navigator in your area, or visit 211.org to find a local 211 organization. Below are programs and services that help Hoosier families meet basic needs. Many families will benefit from more than one program. We recommend you apply for all programs for which you may be eligible.

Food Assistance (See also “Food” and “WIC” fact sheets.)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is Indiana's Food Stamp Program, a federal program designed to improve the nutrition of low-income households. SNAP helps low-income families buy nutritious food with Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards. To qualify, applicants must meet financial and other requirements. **To apply**, contact the Division of Family Resources office in your county of residence, or simply file an application that contains the name, address, and signature of a household member. Applications may be taken to the local DFR office, mailed, or faxed. You may also apply online at <http://www.in.gov/fssa/dfr/3099.htm>.

WIC (Women, Infants and Children) is a nutrition program that provides a basic food package, nutrition education, referrals, and breast-feeding support to women and children, aged 0 to 5. Households eligible for WIC must include a pregnant woman and/or child(ren) under age 5, a breastfeeding woman (up to infant's 1st birthday), or a non-breastfeeding postpartum woman (up to 6 months after the birth of an infant or after pregnancy ends). Participants must meet income eligibility and be “nutritionally at risk.” **To apply**, make an appointment at the WIC clinic nearest you. To find a clinic, call 1-800-522-0874, or visit <http://www.in.gov/isdh/20424.htm>.

Free and Reduced Price School Meal Programs are for qualifying school-age children and may provide breakfast and/or lunch. To apply, ask your child's school for an application. Some communities offer additional support to qualifying students through **Backpack Buddies** (provides a backpack with food for weekends and holidays) and **Summer Food Programs** at community centers.

Other community food resources: Food Pantries distribute food, which can be prepared at home, to income-eligible households. **Soup Kitchens** and **Community Centers** provide prepared meals on a regular basis. A list of food pantries and soup kitchens can be found on Indiana's Emergency Food Resource Network Website: <https://www.purdue.edu/indianasefrnetwork/>. You may also call 2-1-1 to learn more about local emergency food options.

Community Gardens and Orchards can provide fresh produce or help persons with low income grow their own food. Other programs like **Purdue Cooperative Extension Services** and **Cooking Matters/No Child Hungry** provide education on planning, purchasing, and preparing healthy meals on a tight budget.

Shelter and Housing

For emergency shelter for individuals and families in crisis, dial 2-1-1. Also, 211 can provide information on programs that offer rental assistance, subsidized housing, home repairs,

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housing vouchers, and financial support for home repairs that can help families, seniors, and persons with disabilities find safe, habitable housing.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs offer affordable housing options to qualifying individuals and families. To apply for subsidized rent assistance, contact or visit each management office of the apartment buildings you are considering. To apply for public housing or housing choice vouchers (Section 8), visit your local Public Housing Agency (PHA). For a list of PHAs, visit www.hud.gov, and search for 'Housing Choice Vouchers.' Waitlists can be long, so it may be beneficial to apply at more than one PHA. For information, call (800) 955-2232.

Housing Counseling is also available to those seeking free or low-cost advice on buying a home, renting, foreclosure avoidance, credit issues, etc. To search for an agency near you, call HUD's interactive voice system at 1-800-569-4287.

Utility Assistance

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is a federally-funded program through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) called the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Energy assistance is a one-time benefit that can assist you with can help you pay your heat and electric bills. To apply, see <https://www.in.gov/ihcda/2329.htm> or call to find your local service provider.

Health Care Services (See also Health Care Financing fact sheets.)

If you need help accessing health care, 211 can assist with many health-related issues including, but not limited to, the following:

- understanding insurance options (Marketplace, Medicaid/HIP 2.0, Medicare, etc.)
- accessing prescription-assistance programs and medical transportation options
- accessing confidential support for drug and alcohol addiction
- providing information regarding vaccinations, nutrition, wellness, etc.

Family Voices Indiana provides parent-to-parent, individualized support to families of children and youth with special health care needs to help them identify healthcare financing options. Call 1-844-F2F-INFO to contact a Health Information Specialist in your area.

Covering Kids and Families assists all Hoosiers with finding, accessing, and keeping affordable health care coverage. Call 317-222-1850 for information or to apply.

Crisis and Emergency

Everyone deserves the right to live free and without fear. 211 is a free, confidential resource to assist women, men, teens, and children who are experiencing emotional or physical abuse, or who need help getting out of threatening living situations. Dial 2-1-1 if you need help recognizing the signs of bullying, abuse, or sexual assault, or if you need information about emergency shelters and safe houses as well as programs that provide a path out of violent circumstances. **In the event of an emergency, dial 9-1-1.**

The above list is not comprehensive, and services vary by area. Note that 211 can also assist with other needs such as transportation; job support; childcare; veterans' issues; disaster assistance; re-entry into the community after leaving correctional facilities, alcohol and drug treatment, or mental health facilities; and more.

Programs and systems change often. It is important to ensure that you are using the most current information. This fact sheet was updated April 2019. Please check http://fvindiana.org/fact_sheets for the most recent edition.

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