

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is United Way of Northeast Louisiana?

- United Way of Northeast Louisiana is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) agency that works with volunteers, donors, and other local organizations to fight for the Education, Financial Stability, and Health of every person in our community
- Our mission is focused around Helping People & Improving Our Community
- Our Values are Inclusiveness, Compassion, Integrity, Respect and Dignity and Positive Impact

Who runs United Way of Northeast Louisiana?

- All United Ways are locally run and governed in each community. Our staff works with knowledgeable, well-trained volunteers representative of our community here in Northeast Louisiana.
- A volunteer-led Board of Directors sets policy and strategic direction.
- Various volunteer committees oversee financial practices and provide counsel on operational issues.
- The Chairman of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee of United Way of Northeast Louisiana is Blake Wheelis, Blake Wheelis State Farm Insurance Agency, Inc.
- The President of United Way of Northeast Louisiana is Janet S. Durden.

When was the United Way of Northeast Louisiana chartered?

United Way of Northeast Louisiana has been supporting health and human service programs in Ouachita Parish since 1956, and in the entire Northeast Louisiana area since 1987.

What does United Way of Northeast Louisiana do?

United Way of Northeast Louisiana mobilizes volunteers, donors, and community partners to fight for the Education, Financial Stability, and Health of every person in our community. Together, our work is focused on:

- Children, Youth, & Young Adults Successful in School & Life
- Economic Opportunity for All
- Healthy, Safe Community

What does it cost to run United Way of Northeast Louisiana?

- Our administrative and fundraising cost is 16.2% for the most recently filed 990 (6/30/17)
- Even though the Better Business Bureau guidelines suggest 65% of total expenses for charitable, non-profit organizations be spent on program activities, we are committed to keeping our administrative expenses low.
- Overhead costs include important investments non-profits make to sustain and improve their work: investments in training, planning, evaluation, internal systems, and a professional staff, as well as their efforts to raise money so they can operate their programs. Other factors that contribute to non-profit performance include transparency, governance, leadership, and results.

Which parishes does United Way of Northeast Louisiana serve?

- United Way of Northeast Louisiana is a regional organization, serving 12 Parishes. These parishes are Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union and West Carroll.
- Our Partner Agency programs that we fund help people all over Northeast Louisiana. Parish-wide information on funded programs is available from your United Way staff person and on our website at unitedwaynela.org.

What is United Way Worldwide and how is our local United Way related to it?

United Way Worldwide is the leadership and support organization engaged in nearly 1,800 communities across more than 40 countries and territories. It provides national media advertising including television Public Service Announcements

broadcast during the NFL football season. It also sets national impact goals and provides brand leadership for local United Ways. Use of the United Way logo is based on United Way Membership Requirements regarding governance and fiscal accountability. In addition, United Way Worldwide conducts a vast array of research to assist member organizations in the development and implementation of their local community impact agenda. United Way Worldwide DOES NOT provide funding of any kind to any program, organizations, or any local United Way. United Way of Northeast Louisiana pays 1% of its annual campaign dollars to United Way Worldwide for dues.

How are dollars raised allocated in the community?

When you give your gift to United Way of Northeast Louisiana, you are allowing local volunteers, representing all segments of the community, to determine how to invest the money in the issues and areas that need it most, ensuring our work is both focused on key goals while doing the most good for our entire community.

What's the difference between an undesignated and designated gift?

An undesignated gift takes advantage of United Way of Northeast Louisiana thorough, research-based program selection that gets the money to the issues and areas that need it most. You can also choose to direct your gift to any of our Community Impact Initiatives or collaborations centered around our work in Education, Financial Stability, and Health.

By completing a Specific Care Form and submitting it with the pledge for, a designated gift restricts your gift to a specific 501(c)3 non-profit health and human service agency.

- Designated gifts must be \$100 or greater.
- Gifts of less than \$100 will be directed to the general fund.
- These gifts will be adjusted for pledge loss and an administrative fee.
- Specific Care Forms must be turned in to your Campaign Coordinator with the pledge amount and signed by the donor along with address and or email address by February 15th to be honored.

