



COVID-19 ACTION FUND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the United Way Blackhawk Region COVID-19 Action Fund?

We understand many individuals and families have been impacted by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, with more to be affected. The Fund will provide resources to 501(c)(3) organizations in the Blackhawk Region that are directly supporting local, vulnerable residents and families. While the fund is not available to individuals, it will support local nonprofit organizations that are well experienced providing health and human services.

Why is United Way Blackhawk Region taking the lead on a COVID-19 Action Fund?

United Way is always on the front lines of community problems, both everyday problems and crises. When it comes to this new crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, United Way is proud to complement the efforts of our partners in health care, public safety, human services and emergency management. United Way is uniquely positioned to provide flexible resources to nonprofit organizations working with communities who are disproportionately impacted by coronavirus and the economic consequences of the outbreak.

United Way Blackhawk Region's COVID-19 Action Fund will help support community needs resulting from the economic impact of measures taken to stop the spread of this disease.

I'm an individual who's been affected by COVID-19. Can this Fund help me?

We understand many individuals and families have been affected by the outbreak already and more will continue to be affected. United Way Blackhawk Region is working to move resources to community-based organizations that are directly serving local residents and families who are most affected by the (COVID-19) outbreak.

While the Fund is not able to provide grants to individuals, we will be funding community-based organizations that have experience and a history of providing people and families with services and support. If you are in need of community resources, please call United Way's 211 for information and referrals.

I'm an individual in need of community resources. Where do I turn for help?

United Way's 211 is a free and confidential 24/7 information and referral helpline. The 211 system across Wisconsin is working tirelessly to meet the needs of callers and community members searching for information and support due to the public health emergency. Below are the following methods community members are able to connect, in order of recommendation:

- **Text** COVID19 (no hyphen) to the number 211211 to receive information and county details
- **Visit** the website page 211wisconsin.org/coronavirus
- **Call** 211 for information and referrals. Wait time is longer than usual due to high call demand but call specialists will help as soon as available

My organization is interested in resources from this Fund. Can we be considered?

We understand the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting nonprofits in many ways, including increased demand for their services, lost revenue due to closures and cancellations, as well as

other challenges. United Way Blackhawk Region is working closely with our Community Impact Council and Rock County's Emergency Response Team to assess the fluid situation and identify the greatest needs in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. In order to move resources quickly, we are hosting a streamlined application process for the Fund. Application is not limited to existing funded partners of United Way Blackhawk Region.

Based upon the charitable structure of United Way Blackhawk Region's COVID-19 Action Fund, our grants are limited to:

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations
- Groups fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- Other charitable organizations able to receive a tax-deductible contribution, such as schools, faith-based organizations or other public entities
- Organizations that acknowledge funding **MUST** be used for needs within the Blackhawk Region

Funding requests will **not** be considered for:

- Individuals
- Businesses
- Labor Unions
- Endowment or Capital Campaign Funds
- 501(c)(4), 501(c)(5) or 501(c)(6) organizations; nor political, religious or sectarian purposes
- Organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, citizenship status, age, gender, gender identity & expression, disability, sexual orientation or veteran-status, familial status or socio-economic status

Visit LiveUnitedBR.org/COVID-19 to complete the application. For questions contact United Way Blackhawk Region Vice President Denise Peters-Kauihou at 608.314.8424 or email covid19@lubr.org. United Way's Community Impact Council will oversee all requests to ensure fiscally responsible allocations. Programs awarded funding through will be asked to report on outcomes or results associated with their funded areas.

DONATING TO THE COVID-19 ACTION FUND

How do I donate?

100% of donations go to the community. United Way Blackhawk Region does not charge administrative fees. Give to the Fund:

- **Online** at LiveUnitedBR.org/COVID-19
- **Text** "GiveCovid" to "41444."
- **Mail** a check, made out to United Way Blackhawk Region, to:
United Way Blackhawk Region
PO Box 2780
Janesville, WI 53547
- **Gifts** of stock and securities will also be accepted. Call United Way's Finance Director at 608.314.8420 with any additional questions.

I want to donate, can I restrict my funding to a specific grantee?

To ensure we move resources as efficiently as possible and respond to needs of communities

most impacted, we are not considering restricted donations at this time. The COVID-19 Action Fund was created in hopes of providing a way to coordinate as many resources as possible.

My company / organization would like to contribute.

As expected, big-hearted corporate partners, donors and funders are asking us how they can help; contributing to this Fund is one meaningful and collaborative way. United Way Blackhawk Region is the strategic philanthropic partner for more than 200 local companies, helping them invest in communities and engage their employees in corporate social responsibility activities. Because we have a unique finger on the “pulse” of our region’s needs, our corporate partners know that United Way can direct dollars to where they’re needed most, and that we’ll steward donations responsibly.

