



ECHO Guidelines for Inclusion/Exclusion

The primary focus should be on the information that details resources and services to help our community. Agencies that provide these services should be prioritized and listed. The demographic trends of the region will suggest certain listings, for example, if it has a large proportion of homeless, aging, or immigrant populations.

Where known, services routinely inquired about by the community should be included. A community's unmet needs or service gaps should be identified, and agencies that provide or refer those services should be included.

ECHO does not discourage or endorse any faith based organization or service that provides for our citizens. If the Service Directory includes political cause and issue-oriented action groups, the directory should achieve balance, i.e., it should include organizations that represent all sides of the issue. For example, it would include both pro-choice and pro-life agencies.

Service Directories should generally include:

- Organizations that address the fundamental needs of all the people in the target community.
- For-profit organizations that are either providing important human services or are licensed by a government authority to provide a particular service.
- Organizations that serve the geographic area covered by the database (even though not all of them will be located within the geographic area).
- Government and nonprofit agencies that provide human services relevant to individuals and families in the target population.
- Mutual support groups (self-help groups) that may not always be incorporated but serve a valuable purpose.
- Services that meet the previous criteria and are provided for free or for a low cost or according to a sliding scale geared to income.
- Services that meet the previous criteria and have demonstrated some stability within the community (for example, they recently received government or United Way funding, are accountable to the community through a volunteer Board of Directors and have been in operation for at least 1 year).

Guidelines for Exclusion:

If a program does not expressly meet the inclusion criteria, it may be excluded. Listings supplied by the client that have too little information to verify the existence of the agency, for example only a vague name and description given, may be omitted if further information cannot be provided.

Service Directories will exclude:

- Organizations that do not serve Oakland County residents.

- Organizations that engage in fraudulent, discriminatory or illegal activities.
- Organizations that misrepresent their services in any way (for example, an organization may claim to be providing youth counseling, but on closer examination it is discovered they are primarily concerned with securing members for cult-like purposes).

Service Directories may exclude:

- Organizations that provide services only to their own members (for example, a faith community that only provides food or clothing to its own congregation).
- Practitioners and institutions who are too numerous, particularly if there is a referral service or a head or district office available, which may include the following:

Advocacy and Issue-Oriented Groups

Places of Worship

Political Representatives

Private Counseling

Private Professionals (such as chiropractors, licensed therapists, dentists, paralegals, etc.)

Schools

Service Clubs (such as Rotaries, Elks, Moose, etc.)