I don't benefit, so why should I give?

You, a family member, friend or coworker may have already used the services of United Way of Northeast Louisiana partner agencies, initiatives, and collaboratives without realizing it. We all win when children succeed in school, when families are financially stable, and when people have access to basic needs. When you support United Way of Northeast Louisiana, you help to create lasting change for all in our community.

How is United Way of Northeast Louisiana accountable to its donors?

In order to receive funding from United Way of Northeast Louisiana, a partner agency program or organization must demonstrate that it is meeting strict accountability requirements:

- Be a tax exempt, non-profit corporation
- Be governed by a volunteer board whose members are elected and supported by trained, professional staff
- Have an annual, independent financial audit (Agencies with under \$100,000 in revenue may have an independent review)
- Meet reasonable standards of financial responsibility and efficiency
- Quantify or measure the changes that the agency/program is making in the lives of the people it serves

Who is ultimately responsible for the Partner Agencies?

While United Way of Northeast Louisiana has standards for Partner Agencies, each agency is autonomous and is governed by a Board of Directors. The agencies determine the programs they provide to the community and their criteria for receiving services. Agencies are not totally funded by United Way of Northeast Louisiana dollars and may depend on service or membership fees for financial support. Frequently, agencies offer sliding fee schedules so that people who are unable to pay the total fee can be charged based on their ability to pay.

Why are some community non-profits no longer United Way of Northeast Louisiana Partner Agencies?

Some agencies choose to discontinue their partnership with United Way of Northeast Louisiana; others do not continue to meet partnership standards and are asked to exit AFTER every effort is made to help the organization meet the partnership criteria and standards.

How does an agency become funded by United Way of Northeast Louisiana?

United Way of Northeast Louisiana has a formal process for funding health and human service agencies that involves volunteer and staff review, fiscal accountability and agency compliance with policies set by the Board of Directors. United Way enters into contractual partnerships with agencies with the objective of achieving specific outcomes that address our community goals and impact areas.

What is United Way 2-1-1?

United Way 2-1-1 is your **CONVENIENT COMMUNITY CONNECTION** to information and resources including information related to basic needs services, child care services, consumer help, volunteer opportunities, crisis Intervention, health care, and more. A call to United Way 2-1-1 is free, confidential, and available 24/7!

Now you can also TEXT to connect a United Way 2-1-1 Resource Specialist, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday. To connect during business hours, simply text your ZIP CODE to 898-211.

I know someone who asked for help and didn't get it.

Needs always exceed the dollars available to meet them, so unfortunately, some people don't get the help they desire when needed because of limited resources.

If I know someone who needs help or assistance how do I get information about what is available?

The fastest way to find out what is available is to call United Way of Northeast Louisiana 2-1-1. With just one phone call to 2-1-1 by cell or landline phone, anyone who needs help can speak with a caring, highly trained person who will listen, assess their needs, offer emotional support, and get them connected to the services that could meet their needs. Call specialists have access to a vast array of community and social service resources. For more information, visit the 211Community Services Directory on the United Way of Northeast Louisiana website at www.unitedwaynela.org, or simply call 2-1-1.

I have some time and I'd like to get involved in the community as a volunteer, but I don't know where to start. Can United Way of Northeast Louisiana help me?

In 2017, United Way of Northeast Louisiana launched VolunteerUNITED, a Volunteer Engagement Center developed to connect individual and group volunteers to the region's most pressing needs, providing rewarding volunteer experiences, translating their passions into action, and inspiring them to take part in positive community change.

To get started, visit unitedwaynela.org/volunteer or simply call or text 2-1-1. A call specialist will connect you with our Community Engagement Manager to discover your interests and connect you with appropriate volunteer opportunities in our community.

Does United Way of Northeast Louisiana fund abortion?

NO, United Way of Northeast Louisiana does not fund abortion or abortion services nor does any local United Way.

