



Frequently Asked Questions

What is United Way? United Way is a locally incorporated, nonprofit organization that is the single largest non-governmental funder of health and human services in the Coastal Bend. United Way dollars support more than 35 health and human service programs addressing community problems in the Coastal Bend.

Is United Way a local or national organization? While we are affiliated with a national service and training organization, United Way of the Coastal Bend is a local, autonomous organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. While each United Way must meet basic organizational standards, each is separate and independent from other United Ways in the country.

Why does United Way exist? United Way of the Coastal Bend was established by and for the community as the place where society's most powerful forces join to work for a common goal — to most efficiently and effectively maximize the impact of donors' dollars in our local community. For many years, we have improved people's lives and created measurable change in communities throughout the Coastal Bend area.

Why am I asked to give to United Way in my workplace? United Way has always enjoyed a strong partnership with the business community. Organizations that host a workplace campaign understand that we all share a responsibility for the people and neighborhoods where we live, work and raise our families. Our annual workplace campaign raises millions of dollars that contribute to real, lasting and measurable change throughout the community.

Is giving to United Way voluntary? Yes! Giving to United Way is a personal decision and should be strictly voluntary. United Way prefers that donors give from the heart and that coercion is unacceptable when donating. Education about how United Way programs make a difference in our community is the best way to encourage contributions.

What if my spouse already gives to United Way? Each and every contribution is important and makes a difference. Each person's gift can help United Way of the Coastal Bend meet the needs of the communities in our 9-county service area. We all have a stake in the region's well-being.

What is the advantage of a payroll deduction gift versus a one-time contribution? The payroll deduction benefit that United Way offers allows for convenient giving on an installment basis in any amount. Often, larger gifts are possible because giving is incremental rather than all at once. Payroll deductions provide a steady cash flow, allowing it to plan its service delivery.

How can I receive updates about how my contribution is making a difference in the Coastal Bend? Visit www.uwcb.org for updates and sign up for our electronic newsletter. Also, include your home address and email on your pledge form so United Way can stay in touch on a regular basis.

Does United Way sell or trade list information of its donors? No. United Way maintains its own database of supporters and will, under no circumstances, sell or trade this information to any individual or organization, public or private.

What are some of United Way's programs or initiatives? United Way focuses on Education, Financial Stability and Health — the building blocks for a good quality of life. Through our work in Education, we ensure children have a strong foundation for the rest of their lives, make achievements in school and graduate. In Financial Stability, we work to ensure families and individuals are financially stable and we work to improve the overall health of our community. For a full list of United Way's work, please visit www.uwcb.org

Why should I give to United Way in addition to my other charities? Everyone should give to the charities that are closest to their hearts. But a gift to United Way will extend charitable giving by investing in the needs of the greater community. A donation to United Way doesn't just change one or two lives — it changes the fabric of our community. This is because our United Way donation produces measurable results; for example, keeping students in school or increasing the number of families who are financially stable. And if you are investing in our Funded Programs, then you know those programs are vetted through a rigorous, volunteer-led process where they must report and are held accountable for their results.

What is the Community Investment Fund? United Way's Community Investment Fund focuses on priority needs in the Coastal Bend. When a donor gives to the Community Investment Fund, trained volunteers invest the gift in a network of community programs and services that work together to provide a continuum of care for those in need. Giving to United Way of the Coastal Bend through the Community Investment Fund is the most efficient, effective way to support a collection of programs that solve local problems and serve human needs.

Can I still designate my United Way gift to a specific United Way agency? Absolutely. Giving is a personal decision and we would never encourage donors to not follow their hearts. That stated — no other organization in our area has the same depth of reach, partnerships or perspective that gives United Way the ability to unite and apply resources where they are needed most in the community. United Way will honor donor designations to specific programs listed in the United Way brochure.

How does United Way decide who gets my money? How do I know my money is going to make a difference? Volunteers decide. Every United Way funded program must meet high standards of quality and efficiency. At the end of each annual campaign, volunteers from all walks of life study the needs of the community and determine where your gift, and theirs, can do the most good. They review budgets and monitor programs to assure high quality. This is a rigorous process that holds programs accountable for outcomes and ensures they are operating effectively and efficiently. As donors to United Way of the Coastal Bend themselves, they too want to be convinced that their donation changes lives. Call 361-882-2529 if you are interested in volunteering on an allocations panel.

Why do agencies still have fund-raisers when they are funded by United Way? United Way of the Coastal Bend funds programs provided by nonprofit health and human services agencies. United Way usually funds a portion necessary for these programs. Agencies must continue to raise funds from various other sources to support their ongoing activities.