

COVID-19 FAQ - Agencies



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Agency FAQ

When will we be giving out money?

Phase 1: We accepted requests for Phase 1 of the COVID-19 Emergency Fund in early April. This initial funding will be available to UWHH’s currently supported agencies, and focused on requests for basic needs (food, personal hygiene items, baby necessities, personal protective equipment, etc.). Phase 1 Emergency Funding decisions will be made by mid-April, with funds out to agencies by the end of the month. (*Please see intake documents for precise dates. Intake details are below.)

Phase 2: The second phase of funding will include an open call to all local non-profit agencies focusing on supporting seniors through the funds provided by the Federal government through the New Horizons Seniors Program. The allocations process will follow guidelines and reporting requirements of the Federal government. (*Please see pg.3 for full details on New Horizons emergency funding.)

Phase 3: Open call for funding, with a focus on mental health supports and agency capacity. Basic needs requests will also be accepted. The intake questionnaire will be adjusted to reflect expanded scope.

Phase 4: Rolling open calls no sooner than every two weeks or as the fund reaches a 20K threshold.

** Each phase will proceed no sooner than every two weeks or when we cross a minimum \$20,000 fundraising threshold.*

**Precise dates for open calls and funding distribution will be communicated via email, directly to agencies, as well as through community partners.*

**If you do not receive funding in one phase, your application will remain eligible in ongoing open calls. If successful in a subsequent phase, you may be asked to provide an update on any changes that have occurred since the original request for funding.*

What supports are we putting the money through?

Emergency Funds will be distributed based on the following Support Themes:

- **Basic needs:** Ensure people have access to life's essentials, such as food, baby formula, diapers.
- **Help for the vulnerable who are isolated, including seniors:** Ensure that while vulnerable people are isolated, they are also supported
- **Mental health support:** For individuals and families experiencing stress and or temporary job loss / economic strain
- **Capacity for community services:** Ensure that front line community agencies who are working with our most vulnerable can continue to do their vital work

What is the intake process?

Agencies must complete and submit an Emergency Request for Funding form, answering a short series of questions. Funding intake forms and details have been sent via email to all UWHH supported agencies. Please visit the Agency Emergency Relief web page for more details and the most up-to-date information: <https://www.uwhh.ca/COVID-19-for-agencies/>

Basic Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to receive funding from United Way Halton & Hamilton, agencies must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- a. Be incorporated as a registered charitable agency/organization with the Canada Revenue Agency and operating for a minimum of two years.
- b. Have a clearly stated purpose and function within the voluntary human and social service sector operating and service the Halton and/or Hamilton communities.
- c. Be governed by an active volunteer Board of Directors whose members reflects the community it serves.
- d. Adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code and not exclude anyone from service, accommodation or employment by reason of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, or disability.
- e. Be seeking support for services/initiatives that align with one or more of the four support themes for the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund.

Proposals **will not be accepted** for organizations that are primary health care providers, mandated government services, or environmental, political, heritage, or religious in nature.

How will funds be allocated? Who determines which agencies receive the funds?

Through a consultative process with several stakeholders, agency and community needs will be assessed. Applications will be received and reviewed and then vetted by a Board established committee and task force of experts. This committee will assess and weigh each application based on outcomes, impact and areas of greatest need.

Is this a shift in focus for United Way?

Not at all. United Way donors support a stable network of 129 agency programs in our community that provide a range of programs and services for 200,000 people annually.

COVID-19 presents a challenge for the most vulnerable in our community. There is an urgent situation in our community, and people are asking how they can help. United Way was established as a way to be there for each other when it matters most, and this is one of those times.

The Fund is intended to provide an efficient response to support front line serving agencies that are working with vulnerable populations impacted by COVID-19.

How is this emergency fund different from the Community Investment Fund?

The Community Investment Fund is the overall pool of United Way donations, raised annually, that are available to local registered charitable organizations through an application and evaluation process. Comprised of individual gifts, workplace donations, and special events revenue, the Community Investment Fund provides critical multi-year funding to programs across all five communities supported (Burlington, Halton Hills, Hamilton, Milton, Oakville).

