

Common Questions about Giving

United Way
of the Lakeshore



Can I contribute by check, cash or credit card?

All contributions are graciously accepted. United Way of the Lakeshore encourages payroll deduction as a convenient and easy way of spreading a generous gift over a year's time. However, we do accept cash, check or credit card.

What happens to my pledge if I stop working?

We know that your pledge is made in good faith and is based upon your earnings. Should you cease to be employed, it will be up to you to determine your ability to continue your pledge based on your personal circumstances. You can stop your pledge at any time by notifying your payroll office.

Who supports the United Way of the Lakeshore and why?

Individuals are asked in the workplace for contributions. Businesses and industries give corporate gifts. Donations are also received from retirees and others who cannot give through a workplace campaign. Many people believe the United Way of the Lakeshore is the best way to maximize charitable contributions because of the thoroughness and care that go into reviewing and monitoring agency programs. United Way's coordinated planning makes the most efficient use of donations.

Why should I contribute when I don't use United Way-funded services?

United Way of the Lakeshore funds programs which address a wide variety of concerns. While you may not have had any occasion to turn to a United Way-funded agency in the past, you could need assistance in the future. By making a pledge, you are making sure that human service programs will be there for you and your family or friends and co-workers if you need them.

How can I be sure that the money I give remains in the community in which I live or work?

All donor requests are honored. Our pledge forms let you choose where and how you wish your gift to be distributed. Agency finances are monitored by an accounting firm and dedicated volunteers from each community are involved in every aspect of United Way, including fund distribution.

Does United Way have a high overhead and fundraising cost?

United Way keeps its administrative and fundraising costs to a minimum. Administrative costs were 8% and fundraising costs 10% in 2015, the most recent year for which statistics are available. The Better Business Bureau suggests administrative and fundraising costs be at 35% or less. United Way has historically been well below the acceptable level. We keep our costs low due to generous sponsorship by local companies and media. Our corporate partners fund the majority of our fundraising and administrative costs. This allows most of individual gifts to go directly to programs and services. In 2018, 1.6 million was raised by individual donors and 2.2 million was allocated to programs and services.

Does United Way fund agencies that provide abortions or gun control?

This is a commonly held misperception that is rarely voiced out loud. United Way of the Lakeshore does not fund any programs or services like these. We avoid getting involved in issues that clearly polarize the community. We do honor donor designations to local pregnancy care centers that offer pregnancy testing, peer counseling, some medical services and community referrals in addition to assistance with maternity/baby clothing and supplies. We fund programs that aim at reducing teen pregnancy, as well as programs that help teens become better parents.

Someone I know didn't get help when he/she needed it.

Chances are that the individual was not dealing with the most appropriate agency to meet their needs. Call 2-1-1 is a 24-hour information and referral organization that helps connect people to the help they need.

Do you have to give to United Way to receive services from an agency?

Agencies provide service to people based on need; they do not require that people receiving services contribute to the United Way. Fees for service, if any, are based on the person's ability to pay. Agencies do not turn away clients because they cannot pay.

Why should I give?

Government programs take care of some human care needs, while others are handled by voluntary agencies such as those funded in part by United Way. Those agencies supply many services offered by no other source. If United Way did not exist, many programs would have to be cut or eliminated.