



IMAGINE THE IMPACT YOU'LL MAKE.

Frequently Asked Questions

As a volunteer for United Way Miami, you can expect questions – they are a natural part of the process of asking people to donate. Knowing the facts will help prepare you to address questions and concerns.

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

- 1. 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.
- 2. 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?
- 3. 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, perhaps sharing 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, then tell them that either you or their United Way representative will get back to them promptly with the answer(s) to their question(s).

What does United Way Miami do?

United Way Miami is a nonprofit that connects people who need help with people who can help. They work with a network of donors, volunteers and partners to transform the lives of our community’s most vulnerable residents. United Way Miami leverages its unique position to provide direct services that uplift underserved families, invest in more than 100 programs at more than 60 partner agencies, convene the community, and build awareness of Miami-Dade’s needs and potential.

How long has United Way Miami been around?

United Way Miami was founded in 1924 – less than 30 years after the city of Miami’s official incorporation. For more than a century, we’ve been here for our community.



We're here.



United Way Miami

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why should I give to United Way Miami?

United Way Miami has been a leader in Miami-Dade's nonprofit community for a century. The organization more than doubles the impact of every \$1 of your donation – maximizing the impact. And, United Way Miami ensures donations fund vetted programs that have verified results. It invests in more than 100 local programs at more than 60 partner agencies. It also leads 17 initiatives that help families and individuals.

Giving to United Way Miami is the most powerful way you can make our 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. Your gift translates into real and measurable results that change lives and strengthen our community.

How is United Way Miami different from other nonprofits?

United Way Miami brings together powerful forces within our community to create a more educated, prosperous and healthy Greater 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 do not focus on a single issue, but rather on the community as a whole.

What are United Way Miami's Core Four Pillars?

United Way Miami transforms lives by empowering hardworking families who are struggling to make ends meet. We're focused on the Core Four pillars:

- **Health & Wellbeing** initiatives that give people access to healthy lifestyles, mental health support, family counseling, prescription discounts and more.
- **Education** activities that span the earliest years of a child's life through career exploration, college prep and professional learning.
- **Resilient Communities** that we build through United Way Miami's work on disaster recovery, drowning prevention for young children, connecting people in need to social services and support, and more.
- **Economic Mobility** programs to empower individuals through skill-building, job training, housing assistance, financial coaching and more.

We're HERE together.

Why did United Way Miami add the fourth pillar of Resilient Communities?

As our community has continued to evolve, United Way Miami has evolved to continue to meet its needs and serve its best interests. Research and conversations with donors, supporters, major stakeholders and the community at large made it clear to us that resilient communities are an important key to Miami-Dade's present and future. As we enter our next century, resilient communities are one of our key focuses for the future.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is United Way Miami's role in Miami-Dade's emergency response and relief?

Miami-Dade County's Office of Emergency Management relies on United Way Miami for disaster response. We recruit and organize volunteers and manage funds for assistance. In this role, our United Way plays a key role in helping people and communities recover and rebuild after a crisis. Working with our community partners, we offer a variety of services to ensure that those who will be or have been affected by a disaster get the help they need as quickly and efficiently as possible.

What is Operation Helping Hands?

United Way Miami, in partnership with the Miami Herald / el Nuevo Herald and media partner Univision 23 Miami, activates Operation Helping Hands, an emergency response initiative to raise funds and recruit volunteers to help with crisis recovery and relief efforts around the world. Operation Helping Hands gives people in South Florida an efficient and trusted way to respond to disasters in other parts of the world.

For example, we have activated Operation Helping Hands during multiple hurricanes, both in our community and around the region, as well as during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Champlain Towers South condominium collapse, earthquakes in Haiti and other emergencies.

United Way plays a key role in helping people and communities recover and rebuild after a crisis. Working with our community partners, we offer a variety of services to ensure that those who will be or have been affected by a disaster get the help they need as quickly and efficiently as possible.

What is United Way Miami's position on diversity, equity and inclusion?

United Way Miami respects and celebrates the strength diversity adds to our community and our organization. We recognize structural racism and other forms of oppression have contributed to persistent disparities, which United Way seeks to dismantle. For 100 years, United Way Miami has sought to create a stronger community for all by bringing together diverse groups to identify issues, define solutions and engage community members – especially those whose voices have traditionally been marginalized – to advance social change.

We work with individuals, other nonprofits, corporate partners, labor groups, government and other partners to co-create solutions that ensure everyone has the resources, support, opportunities and networks they need to thrive. From our role as conveners and awareness builders, to our strategic investments and public policy advocacy, we commit to leveraging all of our assets to create a more equitable community. For more information, please visit unitedwaymiami.org/DEI.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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 health and wellbeing, education, resilient communities and economic mobility. These are the building blocks for a good quality of life. By contributing to the Community Plan, you are empowering United Way Miami, 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 Miami maximizes the impact of your donation and ensures funds go to vetted programs and verified results. That's money that goes directly to support more than 100 innovative programs and initiatives that help children, youth, families, seniors and many others reach their full potential.

Who oversees the operations of United Way Miami?

