



Frequently Asked Questions

United Way provides essential health and human services to our community. The following information will give you a better understanding of the purpose and goals of the United Way of Merced County.

What is United Way?

United Way of Merced County is a volunteer organization that collects and uses locally donated dollars to fund local programs that have a significant positive impact on the quality of life in Merced County. It has an Executive Director, a Director of Operations, a Resource Developer and an Administrative Assistant.

Is the local United Way a chapter of United Way of America?

No. All local United Ways are separate, autonomous organizations run by local volunteers. Locals pay a small administrative fee (1% of the campaign) to use the United Way logo and name, to buy supplies at reduced cost, get training, and benefit from the NFL support.

Are administrative costs high?

No. Administrative costs are estimated to be 18% percent this year. If the citizens of Merced County are generous with their charitable dollars this campaign, the administrative costs will be even less.

How are donations made?

Most donations are a result of payroll deductions arising from presentations made in the workplace. Gifts of cash and checks are always acceptable and credit cards may be used at www.unitedwaymerced.org

How does United Way decide which programs to fund?

Any non-profit human-care service provider may apply for funding. The applicant must first submit a letter of intent to ask for funding that allows Board Members to screen for acceptance criteria. Those accepted will be given a complete funding application. An all volunteer Community Investment Committee reviews the applications, talks to the staff and volunteers of each agency and then determines the relative merit of each program. From this, the committee makes a funding recommendation that is sent to the Board of Directors for approval.

Can I designate my donation to go to a specific charity?

Yes. While United Way is raising funds for the programs of applying charities it deems most worthy of funding, it also allows the donor to give all or part of their donation to any non-profit organization whether or not they receive funding from United Way. United Way will deduct the expense of performing this task (normally 10%).

Will my designated gift to a United Way funded agency be considered "First In Dollars" towards their allocation?

No. Designated donations are considered completely separate from the general campaign and are sent to the designated agency over and above any allocation.