

# United Way of the Mark Twain Area

## 2026 Community Impact Funding Process

Each year United Way invites area nonprofits to join as a partner in making our vision for the community come to life: a community where all are empowered to achieve their potential by accessing the services they need. We make an impact in our community by partnering with organizations and launching our own projects and programs. All of our work aligns with our areas of focus and our priority areas. The work supports the Community's Priority Health Needs that were identified through our Community's Health Improvement Plan.

As a Community Impact Agency, organizations receive volunteer support, marketing support, training opportunities, and monthly funding. United Way raises these dollars through the organization's annual campaign. Agencies must apply each year to be a Community Impact Agency. Following is information regarding United Way's Areas of Impact, Areas of Priority, standards of Community Impact Agencies, evaluation criteria, application instructions, as well as a timeline for the 2026 Community Impact Process.

### **United Way's Areas of Impact**

United Way has adopted new Areas of Impact in conjunction with United Way Worldwide. These Areas of Impact follow:

**Healthy Community** – United Way supports programming and services that work to improve the health and well-being for all.

**Youth Opportunity** – United Way supports opportunities that help young people realize their full potential.

**Financial Security** – United Way invests in opportunities that help people build their financial stability and strength.

**Community Resiliency** - United Way supports opportunities that are addressing urgent needs today for a better tomorrow.

### **United Way's Priorities**

To make the United Way's mission and vision come to life, there are two specific priorities that have been identified by the United Way's Board of Directors. United Way will work to fund and implement projects and programs that relate to these two identified priorities.

**Supporting Critical Services** - Individuals must have access to food, water, shelter, security, health, and safety. United Way prioritizes providing critical services to ensure the basic needs of individuals are met.

**Providing Opportunities for Upward Mobility** - It is our goal at United Way that individuals can become self-sufficient. United Way prioritizes opportunities to promote upward mobility. We want individuals to have opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills they need to be independent through educational programs, mentoring, skill development, and connections to opportunities. We want individuals to have access to the resources they need to receive support and gain the confidence and skillset to become accountable for themselves and independent.

## Community's Priority Health Needs

- *Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders*
  - *Lack of local inpatient mental health services*
  - *Shortage of behavioral health providers*
  - *Stigma and lack of awareness surrounding mental health*
  - *High rates of substance use and overdose*
- *Access to & Affordability of Care*
  - Provider shortages, especially in rural counties
  - Transportation barriers to care
  - High out-of-pocket costs and limited insurance access
- *Housing and Homelessness*
  - Limited affordable housing options
  - Increasing homelessness and emergency shelter demand
- *Transportation*
  - Limited or no public transportation in rural areas
  - Transportation barriers to accessing care, employment, and services
- *Chronic Disease Prevention & Management*
  - High rates of diabetes, obesity, and heart disease
  - Limited access to healthy food and physical activity opportunities
  - Low health literacy
- *Workforce Development (Health & Social Sectors specifically creating hardship in Health Areas)*
  - Shortage of qualified health and social service professionals
  - Need for recruitment, training, and retention programs

More information can be found regarding this work can be found under the [Community Needs Tab](#).

## **Standards of Community Impact Agencies:**

- Leadership of organization must attend (or have previously attended) the Nonprofit Leadership Training. It is recommended to offer this training to each board member and new board members of the organization should be encouraged to attend. If the organization has an Executive Director, the director must attend or previously have attended.
- Non-Profit Organization that provides human services and has programs that align with United Way's areas of impact and priorities and align with the Community's Priority Health Needs.
- Must serve individuals in Lewis, Marion, Monroe, Ralls, and/or Shelby Counties.
- Must offer opportunity for participation in programs, services, and staff employment to persons of all race, religion, creed, sex, and national origin.
- Must have a ruling from the United States Treasury Department that it is not a private foundation and is exempt from payment of income tax and that gifts to it are deductible for income tax purposes as outlined in 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- Must be in compliance with all applicable anti-terrorist financing and asset control laws, statutes, and executive orders
- Must have governing board that meets at regular intervals (at least once a year). Board members must be elected for specific terms, should be representatives of the community, and should serve without pay.
- Must furnish United Way with constitution, bylaws, board rosters, and employee directory upon applying for membership. United Way needs to be informed of changes made throughout the year of key staff at organization.
- Must keep comprehensive and accurate financial records and supply them to United Way.
  - Agencies with annual budgets of \$20,000 or less will provide financial statements that may be internally produced.
  - Agencies with budgets ranging from \$20,000- \$300,000 will provide a Compilation Report prepared by a Certified Public Accountant.
  - Agencies with budgets over \$300,000 will provide a full audit prepared by a Certified Public Accountant in accordance with standards issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.
- For agencies operating under religious auspices, there must be clear separation in the budget for support of social service programs from its religious programs.
- Must plan to participate actively in the United Way's events and programs, including the annual campaign by hosting a workplace campaign within the agency if the organization has employees.
- If selected as a Community Impact Agency, must self-identify as a United Way Community Impact Agency or Program.

## Evaluation Criteria

Members of United Way's Community Impact Committee will read applications and review all documents that are submitted as part of the application process. Committee members will visit the agency and/or with agency leadership. Following outlines the criteria that is taken into account when making decisions to select Community Impact Agencies.

- **Community Need:** Does the application clearly outline a community need that is being tackled by the implementation of the organization's work?
- **Community Impact:** Does the work of the organization/program create a positive impact in our community and is there data to prove this?
- **Alignment with Impact Areas:** Does the organization's programming strongly align with the one or more of the areas of impact?
- **Alignment with Priorities:** Does the organizations programming strongly align with one or both of the identified priorities?
- **Alignment with Community Health Improvement Plan:** Does the organization's programming strongly align with one or more of the priorities of the Community Health Improvement Plan?
- **Population Served:** Does the organization serve a population of individuals that are in need of programs and services to help them achieve their potential?
- **Financial Management:** Does the organization demonstrate financial stability and have good record keeping and accounting practices? Are there multiple funding sources?
- **Impact of United Way Funds:** Will United Way funding allow the organization to reach more people or expand upon the organization's services and/or initiative a new program? Will anything at the organization change because of United Way funding?
- **Community Engagement:** Has the organization been a positive community partner working alongside other nonprofit organizations and/or entities to work collaboratively to tackle community issues?
- **Organizational Leadership Capacity:** Does the organization have the leadership in place that is needed to execute their mission efficiently and effectively as well as manage a solid nonprofit organization? Leadership referring to both board members and employees (if there are employees).

**Application Instructions:**

- 1) Review application and required documents
- 2) Complete the Community Impact Application found at link at bottom of Community Impact tab page.
  - a. If desired, can utilize the Word Document to write out initial responses (adhere to character limits) then copy/paste into the online application link.
- 3) Download the required documents and complete those documents.
- 4) Save the completed documents as Excel Spreadsheets on your computer.
- 5) On the application link, upload required documents via the provided links.
- 6) Submit your application.
- 7) Once your application has been received and your organization is found to be eligible to apply for status as a Community Impact Agency, United Way leadership will reach out to you to schedule a time for the Community Impact Committee to come visit your agency.

**Community Impact Timeline:**

**January 1:** Application opens on United Way Website

**January 30-February 27:** Non-Profit Leadership Training Occurs on Fridays

**February 15:** Application Closes

**Late February:** Community Impact Committee Reviews Applications

**Fridays in Late February & Early March:** Community Impact Committee Visit Agencies

**April:** Community Impact Committee presents recommendation of Community Impact Agencies & Funding levels to the Board of Directors

**May:** Organizations begin receiving funds from United Way