

United Way of Nevada County
Fund Distribution Policy
United Way of Nevada County
Mission Statement

To improve lives by directing community resources to community needs

Introduction

The **purpose of this document** is to specify the policies and practices of distributing (or “Allocating”) Annual Campaign revenues to address United Way of Nevada County (UWNC) Board-identified human service issues, needs or projects. To be eligible for an allocation, a share of Campaign revenues, an agency must complete and submit an *annual Partnership/Fund Application*, as made available by UWNC

Agencies and organizations interested in applying will find eligibility requirements in UWNC’s partnership policy, *Criteria and Responsibilities for Partnership and on UNWC’s website at www.uwnc.org/PartnerResources2.htm*.

United Way, Nevada County, and human needs are constantly changing. Therefore, this policy will be subject to continual review and revision. **Any changes in policy or practice must be approved by the United Way of Nevada County Board of Directors.**

Only the most recent, Board-approved version of this document reflects actual, current practice.

Committees

Community Investment Committee - Serves as a year-round committee. Comprised of the Executive Director, at least one Board Member and, as necessary, agency and citizen volunteers familiar with the UWNC community investment process. The Community Investment Committee reviews the *Partnership/Fund Application* and procedures to assure efficiency and responsiveness. The Community Investment Committee assures that a proper number of qualified trained members sit on each Citizen’s Review Team (CRT) such that no more than four agencies are visited by any single Team. Following completion of the CRT agency visits and application reviews, the Community Investment Committee makes the final recommendation of allocation amounts to the UWNC Board based on the recommendations of the CRT leaders.

The Finance Committee - The Finance Committee meets throughout the year overseeing UWNC fiscal matters. During the allocation process, this Committee reviews financial information reported by agencies in the *Partnership/ Funding Applications*. As necessary, this Committee requests further, clarifying fiscal information, assuring that what is summarized for the Citizen Review Teams is a clear reflection of each applicant agency’s financial status. The Finance Committee is also available to the Executive Director for review of financial documents in the annual application packet.

In years when campaign returns allow such requests, this Committee also reviews all requests for contingency funding (*see Special Funding Requests, below*).

Citizen Review Teams - Each Citizen Review Team (CRT) has four or five citizen volunteers solicited by UWNC staff and/or by the chair of the Community Investment Committee. CRT's serve just during the membership/allocations review period, usually late March through early May. All CRT members attend a training meeting. Teams are assigned member agencies to visit and hold additional meetings as necessary to review agency programs, goals, outcomes, and needs. CRT membership is overseen by the Community Investment Committee, such that each CRT has two or more experienced agency reviewers. Truckee agencies are reviewed by Teams with Truckee area members in the majority.

Each Team has a Leader selected and, if new, trained by the Community Investment Committee. The Team Leader schedules and plans the Team's agency visits and leads Team members through the agency review process. Each member of the Team fills out an *Agency Rating Form* for each agency visited. . The Team Leader carries the Team's ratings to the Funding Night meeting where allocation amounts are jointly discussed and determined. All rating forms are collected by the Community Investment Chair(s), transcribed with their comments.

The Community Investment Committee submits the community investment proposal for funding to the United Way of Nevada County Board during the first regularly scheduled Board meeting in May for approval by the Board.

Fund Distribution Overview

The purpose of the allocations process is to distribute United Way annual campaign funds to collaborating agencies and organizations in a manner that maximizes benefits to those in need, makes some measurable improvement in an identified community problem, maintains donor confidence, and encourages the effectiveness of our partner agencies. The UWNC Board will annually, in May, announce how prior-year Campaign proceeds will be allocated to address the Board's identified priority community need (s).

Allocated funds are for unrestricted agency use in Nevada County. Central to the process is the Citizen Review Team on-site visit which, with Finance Committee review of agency fiscal information, is designed to establish annual agency effectiveness.

Partnership/Fund Applications will be accepted only once a year, as scheduled by United Way of Nevada County. Annually, the UWNC Executive Director will develop a calendar for the partnership and allocations process, which will be approved by the Community Investment Committee.

NOTE: UWNC maintains collaborative relationships with three types of agencies and organizations: "Funded Partners", those who complete and submit the Partnership/Fund Application may receive an Allocation; "Non-Funded Partners" collaborate actively with UWNC in addressing an identified community issue(s) and must complete the Non-Funded Partner Application; "Affiliate Partners" maintain applications with UWNC but are inactive for the current year.

After the fundraising campaign has been completed, *Partnership/Fund Application* packets are mailed out to all eligible UWNC partner and affiliate agencies. After the due date for applications, the UWNC Finance Committee, the Citizen Review Teams and, as necessary, the Community Investment Committee will review agencies' renewal applications and financial requests and develop funding recommendations. It is the obligation of each CRT member to become knowledgeable about the agencies being reviewed.

From the initial review through the final funding decision, it is imperative that agencies responded to identified community needs, agency success in achieving measurable outcomes and purposes, cost-effectiveness, agency board involvement, agency need, possible duplication of services, and agency management be considered. Strong points as well as those areas needing improvement should be presented and discussed in pertinent, realistic terms. By doing so, a true picture of each agency will be obtained.

