Introduction

The First Contact Community Resource Database predominantly contains entities that provide direct health or human services that assist individuals, families, and seniors.

The *Community Resource Database Inclusion/Exclusion Policy has* been established to:

- Assist First Contact in determining the inclusion and/or exclusion of nonprofit/government/for-profit/faith-based/ education/cooperatives (entities) in the community resource database.;
- Ensure the community resource database will contain information about entities that enhance the quality of individual and community life;
- Ensure that all health and human service information provided by government entities and critical entities is accessible for the community;
- Support partnerships with specialized health and human service related information and referral (I&R) entities and other existing community resources;
- Ensure the community resource database is comprehensive, accurate and meets the needs of the community.

This policy is based on Inform USA (previously known as Alliance of Information and Referral Systems - AIRS) "Standards and Quality Indicators for Professional Information and Referral."

This policy is reviewed by the First Contact Board of Directors every year to ensure First Contact is meeting the changing needs of the community.

Inclusion

First Contact will list the following types of entities in the community resource database:
- **Non Profit:** Includes entities registered as 501(c)(3) as well as agencies with a more informal status that are run predominantly by volunteers, such as support groups or self-help groups.
- **Government:** Government agencies can be local, county, state, federal or partnership among these. The work of governmental agencies is mandated and directed by law. Examples include housing authorities, military, law enforcement, and fire departments.
- **For Profit:** Must offer commonly requested and low-cost services. Excludes agencies that claim to offer free services but exist to turn the client into a money-making opportunity. Also exclude if it meets all other requirements, but a specialized clearinghouse exists and is eligible to be listed in the database. The database is not intended to provide free marketing to businesses.
- **Faith Based:** Services are offered by a church or other similar institution or if they are funded by primarily religious services. Also applies if faith is an underlying reason for providing services - even if the organization is a registered nonprofit. Exclude if an organization requires participation in religious activities, membership in a religious group, or profession of faith to receive services. Exceptions may be made in areas of acute need, such as food or shelter. Also exclude services that are primarily religious activities.
- **Education:** Agencies that provide educational services as their core program. Includes preschools, after-school programs if educational, school districts, and post secondary education options. For-profit education services fall under the for-profit agency type and inclusion/exclusion rules.
- **Cooperative:**Any association of members of a similar profession or community needs that work together. It may purchase and market the products of its members or procure supplies to sell to the members. Eligibility criteria and fees must be clearly stated and otherwise open to the public.

All entities must:

- Provide a health and human service or have a related role (funding, planning, coordinating, monitoring) in the health and human service network.
- Be operational. First Contact does not list aspirations for entities, but will list entities that are operational and providing an actual service/program.
- Provide a contact person who is available to answer questions regarding their listings in the resource database.
- Must possess license standards for the entities given field of service if they are known to exist.

Exclusion

First Contact will not list entities in the community resource database that:

- Have been in operation for fewer than 6 months unless they serve a critical need. See Special Note - Disasters below.
- Deny service on the basis of color, race, sexual orientation, gender, religious belief, national origin or ancestry.
- Do not provide a direct service to the public (coalitions, programs where the inquirer already must be a client of the same agency or another agency)
- Violate federal, state, or local laws or regulations
- Services that are rarely or never requested unless they meet a critical need of an underserved population.
- Are Unresponsive to update requests and whose information cannot be made current by other means.
- Are unlicensed and operating in an industry where licensing standards exist.
- Which advocates illegal acts or activities that intend to "cause harm."
- Misrepresent their services in any way.
- Provide services only to their own members.
- Accumulate a significant amount of community complaints.
- Entities that do not expressly meet the inclusion criteria.

Special Note - Disasters:

During disasters, First Contact will add critical need organizations and/or services to the database that will be providing long term disaster response and recovery activities (for example longer than 2 weeks in the same location.). First Contact will not be adding organizations and/or services that are disaster response or recovery short term activities (for example less than 14 days) Disaster response and recovery services that are short term will be provided to the contact center for use during disaster response.

See Service Policies and Procedures for additional information.

Disclaimers

First Contact reserves the right to determine inclusion/exclusion of all entities into its community resource database of health and human service entities.

First Contact reserves the right to:

- Refuse listing any entity if, in First Contact's sole opinion, such a listing is deemed inappropriate or highly politically sensitive.
- Exclude an entity that it has adequate reason to believe may spread hatred, or have a philosophy that could be hurtful to the well-being of individuals, groups, or the community as a whole.
- Cancel a listing when an entity no longer meets the required criteria guidelines.
- Delete an entity from the database that does not respond to First Contact update requests.
- Delete an entity that has serious complaints lodged against them or that are under investigation.
- Edit entity information to meet format, guidelines and space requirements in the community resource database software.
- Publish entity information in a variety of media and data system formats.

First Contact does not guarantee client referrals to any entity in the First Contact database. Entities are completely and wholly responsible for screening clients for eligibility of services within their program(s) and/or service(s.).

Complaints

First Contact views complaints as valuable feedback that can enhance the quality of our database and services. Complaints and appeals about exclusion/inclusion will be acknowledged and addressed. Written procedures are available to complainants upon request.