

# AN URGENT REQUEST FOR YOUR SUPPORT

## THE SITUATION:

### A challenge we must rise together to meet.

The 2020-21 United Way Campaign will be unlike any we've conducted before. Because the stakes have never been this high. As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic delivered a two-fisted blow of health and economic hardship to our community that we will be reckoning with for the foreseeable future.

### Leading the way for COVID-19 response.

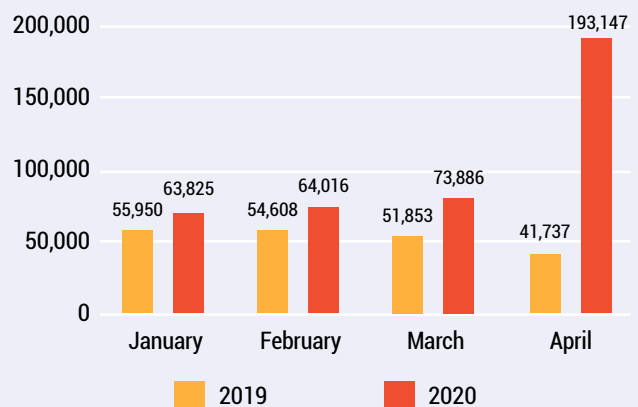
When the state of Pennsylvania issued a shelter-in-place order during the first days of the crisis, United Way's network was already in place, doing what we've always done – convening corporate and donor resources and making sure that basic human needs were being met. Corporations, philanthropists and individual donors knew instinctively that United Way was uniquely prepared to marshal the response. As a result of their generosity, we were able to coordinate critical-relief efforts to make sure people had food on the table and could safely shelter while officials managed the health crisis.

### The economic impact continues to grow and widen.

Thousands of families and individuals who never before thought of themselves as needing assistance desperately did. Small business owners have had to close, furloughing workers many of whom were living just above the poverty level as it was. And families who were already struggling financially before have been hurt even worse. As jobs and wages disappear or become more unstable, their personal spiral of crisis only steepens. Just consider that since the start of the pandemic:

- The unemployment rate in Southwestern Pennsylvania more than quadrupled in May compared to last year.
- People already living below the poverty line are facing additional food insecurity due to loss of wages and school closings.
- Seniors and those with underlying health conditions are more isolated than ever as they fear for their health.
- Experts are expecting a wave of evictions once emergency housing measures expire.
- An unprecedented number of new families and individuals have requested assistance for the very first time.

Pittsburgh Region Unemployment 2020



The Pittsburgh, PA Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) includes Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties in Pennsylvania.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

<https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/data/xg-tables/ro3fx9529.htm>



United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania

# AN URGENT REQUEST FOR YOUR SUPPORT

## THE SOLUTION:

### 3 ways to make the greatest impact during recovery.

#### 1. United Way's Impact Fund



This year more than ever, investing in United Way's Impact Fund is the best way to help tackle our community's most critical issues. By investing in the Impact Fund, you will help tackle our communities' most critical issues including providing critical funding for United Way's 211. The 2-1-1 24/7 hotline connects those at risk with services that can help, and in this time of crisis, call volume of those seeking relief has quadrupled. The impact fund also puts your donation back to work in the community through the highest performing, most innovative and effective programs and agency partners who

address our most critical human service needs and work to unlock the possibility of a better life for people who are struggling.

#### 2. United For Struggling Families



For most financially struggling families, the economic crisis didn't begin with COVID-19. The pandemic simply accelerated a spiral of poverty they were already fighting to overcome. For those facing the real possibility of homelessness before, that reality has become more critical. For those living with food insecurity before, school closings and the strain on services only increased their peril. United for Struggling Families continues to help connect them with basic needs such as reliable transportation to work, assistance with keeping utilities on and food on the table. The challenges aren't new, but the scale has never been greater. Together, we can make real progress in helping struggling families regain their financial footing – even in these uncertain times.

#### 3. The Emergency Basic Needs Fund (EBNF)



United Way's Emergency Basic Need Fund provides direct, short-term assistance for people facing an immediate threat such as utility cut-offs, eviction or hunger. During the COVID-19 Crisis, the need for the fund continued to grow as did the network of agencies who are able to provide services with generous donations from donors like you. The fund provides grants up to \$700 for individuals to help them get through the immediate crisis and get back on a path to self-sufficiency. The EBNF will continue to play a crucial role going forward during the long recovery period ahead.

## Join us for the most important campaign of our time.

How we respond now will define our region for years to come. With your help, we can create a lifeline for those most affected by this crisis.