

Most Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Why should I give to United Way rather than giving directly to an organization?

Think of the analogy of receiving a small gift of \$25 or \$50 for a birthday. It's very nice, much appreciated, but it really doesn't change your life, and most people do not put a lot of thought into spending the money. However, if through an inheritance, you receive a major gift, such as several thousand dollars, most people put some thought into how best to spend the money in a way that would significantly impact their lives.

Apply this concept to agencies. When they receive random gifts from individual donors, they greatly appreciate the gift, but small amounts, received at random times do not allow for major planning or impact. On the other hand, the United Way funds received by agencies are given in large quantities with planning and thought put into how best to use the funds to enhance the mission of each agency or organization. In other words, small individual gifts are nice. United Way funds, raised and distributed collectively, make a major difference.

Also, by giving to United Way, you are helping to fund a whole system that provides a support and strength network to children, families, and the elderly in our community. As Jim Reeves stated when asked about a United Way donation: "When I give to the United Way, I can say that I give to many different agencies."

What are the administrative costs (also known as overhead ratio) of the United Way of Marquette County? In other words, how much does it cost to operate the United Way excluding internally administered programs?

The administrative costs or overhead ratio are based on Management & General, Fundraising and Payments to Affiliates expense. These expenses, when combined and divided by total revenue, measure how efficiently your United Way operates. The IRS Form 990 is used most commonly to calculate a nonprofit's administrative cost or overhead ratio and is accessible online at www.Guidestar.com. United Way of Marquette County's percentage based on the IRS 2018 Form 990 is 6%.

Who decides which agencies and programs to fund?

Panels of volunteers from the community receive the program funding applications and meet with agency representatives to ask questions, then decide, as a group, how much money to invest in each program.

I don't have a lot to give, can I still make an impact?

No matter how much you choose to contribute, you'll be helping to improve the lives of families in Marquette County because United Way dollars address our community's most vital needs. Your donation is joined by many others and supports a network of programs that get results.

What are the different ways to give?

There are 3 different ways to direct your United Way pledge.

1. If you make a pledge to the general "United Way Community Impact," your dollars will go to programs that most need the funding, as determined by the community investment volunteers described above. That way programs that most need funding can receive the necessary support to continue their good work.
2. You may choose a "Community Impact Area" to direct your pledge to a specific need area, such as "Basic Needs (Emergency Food, Clothing, Shelter), Health Care Programs, Youth Programs, Domestic Violence & Addiction Services and Elderly Citizens and Adults with Disabilities". Your donation will then go to help support programs in that area.
3. Your pledge of \$50 or more may be made to "Specific Care Giving" and designated directly to a 501 c 3 health & human service organization in Marquette County. We will be sure the money goes to that agency. Designated gifts are assessed a fee to account for time and materials and pledge loss in processing designated pledges. The current assessment is 11%.

What are my pledge payment options?

1. Payroll deduction. Most workplaces offer payroll deduction for United Way pledges. A small amount deducted from each paycheck is hardly noticed by an employee, but the dollars really add up when hundreds of employees pledge a few dollars per pay period.
2. Cash, check or credit card for one time gifts.
3. United Way will bill donors for pledges over \$100. Choose from annual, bi-annual or a quarterly payment cycle.