

## Frequently asked questions

This guide is designed to help you answer frequently asked questions. As a volunteer for United Way, you can expect questions as they are a natural part of the process of asking people to give. Knowing the facts will help prepare you to address people's questions and concerns.

You may also find the following three-step response helpful when dealing with tough questions:

- **Acknowledge:** Begin your answer by acknowledging the question. Statements like "I understand your concern" or "I appreciate you asking about this topic" will show the individual that you are listening. If a mistake or problem existed, admit it. If appropriate, apologize for it. Don't try to hide it or act like it never happened. Never argue.
- **Bridge:** Move forward. If the question is regarding something that happened, tell the individual what has taken place since the incident or issue occurred. What reforms or actions have been put in place?
- **Positive:** Don't dwell on the problem. Move to the positives. What do you want people to know about? To remember? Conclude the response on a positive note, an important fact that should help alleviate the individual's concerns.

Should you encounter a question that you are not able to answer, that's okay. Simply remind the individual that you are a volunteer and you will find out the appropriate response. Get their name and contact information, and tell them either you or their United Way staff person will get back to them promptly with the answer(s) to their question(s).

### WHAT DOES UNITED WAY DO?

Founded in 1924, United Way of Miami-Dade strengthens the community by improving the education, financial stability and health of our residents. We partner with individuals and organizations with the expertise to create solutions to some of our community's toughest challenges. We listen to the community and assess needs, we generate resources, we invest in quality programs, we collaborate with community partners, we advocate for better policies.

***We fight for the education, financial stability and health of every person in our community.***

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)



## **WHY GIVE TO UNITED WAY?**

Giving to United Way is the most powerful way you can make your community – Miami-Dade – stronger and better. By helping tens of thousands of our families and friends reach their full potential, you're helping to build a more educated, prosperous and healthy Miami-Dade for all. Your gift translates into real and measurable results that change lives and strengthens Miami-Dade.

## **HOW IS UNITED WAY DIFFERENT FROM OTHER NONPROFITS?**

United Way brings together powerful forces within our community to create a more educated, prosperous and healthy Miami. Our unique ability to work across complex issues with hundreds of community partners is unmatched. We bring together government, business, faith groups, nonprofits, labor, policymakers and community members, just like you to find solutions to some of our biggest challenges. We are not focused on a single issue, but rather on the community as a whole. We help young children get off to a good start in life, we help people in crisis get back on their feet, and we help prevent future problems.

## **WHAT IS UNITED WAY'S COMMUNITY PLAN?**

Your gift to the **United Way Community Plan** is the most powerful tool you can use to bring lasting change to your friends and neighbors. It's a strategic roadmap that best addresses community needs in the areas of education, financial stability and health – the building blocks for a good quality of life. By contributing to the Community Plan, you are empowering United Way, on your behalf, to:

- Invest in quality programs
- Advocate for policies that improve lives
- Partner with organizations and individuals to create the most effective solutions

For every \$1 you give to the Community Plan, United Way doubles its impact. That's money that goes directly to support over 100 innovative programs that help children, youth, families, seniors and many others reach their full potential right here in your own backyard.

## **WHO OVERSEES THE OPERATIONS OF UNITED WAY?**

United Way of Miami-Dade is governed by a 51-member volunteer board of directors made up of respected community and business leaders, and committed philanthropists. Carlos A. Migoya, president and CEO, Jackson Health System, chairs the board. The board sets policy and strategic direction and is responsible for the overall governance and stewardship of the organization. Professional staff manages day-to-day activities and is led by president and CEO, Maria C. Alonso.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)



## **HOW CAN I BE CONFIDENT THAT MY DONATION IS WELL MANAGED?**

We take our role as stewards of your money very seriously. We engage community volunteers to oversee our management and financial systems to ensure that we are operating at the highest levels of professionalism and excellence:

- United Way of Miami-Dade is audited annually by an independent accounting firm and carefully reviewed by volunteers who serve on the United Way finance and administration committee and United Way executive committee and board.
- United Way voluntarily agreed to comply with the requirements of Sarbanes-Oxley legislation (FYI: the American Competitiveness and Corporate Accountability Act of 2002, commonly known as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, was passed in response to several corporate scandals and was intended to rebuild public trust in the corporate sector).
- Three independent volunteer groups, the finance and administration committee, the executive committee, and the board of directors, conduct a monthly review of our financial statements and annual review of our audited financial statements. Our IRS 990 form is available online for any interested individuals to review.
- Recently our United Way was awarded Charity Navigators 4-star rating – its highest – which speaks to the financial, health and governance of our organization.

## **WHO DECIDES WHICH PROGRAMS UNITED WAY INVESTS IN?**

Knowledgeable, trained volunteers and experts from our community carefully screen and select the programs to be funded. Their recommendations are reviewed and approved by our board.