United Way of Northeast Louisiana does not provide funding for any agency which performs abortions or provides counseling on abortions. United Way of Northeast Louisiana Partner Agencies do not refer individuals to abortion services as an option. All agencies receiving funding from United Way of Northeast Louisiana, including 2-1-1, have strict policies of **NOT** referring individuals to abortion services. Individuals calling for these services are referred to the yellow pages of the phone book.

Does United Way of Northeast Louisiana fund Planned Parenthood?

- NO, United Way of Northeast Louisiana does **NOT** fund Planned Parenthood, has **NEVER** funded Planned Parenthood and **WILL NOT** fund Planned Parenthood in the future. In fact, **NO** United Way in the state of Louisiana funds Planned Parenthood.
- All United Ways are locally governed in each community. Out of nearly 1,200 local United Ways in the United States, only a small number less than 6%, provide support to Planned Parenthood. **NO** United Way funds are currently used, or have ever been used, to support abortion services.
- Our national organization, United Way Worldwide, exists solely to provide marketing and training support to local United Ways and **DOES NOT** program, organizations, or any local United Way.

Does United Way of Northeast Louisiana fund the Boy Scouts of America?

- Yes, The Boy Scouts of America, Louisiana Purchase Council is a partner agency of United Way of Northeast Louisiana, providing programming, services and opportunities that support our work in Education. United Way of Northeast Louisiana will continue to support these programs and initiatives.
- On Monday, July 27, 2015 the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America ratified a resolution that removes the national restriction on openly gay adult leaders and employees.
- Chartered organizations will continue to select their adult leaders and religious chartered organizations may continue to use religious beliefs as criteria for selecting adult leaders, including matters of sexuality. This change allows Scouting's members and parents to select local units, chartered to organizations with similar beliefs, that best meet the needs of their families. This change also represents the right of religious chartered organizations to choose adult volunteer leaders whose beliefs are consistent with their own.
- The Boy Scouts, Louisiana Purchase Council continues to believe that these changes in adult leadership standards will have **NO** impact on programming here in the Louisiana Purchase Council.

Does United Way of Northeast Louisiana fund the Salvation Army?

- The Salvation Army receives a grant from United Way of Northeast Louisiana to fund overnight homeless sheltering. The funds administered through this grant are being provided by a community fundraising effort being led by Tony Davis of Centurylink. United Way of Northeast Louisiana operates and administers this Community Emergency Shelter Fund with no administrative fee.
- Through this grant, The Salvation Army joins the collaborative efforts being facilitated by United Way to address both short and long-term solutions to reduce homelessness. This approach aims to connect homeless individuals and families with those who can provide needed services.
- Homelessness is a problem no one person or group can solve. United Way is committed to partnering with area non-profits, faith-based organizations, government, businesses, and volunteers to develop and expand long-range solutions to alleviate homelessness in Northeast Louisiana.

Is my contribution tax deductible?

YES. Under IRS guidelines, the full amount of your gift, if paid, qualifies as a deductible charitable contribution.

The IRS does, however, have guidelines for the documentation required to substantiate proof of payment:

For gifts less than \$250

- If paid with: **Cash** - Receipt from United Way
- **Checks or credit card** - Canceled check or credit card receipt
- **Payroll deduction** - Documentation from employer that indicates amount withheld AND Copy of your Pledge Form (we recommend maintaining this with your tax files), or W-2 showing amount withheld.

For gifts more than \$250, paid directly to United Way (non-payroll deduction)

- A written acknowledgment and receipt from United Way specifying the gift and that no goods or services were provided in consideration of the contribution

Does United Way of Northeast Louisiana pressure people to give?

NO, Giving is a personal decision. United Way of Northeast Louisiana has a strong policy against coercion. Whether a person gives to United Way of Northeast Louisiana and how much the person chooses to give is up to the individual. United Way of Northeast Louisiana **does not** support the use of threats or coercion of any kind.

I can't afford to give to United Way of Northeast Louisiana.

Every gift to United Way of Northeast Louisiana, no matter its size, makes a difference in our community. Many people find that giving through payroll deduction allows them to make a contribution that fits their budget. One of the advantages of giving to United Way is being part of a community effort that combines all of our giving to multiply the impact.