The COVID-19 Emergency Fund is separate from the annual campaign and pool of funds. It is intended specifically to help the most vulnerable as our communities respond to challenges raised by the pandemic. Funds will be invested into agencies to help them shift and adapt programming to serve community.

Will this fund impact the amount agencies and programs currently receive?

No. The work agencies do is critical and relied on by 200,000 individuals in need every single year. Thanks to United Way donors, all other commitments to agency partners will remain.

About the COVID-19 Emergency Fund

What is the UWHH COVID-19 Emergency Fund?

The COVID-19 Emergency Fund has been established to help support our community's most vulnerable in a difficult and challenging time. The Fund is intended to provide monetary support to community-based agencies that are working on the front line with individuals experiencing poverty, isolation as well as those who are supporting families under stress.

We know that many people cannot afford to prepare, and do not have a support system around them as this pandemic impacts households.

What will the funds raised through the COVID-19 Emergency Fund be used for?

Working with community partners, United Way has identified the following needs, which will continue to grow:

- **Basic needs** – ensure people have access to life's essentials, such as food, baby formula, diapers.
- **Help for the vulnerable who are isolated, including seniors** – ensure that while vulnerable people are isolated, they are also supported
- **Mental health support** – for individuals and families experiencing stress and or temporary job loss / economic strain
- **Capacity for community services** – ensure that front line community agencies who are working with our most vulnerable can continue to do their vital work

As the situation evolves, so too will the needs in the community. We will be in ongoing discussions to identify how needs are changing and respond on your behalf, to have the greatest impact.

What are you hearing from local agencies about the impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable?

Our agency and community partners that provide vital supports such as food, mental health supports and support to isolated seniors, are telling us that given the COVID-19 response requirements, they will need community support to continue helping the most vulnerable – who are disproportionately affected by this crisis.

Agencies are responding as necessary and adjusting their options for services in real time, but their capacity will be stretched in the coming days, weeks and months.

Poverty. Vulnerable people and families cannot afford to stock up on supplies and are more likely to be severely impacted by closed schools and reduced shift work. Food banks and shelter services will be critical to supporting these individuals.

Families Under Stress. Many families are unable to purchase the necessary food, personal hygiene and cleaning products to protect their health and wellbeing. So too, many are experiencing temporary lay-offs and economic strain.

Mental Health. Psycho-social supports are always critical in a crisis. Access to immediate counselling supports goes hand in hand with a drastic shift in our regular routines, especially something as unprecedented as extended self-isolation. Isolation can trigger anxieties, as well as force people into uncomfortable or unsafe environments. The needs continue to change and we are working closely with public health authorities, community agencies, community groups and others to assist with social services as this health crisis escalates.

Support for Seniors. Seniors are the most vulnerable in terms of exposure and whose main source of interaction is group programs and public spaces.

Advocacy

United Way works with network leaders and government at all levels to advance a number of policy priorities together with sector allies.

At United Way, we influence public attitudes, systems and policies by building and strengthening relationships and engaging and mobilizing the right people around a priority social issue. We identify key community issues and opportunities by engaging our community in conversations to strengthen service networks and overall community capacity.

How does UWHH invest in community?

United Way was established to serve the community. This is achieved by identifying local issues and raising every dollar we can to address them - with funds going to local community programs.

The Community Investment Fund is the overall pool of United Way donations, raised annually, that are available to local registered charitable organizations through an application and evaluation process. Comprised of individual gifts, workplace donations, and special events revenue, the Community Investment Fund provides critical multi-year funding to programs across all five communities supported (Burlington, Halton Hills, Hamilton, Milton, Oakville).

The COVID-19 Emergency Fund falls in line with work United Way has always done. And is well aligned with our annual fundraising and investment strategy.

How is United Way fulfilling its mission during this time?

