



Collaboration, Not Duplication

A Case Study of Partnerships for
Local-Level Resource Navigation



Refugee Housing
SOLUTIONS

Overview

Refugee Housing Solutions (RHS) is committed to helping refugee and newcomer individuals and families, including those eligible for ORR-funded services, connect with reliable, up-to-date housing services and related community resources. Rather than recreating information that already exists elsewhere, RHS has adopted a collaborative approach by partnering with myriad organizations across the United States, such as 211, and integrating relevant components of their resource directories into the RHS Housing Directory.

By linking directly to curated, pre-filtered 211 resource pages, RHS expands the visibility of critical services while leveraging existing localized community expertise. Since launching in 2025, this model is active in Missouri through partnerships with **United Way of Greater Kansas City 211** and **211helps.org** (operated by 211 Missouri) and demonstrates how organizations can work together to strengthen resource navigation without duplicating efforts.

Beyond the technical integration, these partnerships create opportunities for ongoing dialogue, shared learning, and continuous improvement informed by established 211 best practices in resource vetting and management.

RHS views this approach as more than a Missouri-based solution; it is an innovative, replicable model for strengthening localized resource navigation in other communities. This resource explores a case study of partnerships for local resource navigation and how other organizations across the country may be able to replicate a similar model to further collaboration rather than duplication.

LOOKING FOR RESOURCES?

For individuals and families looking for information about housing, food assistance, health services, and other community resources, please visit 211kc.org, 211helps.org, and/or the Refugee Housing Solutions [Housing Directory](#).

Gaps & Challenges

Community resource information changes frequently. Maintaining accurate, comprehensive, and localized service listings requires significant staff time and ongoing verification.

Many communities have established trust with organizations such as United Way of Greater Kansas City 211 and 211helps.org who have robust online resource databases. Developing separate systems to collect and verify the same information can result in duplicated effort, inconsistent information, and missed opportunities for collaboration.

RHS sought a solution that would:

- Increase availability of housing and support resources.
- Reduce duplication of data maintenance efforts.
- Build on existing community infrastructure.
- Enhance user trust in the Housing Directory.
- Support long-term sustainability of resource navigation efforts.

Solutions & Opportunities

Rather than replicating information already maintained by local 211 organizations, RHS partnered with United Way of Greater Kansas City 211 and 211helps.org to connect Housing Directory users directly to relevant resource categories within existing 211 databases.

Using this approach, RHS added pre-defined 211 search result pages as resources within the Housing Directory. Users can easily find housing-related and supportive service information that is already being maintained, verified, and updated by local 211 teams.

This creates a mutually beneficial relationship:

- RHS users gain access to a broader network of resources.
- 211 resources receive increased visibility and reach.
- Both organizations benefit from knowledge sharing and collaboration.
- Communities receive more reliable and comprehensive information.

Why Replicate This Model?

LEVERAGE EXISTING COMMUNITY EXPERTISE

Many local 211's and other similar organizations across the United States maintain extensive online resource directories that include housing, social services, workforce development, health care, and refugee support resources. These systems have established vetting, verification, and update processes already in place.

By partnering with organizations like 211, communities can build upon existing infrastructure rather than creating parallel systems.

INCREASE TRUST AND CREDIBILITY

211 is a nationally recognized and trusted community navigation network. Integrating or partnering with local 211 organizations helps reinforce confidence in the information provided through platforms like RHS' Housing Directory.

Trust and credibility are paramount for users seeking assistance, especially during critical periods of integrating into and building stability within U.S. communities. A visible partnership with a recognized community resource can strengthen credibility and encourage engagement.

EXPAND RESOURCE VISIBILITY WITHOUT STARTING FROM SCRATCH

Cross-posting 211 resource categories through the Housing Directory increases awareness of available services while minimizing duplicate data entry and verification work.

Organizations can similarly focus their efforts on improving availability and user experience instead of maintaining multiple versions of the same information.

How It Works

While implementation may vary by community, the process used by RHS in Missouri followed three core steps:

1 Establish Shared Goals and Alignment

Partners meet to discuss:

- Organizational goals
- Target audiences
- Scope of collaboration
- Resource management practices
- Opportunities for long-term partnership

These conversations help identify areas of alignment and establish mutual expectations.

2 Identify Relevant Resource Taxonomies

Working together, partners determine which 211 categories and search filters align most closely with Housing Directory content needs.

This may include categories related to:

- Housing assistance
- Rental support
- Refugee and immigrant support services

3 Integrate Pre-Filtered Resource Pages

- Selected 211 category pages are added as individual resources within the state's Housing Directory.
- Users can then navigate directly from the Housing Directory to curated 211 search results containing localized service information.

Considerations

Organizations interested in replicating this model should recognize that 211 entities operate differently from state to state and from region to region. As a result:

- Resource databases may be structured differently.
- Taxonomies and categories may vary.
- Different technology platforms may be used.
- Verification requirements and workflows may not be universal.

Because of these differences, a solution developed with one state or region's 211 may require adaptation before being implemented elsewhere.

The Missouri model provides a strong starting point, but successful replication will depend on local collaboration and flexibility.

Results & Early Lessons

The partnership model has demonstrated the value of leveraging existing community infrastructure to expand resource availability, visibility, and navigation. By linking users to trusted and actively maintained directories, RHS can provide broader coverage of local resources while reducing the potential for duplicative efforts.

An additional benefit has been the opportunity to learn from established 211 resource management practices. These conversations have informed ongoing improvements to Housing Directory resource management processes.

Looking Ahead

This approach to collaboration presents opportunities beyond Missouri: it is an innovative, replicable model for strengthening localized resource navigation in communities across the United States. By adapting the model to fit local partner structures, RHS can increase awareness of reliable housing and support resources while building upon trusted, established networks.

LEVERAGE EXISTING COMMUNITY EXPERTISE

- Initiating partnerships with more local and regional 211 entities.
- Facilitating navigation of localized housing and support resources.
- Sharing lessons learned across communities.
- Strengthening the Housing Directory through ongoing collaboration and continuous improvement.

Effective resource navigation does not always require creating new systems. Sometimes the strongest solution is connecting users to trusted resources that already exist. By partnering with 211 organizations, RHS demonstrates how collaboration can expand availability, build credibility, and reduce duplication while better serving communities in need.

FEEDBACK

Refugee Housing Solutions wants to hear from you about the quality, relevancy, and helpfulness of our resources and tools.

Help us improve our offerings by completing this [short form](#).

You may also scan the QR code to access the form on another device.



www.refugeehousing.org

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