A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING THE STATEWIDE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM FOR

REFERRAL TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES, AND, IN CONNECTION

THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://leg.colorado.gov.)

The bill amends with relocated provisions the human services referral service authorized by the Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative to provide assistance through the dissemination of information to residents of Colorado about applicable programs and services provided by government, private, nonprofit, and faith-based organizations and local
communities regarding emergency shelter and food, as well as human services programs.

The bill requires the department of human services (department) to award an annual grant of $200,000 to the Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative for human services referral services and specifies the purposes for which the Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative and human services referral service provider may use the grant money.

The bill requires the Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative to provide one or more specific duties described in the bill. Human services referral services include, in part, providing statewide referral services; enabling referrals through telephone, text, chat, and e-mail; providing trained professionals to perform problem assessments and service navigation; and providing information regarding vital services, such as food and shelter.

The bill requires annual reporting by the department to certain committees of the general assembly.

The bill includes an appropriation to the department of $200,000 for the 2020-21 state fiscal year for the Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative.

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Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly hereby finds that:

(a) On March 27, 2020, the federal government enacted the "CARES Act", Pub.L. 116-136, 134 Stat. 281 (2020), from which Colorado received approximately $1,674,000,000 from the federal coronavirus relief fund to use for necessary expenditures incurred due to the current COVID-19 public health emergency;

(b) On May 18, 2020, the Colorado governor issued Executive Order 2020 D 070, transferring $70,000,000 from the state "CARES Act" fund to the state general fund for eligible expenditures;

(c) The expenditure in the bill is considered an allowable use under the federal "CARES Act" and is necessary to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency; and

(d) The expenditure in the bill was not accounted for in the Colorado state budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020, and...
all of the expenses will be incurred on or before December 30, 2020.

(2) The general assembly further finds that in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic more individuals than ever before are in need of referrals to and assistance from health and human services for basic needs along with supports associated with COVID-19, which include but are not limited to referrals regarding equity, access, or discrimination concerning employment and health access, as well as information on COVID-19 test site locations.

(3) The Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative currently operates call centers within the state as the human services referral services provider and is in the best position to offer the necessary additional referral and intake services to respond to the COVID-19 public health crisis.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, amend part 2 of article 11 of title 29 as follows:

PART 2

HUMAN SERVICES REFERRAL SERVICE

29-11-201. Legislative declaration. The general assembly hereby finds and declares that obtaining access to appropriate community-based organizations and governmental agencies providing for human services is a critical first step for many individuals and families of Colorado to receiving the help and assistance they need. In 2000, in recognition of the need to promote effective access to human services, the federal communications commission reserved the three-digit telephone number of 2-1-1 for access to community health and human services information. The public utilities commission approved the use of a 2-1-1 number for Colorado in October of 2002, and while four pilot sites are operating in specified counties, there is a need for service in all counties of this state.
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION ASSIGNED THE 2-1-1 DIAL CODE TO THE
COLORADO 2-1-1 COLLABORATIVE. The 2-1-1 human services referral
service is dedicated to providing individuals and families with referral
information to obtain nonemergency services such as food assistance,
shelter, job assistance, and low-cost health care, for those in need. Due to
the importance of the human services referral system and the need to
assure that this system is enabled in all areas of the state of Colorado, the
general assembly hereby finds and declares that the human
HUMAN services referral service providers should receive protection of
immunity that is similar to the protection afforded to the 9-1-1 emergency
service.

29-11-202. Definitions. For purposes of this part 2, unless the
context otherwise requires:

(1) "Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative" means the group authorized by
the public utilities commission to establish the provision of human
services referral services in the state of Colorado.

(2) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
CREATED IN SECTION 26-1-105.

(2)(3) "Human services referral service provider" means a service
AN ENTITY that is authorized by the Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative to
provide health and human services referral information.

29-11-203. Human services referral service - immunity - grant
- repeal. (1) No THE Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative, human services
referral service provider, or employee, agent, or financial supporter
thereof shall be IS NOT liable to any person or entity for any damages in
a civil action for injuries, death, or loss to person or property incurred as
a result of any act or omission of the Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative, human
services referral service provider, or any employee or agent thereof in
connection with developing, adopting, authorizing, implementing,
maintaining, enhancing, or operating a referral service unless such
damage or injury was intentionally caused by or resulted from gross
negligence of the Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative, human services referral
service provider, employee, agent, or financial supporter in connection
with the provision of human services referral service.

(2) No The Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative, human services referral
service provider or employee, agent, or financial supporter thereof shall
be NOT liable to any person or entity for infringement or invasion of the
right of privacy of any person caused or claimed to have been caused,
directly or indirectly, by any act or omission in connection with the
provision of human service referral information to any person or entity
unless the infringement or invasion of the right of privacy arose out of the
gross negligence or other wrongful and intentional act of the Colorado
2-1-1 collaborative, human services referral service provider, employee,
agent, or financial supporter thereof.

(3) (a) The Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative shall provide
necessary human services referral services in the state through
december 30, 2020, relating to the COVID-19 public health
emergency, including information on COVID-19 test site
locations and referrals regarding equity, access, or
discrimination concerning employment and health access, as
well as other necessary referrals and intake services due to
the presence of COVID-19 in the state.

(b) The general assembly shall appropriate from the
CARES SUBFUND IN THE GENERAL FUND TO THE DEPARTMENT FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR A GRANT TO THE COLORADO 2-1-1 COLLABORATIVE TO PROVIDE NECESSARY REFERRAL AND INTAKE SERVICES DUE TO THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY, AS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (3)(a) OF THIS SECTION, INCURRED THROUGH DECEMBER 30, 2020.

(c) THIS SUBSECTION (3) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2021.

SECTION 3. Appropriation. For the 2019-20 state fiscal year, $500,000 is appropriated to the department of human services. This appropriation is from the care subfund in the general fund. To implement this act, the department may use this appropriation for a grant to the Colorado 2-1-1 collaborative for eligible services. Any money appropriated in this section not expended prior to July 1, 2020, is further appropriated to the department for the period from July 1, 2020, through December 30, 2020.

SECTION 4. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.