United Way is working with the Federal Government to support local emergency funding.

On March 29, the Federal Government confirmed \$9 million of funds to United Ways across Canada to support vulnerable seniors who are worried about being isolated from their community, getting their hot meals delivered, filling their prescriptions, doing their shopping or seeing their doctors, among other things.

Although this funding is a good start, we know that it is not going to be sufficient. That is why we are continuing to advocate with government to ensure even more dollars are made available to invest in 4 key areas:

1. Helping people access basic needs;
2. Helping those dealing with isolation;
3. Supporting mental health services;
4. And to ensuring our local safety net of agencies and programs have what they need to pivot and adapt to the pressures they face.

This all falls in line with work United Way has always done and is well aligned with our annual fundraising and investment strategy.

About the New Horizons for Seniors Program

Overview:

United Way is pleased to support this important investment by the Federal Government. Canada's seniors are at greatest risk of poor health outcomes due to the COVID-19 crisis, with social isolation and poverty placing seniors at even greater risk.

We know seniors are worried about being isolated from their community, getting their hot meals delivered, filling their prescriptions, doing their shopping or seeing their doctors. They are also concerned about being alone and even more isolated in their homes during this pandemic. This fund will provide urgent funds to help ensure they have the supports they need.

By using United Ways existing local capacity, funds from the New Horizons Senior Program will be used to quickly address vulnerable seniors' most urgent needs and the capacity of our front-line agencies.

United Way is working alongside municipalities, local public health, community agencies and foundations to ensure funds are going to where they are needed most.

Once funds are received, they will be invested into community before April 30th. The \$9 million will be invested across all parts of Canada, with a portion coming into our region. Funds will not be distributed directly to individuals in the community. This funding will be distributed to local agencies and programs that provide services to isolated seniors. Once United Way is provided with the actual amount to be invested locally, United Way will work with key stakeholders to determine which programs will have the greatest impact.

What did the Federal Government announce?

On Sunday March 29, 2020 the Prime Minister announced funding to United Way Centraide (UWC) to support vulnerable seniors at risk due to the COVID-19 Crisis. This funding will support services and supports to isolated seniors in all parts of Canada including rural and remote communities.

Funding in the amount of \$9M will be distributed through the UWC network in Canada. Funding is coming from the New Horizons for Seniors Program. The minister responsible for this program is Minister Deb Shulte, Minister of Seniors. Minister Ahmed Hussen, Minister responsible for Families, Children and Social Development is also involved.

This funding is the first step the Government is taking to put in place a program of supports for vulnerable Canadians and charitable sector organizations.

Is this \$9M fund available to support all vulnerable populations?

No. This New Horizons for Seniors Program is specifically to be used to deliver support for vulnerable seniors. Local United Ways and Centraides, including UWHH, will work with community to direct these funds where they are needed most to support vulnerable seniors.

How will this fund work?

The Federal Government is working with United Way to support the distribution of these funds in local communities across Canada. The funds will be used to help community service partners to address the needs of vulnerable seniors.

How will United Way manage these funds?

Funds will be distributed to community programs by United Way – and we are working closely with municipalities, local public health authorities, business and labour and foundations to coordinate investment where they are needed most.

This will ensure rapid and flexible response in communities and leverage United Ways' existing ability to manage funds accountably for community benefit.

Is this funding enough to meet the needs of vulnerable seniors and Canadians?

This is a positive and welcome announcement.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented crisis affecting all Canadians and putting many at risk due to isolation, job loss and poverty. Demands on community support programs are growing rapidly and

placing major demands on people and our front-line community services. They are also placing significant challenges on the charities as they try to adapt to deliver services due to need for social distancing at a time when the number of volunteers is diminishing, and other revenues are declining.

UWHH's COVID-19 Emergency Fund has been established to help support our community's most vulnerable in a difficult and challenging time. The Fund is intended to provide monetary support to community-based agencies that are working on the front line with individuals experiencing poverty, isolation as well as those who are supporting families under stress.