

2025

UNITED WAY

Lee, Hendry, and Glades

## Fund Distribution

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# Fund Distribution Overview

## Fund Distribution Mission Statement

United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades is a volunteer organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for all people in our community.

The Fund Distribution process ensures fiscal and program accountability for the donors who contribute to United Way.

The objective of the Fund Distribution process is to deploy United Way financial support to maximize the resources available for high quality human service programs that impact the most urgent needs of the community, including those programs directed by organizations not currently receiving United Way funding.

## Basic Principles of Fund Distribution

United Way recognizes the importance of its role in the distribution of funds to human service programs. This distribution process impacts community problems, and therefore, has to be rooted in a system that is fair, flexible and based on documented need.

The Fund Distribution system helps United Way reach its vision of a broad-based Fund Distribution umbrella and to be a recognized leader in community initiatives. It is to this end that United Way will develop and operate a flexible community Fund Distribution system that is:

- Rooted in the support of a partnership with social service providers in order to provide a stable and reliable service delivery system for the community.
- Accountable to the donor and responsive to community needs, based on a community volunteer review process.
- Flexible in its funding capacity so that funds are available for projects and community problem-solving initiatives that meet critical and emerging needs.

# Fund Distribution Process

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***The United Way Fund Distribution process is the cornerstone of United Way. It ensures fiscal and program accountability for all donors who contribute to the organization.***

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Each year United Way sends Teams of community leaders to review many local partner agencies and hundreds of United Way supported programs. Fund Distribution Teams will begin to convene in late February to evaluate the applications for next year's funding.

Fund Distribution Teams typically gather for two meetings. First is a virtual pre-site meeting where Team Members are given a brief orientation, review the Fund Distribution process, and then do a preliminary review of the Agency applications. Team Members are encouraged to document questions to be submitted to the Agency. Agencies may receive Team questions prior to their scheduled site visit and are expected to respond to each question in writing and/or in their presentation.

The second meeting is the site visit, where Teams get an inside look at their assigned Agencies. During the site visits (whether virtual or in person), Teams typically tour the Agency, meet staff and Board Members, ask questions, and receive more information about the Agency and the program(s) being funded. Subsequently, the Teams review, discuss, and make funding recommendations.

Final funding recommendations are presented to the United Way Board for approval. Agencies are then notified which programs will be supported, and the amount to be allocated. All Fund Distributions are contingent upon the successful attainment of the Campaign goal.

## Minimum Eligibility Requirements

United Way uses the following criteria to determine the eligibility of an organization for United Way funding, whether as an ongoing member Agency or as an Agency requesting admittance to United Way.

1. The Agency must be: incorporated and registered as a not-for-profit organization in the state of Florida and be certified as a tax-exempt charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, a unit of government, or a public school.
2. The Agency must have an uncompensated Board of Directors that establishes policies and actively governs the organization. This Board should be representative of and live in the community in which the Agency serves, meet at least quarterly, and be comprised of no less than nine active Members (excluding Agency staff).
3. The Agency must provide a social service program that addresses an identifiable community need or problem.
4. The Agency must demonstrate a need for United Way funding to either maintain or expand a specific social service program(s).
5. The Agency must demonstrate a clear ability to manage both its programs and its finances in accordance with generally accepted procedures.
6. An annual audit must be performed by an Independent Certified Public Accountant in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and, if applicable, the Single Audit Act. An Agency whose total Annual Revenue is under \$500,000 may be granted permission to submit a Financial Review by an Independent Certified Public Accountant.
7. Have an administrative cost of 25 percent or less as evidenced by the IRS Form 990.
8. The Agency must operate programs that provide services to Lee, Hendry, or Glades County residents. Any Agency that does not have its principal office located in Lee, Hendry, or Glades County will be expected to:
  - a. Maintain a physical presence in Lee, Hendry, or Glades County on a regular, scheduled basis
  - b. Participate in all activities of United Way involving member agencies on the same basis as local agencies
  - c. Have appropriate representation on its Board of Directors from the community.
9. The Agency must track demographic information on their clients served that will be reported on the annual funding application.