United Way Miami is governed by a 51-member volunteer board of directors made up of respected community and business leaders, along with committed philanthropists. Frank Gonzalez, partner – Assurance & Advisory at Kaufman Rossin, is chair of 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 are led by United Way Miami's president and CEO, Symeria T. Hudson.

How can I be confident that my donation is well managed?

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

- United Way Miami is audited annually by an independent accounting firm. This audit is carefully reviewed by volunteers who serve on the United Way finance and administration committee, and by the United Way executive committee and board.
- United Way Miami voluntarily agreed to comply with the requirements of Sarbanes-Oxley legislation. That's the American Competitiveness and Corporate Accountability Act of 2002, commonly known as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, which 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 an annual review of our audited financial statements. Our IRS 990 form is available online for any interested individuals to review.
- United Way Miami earned a Charity Navigators 4-star rating – the highest it awards – which speaks to the financial, health and governance of our organization.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who decides which programs United Way Miami invests in?

Knowledgeable, trained volunteers and experts from our community carefully screen and select the programs United Way Miami funds each year. Our volunteer board reviews their recommendations and makes final funding decisions based on them.

Volunteers and staff work together to rigorously monitor funded programs to ensure they produce the intended results. As part of this oversight, staff and volunteers visit the programs, review financial documents, analyze program reports 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?

Creating a stronger Miami-Dade takes all of us working together. When we work together, we have the power to transform lives. For 100 years, we've shown the power of the community, and we hope you'll join us as we enter our next 100 years.

We all win when a child succeeds in school, when a family becomes financially stable, when people enjoy good health, when people in need connect with services that can help them. When the community benefits, we all benefit.

I already give to other charities. Why should I give to United Way Miami, too?

While most nonprofits focus on a single issue, United Way Miami takes a broader approach. We find the needs in our community and address them by supporting with more than 100 programs, working with more than 60 local agencies, and running 17 initiatives. Our work spans the Core Four pillars of a strong community: Health & Wellbeing, Education, Resilient Communities and Economic Mobility.

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 security, we help in times of disaster 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 more than doubles its impact through matching dollars, volunteers and in-kind gifts. We are uniquely positioned to maximize the impact of your donation and ensure it goes to vetted programs and verified results.

My spouse gives at work. Why should I give?

If your spouse supports United Way Miami, 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 Miami contribution tax deductible?

Your United Way Miami contribution might be tax deductible. To receive a tax deduction, you will need to provide the proper documentation when filing your income tax returns. The IRS requires a receipt for each tax-deductible payment of \$250 or more.



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If someone needs help, who should they contact?

The best way to get help is to dial 211. They will reach The Helpline, a program of Jewish Community Services and a United Way partner. It is our community's only 24-hour free information/crisis/referral/phone counseling hotline. Please encourage your friends and colleagues to call 211 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.

Anyone who needs suicide prevention services or immediate crisis calling should dial 988, Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Services are available in English and Spanish.

How can I get involved?

Be an advocate and champion for your community. Whether you're speaking out, posting on social media, reaching out to members of Congress or wearing a United Way shirt to show your support, you can make a positive impact that lasts.

Giving your time through volunteerism is another important way you can help your community. For more information on how to become an advocate or a volunteer, visit volunteermiami.org.

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 Miami pays 1% of its annual campaign revenue to United Way Worldwide in membership fees.

I'm a member of the ALICE population, why should I give?

Every donation counts, no matter how small or large. No donation is insignificant. If you're not able to give a donation, consider spreading the word about United Way Miami and our programs, or using your social media to help amplify our work and our message. Everyone in our community counts, and everyone who contributes, in any way, is important to us.

Currently, the combined ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) and poverty household number is nearly half a million households. These are working households that are struggling and in or one emergency away from falling into poverty. This is 51% of Miami-Dade County households.

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.



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Why is United Way Miami rebranding? What does that entail?

United Way Miami wanted to refresh our brand for our second century and further clarify what we do and who we serve. We also wanted to deepen our emotional connection with the Miami-Dade community and all of our stakeholders, as well as deepen community members' connections with each other. We also want to do a better job sharing the breadth and depth of our work, communicating how we partner with other organizations, and recognizing the contributions area businesses and individuals make to our work.

We know that one way to share what United Way Miami does is to show you how we connect people who need help with people who can help. We make connections at every level, and our new branding reflects this.

Does United Way Miami 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, it 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 dollars designated to them by donors via United Way Miami. Any 501(c)(3) health and human service agency in Florida is eligible for a designated donation via United Way.

Does United Way Miami fund Planned Parenthood?

United Way Miami provides no direct support to Planned Parenthood. However, Planned Parenthood is eligible to receive donor-designated dollars given through United Way Miami, as are all 501(c)(3) health and human service agencies. There are contributors who choose to direct their United Way donation to Planned Parenthood, and we honor and respect their right to designate their giving.

All United Ways are independent and autonomous organizations and make local funding decisions with the input of local leaders and community stakeholders. Out of 1,129 local United Ways in the United States, only a small number (less than 3%) provide direct support to Planned Parenthood to support its health programs. None support abortion services.

Planned Parenthood offers a wide range of women's health services. The majority of its funding goes toward preventive health care, birth control, prenatal care, sex education, STD treatment, cancer screenings and other services.

