



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### 1. What is 311?

The 311 Customer Service Center (one stop shop for phone calls, walk-ins and online assistance) offers a convenient single point of contact for non-emergency government information about City of Grand Rapids services or programs, or to make a request for service. 311 offers three options for service: phone, online, and in-person.

### 2. What is the difference between 311 and 911?

311 is the number to call to obtain information and access to all non-emergency City government services (or dial 616-456-3000 if unable to reach the City by dialing 311). 911 is the number to call in case of emergency (burning house, robbery, crime in progress).

Police non-emergency (616-456-3400) is the number to call for information related to obtaining copies of accident or incident reports, background checks, residential alarm permits, copies of reports, identity theft or any issue that is Police non-emergency that may require an officer to be dispatched.

### 3. What services are provided through 311?

The 311 Customer Service Center is a single, one-stop point of contact program designed to assist customers with nearly all City services. Services include:

- Setting up new refuse, recycling or water service
- Monthly recycling pickup days
- Pay As You Throw (PAYT) refuse accounts
- Refuse pickup schedule
- Voter registration
- Property tax payments
- City electrical permit and inspections
- City job opportunities

#### ***Make a report such as . . .***

- Potholes
- Graffiti
- Clogged catch basins
- Broken street or traffic lights
- Abandoned vehicles
- Missed refuse or recycling pick up
- Illegal Dumping

***311 walkup service is available at Grand Rapids City Hall located at 300 Monroe Avenue NW, 49503 (1/2 hour free parking in Government Center Parking Ramp):***

- Water Payment
- Add funds to PAYT refuse account
- Purchase yard bags, bulk sticker, blue bags, yard waste tags, purple yard waste tags, applicant stickers, and wood cutting permits

#### **4. What are the hours of operation and location for Grand Rapids 311?**

- The hours of operation for the 311 Customer Service Center (phones and walk-ins) are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. It is closed on weekends and holidays.
- The in-person service is available at City Hall Lobby, located at 300 Monroe Avenue NW. Customers will receive a half-hour of free parking in the Government Center Parking structure (parking can be accessed from Monroe Avenue NW or Ottawa Avenue NW).
- The 311 Customer Service Center is available 24/7 online at [311.grcity.us](http://311.grcity.us).

#### **5. What happens during a call to 311?**

A qualified customer service representative will address the caller's issue or provide the information needed. Upon completion of the call, individuals will be issued a service request number for tracking purposes (reports like potholes, abandoned vehicles, etc.). City departments will respond to all 311 service requests in the order in which they are received. Requests will be logged into an advanced tracking system that will show city leadership how responsive departments are in their service delivery.

#### **6. Can calls be made to 311 from outside of the Grand Rapids city limits?**

Individuals wishing to reach a 311 customer service representative from outside the City can call 616-456-3000. When calling from outside the Grand Rapids City limits, cell phones may not be able to reach a tower that would deliver the call properly. The following cellular providers have configured their cell towers to reach 311 when calling inside Grand Rapids: AT&T, Metro PCS, Verizon, and Sprint. There are a few wireless carriers that do not provide their customers with the ability to dial 311.

#### **7. Are there special circumstances to set up a phone, such as in an office, to dial 311?**

Some office phones require individuals to dial a number before making an external call (each office may be different, many use the number 9 on the handset to obtain an outside line), individuals will need to follow that same process; for example 9-311. Many offices and institutions have complex routing and telephone systems that may need to be configured by their telecom office to allow users to dial 311. Alternatively, the 311 Service Center can be accessed by dialing 616-456-3000.

### **8. Can 311 accessed from a VoIP phone?**

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) is a technology that allows telephone calls to be made over the Internet. Vonage, ITS, First Telecommunications, and Lingo are some of the common VoIP service providers. It is up to individual VoIP providers to make 311 service available to their customers. Once configured, VoIP service should work properly as long as the user is registered as being located within City of Grand Rapids boundaries. If VOIP customers have difficulty calling 311, it is best to contact your respective carrier and let them know you cannot connect. Alternatively, you can reach Grand Rapids 311 by dialing 616-456-3000.

### **9. Does 311 work with digital phone service like u-Verse, XFINITY, Frontier, Charter, WOW, Century Link and other similar digital service plans?**

Digital service providers must work with their customers to configure the service or to allow the 311 number to be dialed. Service providers have been contacted and made aware of Grand Rapids' 311 service. Individuals having difficulty calling 311, should contact their respective carrier. Alternatively, individuals can reach The 311 Customer Service Center by dialing 616-456-3000.

### **10. If there is a disaster or city wide emergency, will 311 be available?**

311 Service Center officials have a plan in place in case of a city wide disaster or emergency. Phone lines will be open and available for calls to provide service and answer questions. Hold times may be longer during such an occurrence.