10. The Agency must agree to partner with United Way in the following areas:

- a. **Planning and Interagency Cooperation** - To work with the United Way and other organizations to maximize the effectiveness and cost efficiency of our community's human service network. This is accomplished by working collaboratively through planning and the elimination and prevention of inefficient duplication of services.
- b. **Communication** - United Way funding must be used within the calendar year specified and for the programs defined in the Team Report. Programmatic, organizational, legal, or financial changes or issues that may affect the Agency's ability to operate and/or deliver funded programs must be reported to United Way upon discovery. If it is determined that funding will not be used within the calendar year specified and/or for the programs defined in the Team Report, the Agency must inform United Way Staff immediately. Unused funds or funds used for purposes other than those defined in the Team Report may need to be returned to United Way.
- c. **Campaign** – The Agency agrees to conduct an Agency-wide employee campaign itself and to encourage its Board of Directors to participate as well. The Agency also agrees to actively participate in the United Way Campaign by attending campaign Agency training, providing Agency representatives to speak on behalf of the United Way at events, speaking before employee groups, participating in campaign tours, and other related activities.
- d. **Marketing and Public Relations** – The Agency agrees to work with United Way to maximize co-branding and co-marketing opportunities. For the United Way to more successfully raise funds for United Way Agencies, Agencies need to consistently remind the public of their partnership with the United Way. Agencies should highlight their United Way affiliation, for example, in press releases, news stories, brochures, flyers, radio PSA's, TV PSA's, letterhead, website, event invitations, t-shirts, and other creative places. Additionally, the Agency should provide success stories for United Way publications. Agencies should also display a sign noting their United Way Partnership at all operating locations.
- e. **Fundraising** - In the last two weeks of October and the first two weeks of November, fundraising activities that would conflict with United Way campaign presentations, tours, and Kickoff event are strongly discouraged.

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*Applications submitted will be reviewed by United Way staff to determine if the eligibility requirements are satisfied and if the organization is eligible for consideration in the Fund Distribution process. Eligibility determination does not necessarily result in United Way funding nor as admission as a United Way Partner Agency. Community volunteers evaluate: the quality and effectiveness of the program, amount of available dollars, the number of agencies applying, the urgency of existing needs, and other key variables important to United Way, resulting in the final funding decision that is presented to the United Way Board for their approval.*

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## **Fund Distribution Agency Site Visit**

The purpose of a Fund Distribution Team site visit is to familiarize the Fund Distribution volunteers with an Agency's mission, its day-to-day program activities, and its staff and Board Members. Specific site visit instructions will be provided prior to the Fund Distribution visit. A site visit (in person or virtual) typically proceeds as follows:

1. Introduction of Board Members and staff present by the Agency Executive Director; Introduction of Fund Distribution Team Members present by the Fund Distribution Team Leader.
2. Presentation by the Agency
  - Brief overview of the Agency and its entire scope of operations
  - Brief description of the program(s) requesting United Way funding including what the program(s) achieved last year
  - Client testimonial(s)
  - Brief comments from collaborative partner(s) about their role in the program (optional)
  - Brief description of what the Agency anticipates accomplishing in the future, including how the Agency intends to target United Way funding
  - Brief explanation of how the Agency is increasing services, increasing access to services, and working collaboratively
  - Brief comments from the Board of Directors on their role in the organization
  - Responses to any questions/concerns raised by the Team or last year's committee (see comments on prior year's Team Report), including Board involvement, management, and budget
3. Tour of Agency or video presentation of Agency programs, if applicable.
4. Questions from the Fund Distribution Team. This is a critical part of the site visit process. All volunteers are encouraged to ask pertinent questions of Agency personnel and Board Members.





### **Contact Us:**

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## **UNITED WAY**

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