After selection, these programs are rigorously monitored to ensure they produce the intended results. As part of this oversight, staff and volunteers visit the programs, review financial documents, analyze programs and evaluate outcomes on a regular basis.

## **I NEVER USE AGENCY SERVICES AND I DON'T KNOW ANYONE ELSE WHO DOES. WHY SHOULD I GIVE?**

Everyone deserves opportunities to have a good life: a quality education that leads to a stable job, enough income to support a family through retirement, and good health. We all win when a child succeeds in school, when a family becomes financially stable, and when people enjoy good health. When the community benefits, we all benefit.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)



## **I ALREADY GIVE TO OTHER CHARITIES. WHY SHOULD I GIVE TO UNITED WAY, TOO?**

While most nonprofits focus on a single issue, United Way takes a broader approach. We find the needs in our community and address them by working with over 100 programs that support initiatives to promote the education, financial stability and health - the building blocks of a good life. We help young children get off to a good start in life, we help people in crisis get back on their feet, we help families pave a path to financial stability and we help prevent future problems. In addition, when you give to United Way, your dollar goes further, because for every \$1 you give, United Way doubles its impact through matching dollars, volunteers and in-kind gifts.

## **MY SPOUSE GIVES AT WORK. WHY SHOULD I GIVE?**

If your spouse supports United Way, that is wonderful! Your gift is just as important because it helps close the gap of unmet service needs in Miami-Dade County. Additionally, couples with combined gifts of \$1,000 or more are recognized, as being part of our Leadership and Endowment Circle.

## **IS MY UNITED WAY CONTRIBUTION TAX DEDUCTIBLE?**

For taxpayers who itemize their deductions, 100 percent of their charitable contribution is deductible as long as deductions do not exceed 60 percent of their adjusted gross income. Contact the Internal Revenue Service, your accountant or other financial advisor for further information.

## **IF SOMEONE NEEDS HELP, WHO SHOULD THEY CONTACT?**

The best way to get help is to contact JCS Switchboard 2-1-1 of Miami, a United Way partner, which operates our community's only 24-hour free information/crisis/referral/phone counseling hotline.

Please encourage your friends and colleagues to call 2-1-1 or (305) 358-HELP (4357) when they need assistance. Trained phone counselors who speak English, Spanish and Creole are ready to listen and to guide callers to the right services within our community.

## **HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?**

Be an advocate and champion for your community. Whether you're speaking out or posting on social media to improve education, financial stability and health, reaching out to members of Congress, or wearing the LIVE UNITED shirt to show your support, you can help create a more educated, prosperous and healthy Miami-Dade.

Giving your time through volunteerism is another important way you can help your community. United Way is always looking for additional volunteers. For more information on how to become an advocate or a volunteer, visit [unitedwaymiami.org/get-involved](http://unitedwaymiami.org/get-involved).

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)



## **ARE UNITED WAYS RELATED?**

There are approximately 1,800 community-based United Ways across the world and each is separately incorporated and independently governed by local volunteers.

United Way Worldwide, the national service and training center for local United Ways, has no governing power over local United Ways. However, all United Ways are required to follow a set of membership requirements to ensure accountability and transparency. In addition, United Way Worldwide has a set of Standards of Excellence to help local United Ways enhance their effectiveness by implementing best practices. United Way of Miami-Dade pays one percent of its annual campaign revenue to United Way Worldwide in membership fees.

## **I'M A MEMBER OF THE ALICE POPULATION, WHY SHOULD I GIVE?**

Members of the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) population comprise 29.5% of Florida's working households who are struggling to make ends meet. To address the needs of this vast underserved community, it takes all of us doing our part – however big or small – to build a community in which all our children can learn and thrive, all families can be financially secure and all people have good health. Working together, we can achieve far more than any of us on our own.

## **DOES UNITED WAY FUND THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, SOUTH FLORIDA COUNCIL?**

In 2003, United Way ended its funding relationship with Boy Scouts of America (BSA), South Florida Council, because the national office of the BSA prohibited its South Florida council from implementing an agreed upon sensitivity training that would equip its adult leaders with the skills and knowledge to respond appropriately to a boy who might be questioning his sexuality. At the time, BSA did not allow gay youth or adult leaders to participate.

In 2014, BSA changed its policy to allow gay youth to participate, and in July 2015, the organization removed the national restriction on gay adult leaders and employees. However, BSA allows local troops to use religious beliefs as criteria for selecting adult leaders whose beliefs are consistent with their own.

BSA, South Florida Council, continues to be eligible to receive designated dollars, as are all 501(c)(3) health and human service agencies in Florida.