The recommendations of the CRT's will be brought forward to Funding Night, at which time CRT leaders report on Team findings by the Team Leader or appropriate representative of each team. This group of Team Leaders, and if necessary members of the Community Investment Committee, is responsible for making recommendations about the allocation amounts of each member agency for the coming year. The result of these individual recommendations of specific dollar amounts by agency will not exceed the total amount of undesignated campaign funds as declared available by the UWNC Board and reported to the Community Investment Committee.

The Community Investment Committee will address agency appeals of proposed agency allocations if the appeal is due to an incomplete application or if pertinent, relevant information was omitted on the Partnership/Fund Application. Appeals must be submitted to the UWNC Board of Director's within fifteen days of the proposed agency allocation. Filing an appeal may delay the Board of Director's ability to make a first quarter allocation. Final recommendations of funding levels are forwarded to the UWNC Board of Directors for review and approval in May at the regularly scheduled Board Meeting. The Board of Directors has the final decision-making authority for all funding decisions and appeals. Each agency's director will receive a letter from the UWNC Executive Director stating the amount of the proposed agency allocation.

United Way of Nevada County reserves the right to suspend or terminate any/all current or future funding based upon any information that is received by the Board, in its sole discretion, that would call into question an agency's ability to fulfill any of the provisions as referenced in the Criteria and Responsibilities for Partners.

Special Funding Requests

The United Way of Nevada County Board of Directors may establish a **Projects Fund** and allocate dollars to projects or programs designed to address this special project. The Board may utilize any recently published community assessment report, news article or relevant community information tool that can be relied upon to provide, useful, relevant community based information in the establishment of its Board initiatives. At the Board's discretion, member agencies may be funded for such program development, or the Board may issue a Request for Proposal (RFP). Member agencies and non-member agencies could be eligible to respond to the RFP. The RFP process would be overseen by the Community Investment Committee according to guidelines adopted by the Board.

Fundamental Principles and Values of the Fund Distribution Process

The fund distribution process is based upon a set of principles and values. They are:

- **All Agencies and Organizations Considered on the Same Bases:** All UWNC funded partners are reviewed using the same criteria. There is only one category of funded partner.
- Recommendations about how the United Way distributes community funds it receives will be made by informed community volunteers who reflect the diversity of the community and are trained for the task.
- Funds will be distributed with fairness and impartiality, with the betterment of the broad community in mind.
- The process will be a cooperative one with partners, one that respects and recognizes that a cooperative system is essential.
- The process will be guided by UWNC Board identification of key community issues.
- Organizations that receive United Way funding will be held accountable in terms of fiscal, management, and program delivery standards. Such standards will be flexible so they can relate to diverse groups or organizations, and a range of funding relationships. The basic purpose is to ensure that distributed funds are used to support the provision of needed quality services.
- A funded partner must have a written policy of non-discrimination as it applies to the delivery of services to clients/customers, to staff, volunteers, board members and the public.
- In general, United Way financial support should not exceed 50% of the recipient's gross revenue.

- Allocated dollars that are used for programs and services by the funded partners must be spent on programs and services within Nevada County.
- Organizations that receive funding will abide by United Way of Nevada County's *Criteria and Responsibilities for Partners*.
- At the joint meeting of the Community Investment Committee and the Citizen Review Team leaders, every effort will be made to avoid a reduction in allocated funds from the previous year.
- The goal for the allocation process is to fund health and human service priority areas linked to issues in the community. Special consideration will be given to programs/services that demonstrate collaboration between service providers.

Agencies that receive United Way of Nevada County funds to provide programs/services shall be accountable to the community through their evaluation and outcomes. If an organization fails to meet UWNC's performance standards, and/or substantiated complaints about the organization are received from its community, the Board of Directors of United Way of Nevada County, Inc. reserves the right to deny the membership, or to withdraw the membership at any time, of any organization whose membership the Board, in its sole discretion, determines to be not in the best interest of United Way of Nevada County. At the direction of the UWNC Board, the Community Investment Committee and/or the Executive Director will notify the organization by letter that its United Way membership has been terminated.

Partnership Overview

Eligibility to receive United Way of Nevada County funding must be reestablished each year. UWNC agencies must renew their partnership agreement each year by returning the *Partnership/Fund Application* to the UWNC office on or before the due date listed on the application package.

Agencies wishing to maintain partnership that do not receive community investment funds will be asked to return a basic financial information for membership-only application known as the Non-Funded Partner Application. This application is reviewed by the Finance Committee.

Community human service agencies may apply for new partnership in the United Way of Nevada County. These agencies must file an *Affiliate Application*. Application forms are available in the United Way office. A review of this information and an agency visit will be conducted, and a recommendation regarding affiliate status will be made to the Board of Directors via the Executive Committee. An affiliate member will be listed as a United Way of Nevada County member but will receive only designated funds until it becomes a full member. A request for transfer to full membership will be considered by the Board of Directors after at least nine months of affiliate status, after approval of the *Partnership/Fund Application* at the start of the allocations process, and after the Board considers the budget impact of adding new member agencies who might receive a share of allocated campaign dollars.

(Special Funding Requests Policy - Adopted Aug.17, 1994)
 (Revised Fund Distribution Policy – March/April, 2004)
(revised and approved Fund Distribution Policy – July 2005)
(revised and approved Fund Distribution Policy – Feb. 2006)
(revised and approved Fund Distribution Policy – Feb. 2009)