Is there a fee to contribute?

With a focus on getting resources out to the community in this critical time, there is no administrative fee for participating in the Fund. 100% of donations will go to community groups on the ground (except for a credit card processing fee for online donations which donors may opt to cover).

Should I give to this Fund instead of making my annual pledge to United Way’s campaign or other donations?

We hope you will continue to support United Way’s vital work via the annual Community Campaign, as well as making an additional investment to the COVID-19 Action Fund.

If the Fund priorities align with your values, please consider making a donation. However, this is a critical time for so many, including the nonprofit organizations that rely so heavily upon support from United Way. Your giving to the annual campaign this year and in the past, enables these organizations to operate throughout the entire year. If you currently support individual organizations, please continue to do so at this critical time. Now is the time to double down for our community as we gain greater awareness of the depth and scale of the long-term ramifications of the outbreak.

Will my donation be recognized?

United Way will proudly and creatively recognize your generosity publicly. Donations made online will immediately publish on our COVID-19 webpage. Please be sure to indicate if you wish to remain anonymous.

FUNDING DECISIONS

Is there a geographic area of focus for the Fund?

The COVID-19 Action Fund will prioritize community-based organizations serving the Blackhawk Region, which United Way defines as all of Rock County, Wisconsin and communities in northern Winnebago County, Illinois (Rockton, Roscoe, and South Beloit).

How will it work?

United Way will proactively identify potential grant recipients, solicit guidance on potential recipients from community advisors, and facilitate a volunteer-driven process to determine awards. To not further burden organizations providing vital services amid the pandemic, we have implemented a streamlined application process. Funds will be released on a rolling basis as fundraising continues throughout the outbreak and recovery phases of the crisis, making it possible to move resources quickly and adapt to evolving needs in our region.

How long will it take to make the funding decisions and release funds?

Responsible stewardship of United Way Blackhawk Region donor dollars is our first responsibility. We will make every effort to expedite the application process during this extraordinary time.

What will be considered in the first phase of rapid-response grants?

Although we anticipate the Fund priorities to evolve as our region adapts to the situation, initially our focus will be on:

- The economic impact of reduced and lost work due to the coronavirus outbreak;
- Immediate needs of economically vulnerable populations caused by closures and cancellations related to COVID-19;
- Increased demand for medical information and support; and
- Fear and confusion about the outbreak among the region's most vulnerable residents.

What will NOT be included in the first phase of funding?

We anticipate there may be multiple phases of funding to address both the acute needs and the longer-term impacts of the outbreak and recovery. In this first phase, we are prioritizing community-based organizations that are serving communities and individuals who are immediately and disproportionately suffering from this crisis. We are not able to prioritize organizations that have lost revenue or are likely to lose future revenue due to canceled events or programs, or larger public institutions that are strained by increased demand for services in this first round. We recognize these challenges, and as the crisis and long-term impacts continue to unfold, we will continue to tap the volunteer-driven Community Impact Council to assess and evolve our funding strategies.

How will the Fund shift gears if needed?

The Fund priorities may evolve as our region adapts to the COVID-19 outbreak. We will continue to prioritize communities most impacted, recognizing deep and historic inequities that are likely to be magnified in times of crisis. Crisis philanthropy recognizes the need to provide immediate resources for triage, as well as the importance of recovery resources to ensure community resilience.

When will you share who you fund?

United Way Blackhawk Region prides itself on consecutively earning the Platinum Seal of Transparency from GuideStar (highest available) and a four-out-of-four star rating from Charity Navigator. We are committed to both transparency and accountability. Given the ever-changing nature of this situation, we anticipate making a first round of investments in the coming weeks (early – mid April), and per usual investment processes, will publicize award recipients.

What is United Way Blackhawk Region's Diversity & Inclusion Commitment?

As a champion for building strong and healthy communities, United Way Blackhawk Region celebrates diversity. We promote an inclusive environment where everyone respects and values the contributions of all people and believe all people should have an opportunity to make an impact in society. United Way seeks to engage the entire community in our work without regard to race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity & expression, disability, sexual orientation, veteran-status, familial status or socio-economic status. United Way takes the broadest possible view of diversity, going beyond visible differences to affirm the essence of

all individuals including the realities, background, experiences, skills and perspectives that make each person who they are. That commitment will be reflected in all aspects of United Way's work – service delivery, staffing or volunteer participation. It is through the collective efforts of individuals in our communities that we create a responsible and vibrant society, one which respects, honors and thrives on the unique attributes of its members.