



United Way  
of Chester County

211 N. Walnut Street  
West Chester, PA 19380  
610-429-9400

[www.uwconline.org](http://www.uwconline.org)

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## What is the work of the United Way?

United Way of Chester County focuses our work on creating opportunities for a better life for everyone by making strategic investments in education, income, and health. These are the building blocks for a good life and we are working to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place.

## Who directs the work of the United Way?

United Way of Chester County is led by a dedicated local Board of Directors who are supported by a team of professional staff, an army of volunteers and other community partners. All funding decisions are made by community volunteers who serve on Community Investment Teams. Last year, close to 75 Chester County volunteers dedicated more than 2,400 hours evaluating each member agency and its ability to manage community needs, the effectiveness of its programs and its fiscal accountability.

## Why should I give to the United Way?

**LEVERAGE** - Your contribution has more impact when pooled with those of other donors. When you give to United Way, you build support for a Campaign that raises more than \$5 million per year in voluntary giving. United Way is most powerful when we bring communities and funding partners together around a set of issues that can only be addressed collectively.

**NETWORK OF CARE** - Giving to a single agency targets one type of problem. You help a child, but you don't help the parent. Or you find someone a job but you don't help them with day care. United Way funds a network of services so that the needs of the whole family can be met and sustained.

**COMMUNITY INVESTMENT** - United Way provides a safety net for individuals in need and measurable initiatives to tackle the root causes of critical issues. By giving through United Way, donors can make a difference on problems they care about as well as those that fall outside the course of their daily lives. United Way's broader reach touches people whose lives we can only begin to imagine.

**RESULTS** - United Way provides oversight for donors because we understand that most donors do not have the resources to be personally involved with a non-profit agency in order to monitor the use of their charitable gift. United Way staff convenes community leaders to research needs, selects the most effective approaches to dealing with particular problems, identifies agencies best qualified to do the work, and requires demonstrated outcomes from funded agencies.

## Why choose the Community Impact Fund?

Hundreds of United Way volunteers invest your Community Impact Fund contributions in local programs that are designed to make our community stronger and safer, and help people live better lives. Those programs include affordable child care for working parents, emergency response when safety nets have failed, access to affordable quality health services for families, and preventing substance abuse from destroying lives. By giving to the Community Impact Fund, you help to leverage gifts from others that might never be made otherwise, and build philanthropy community-wide.

## Can I give directly to an agency?

It is our priority to fund the entire network of services needed in the community. However, it is possible to direct your gift to an agency or to another United Way. We encourage unrestricted giving to our Community Impact Fund which addresses the most pressing needs right here at home.

## If United Way deducts an administrative charge and the agency then deducts more overhead, doesn't this duplicate overhead costs?

No. United Way's fee just recovers our fundraising costs. The agency may have additional overhead expenses related to their delivery of service but we have saved them the expense of fundraising. Thus there is no duplication.

## How do I know that United Way handles its finances and my money responsibly?

A certified public accounting firm audits United Way of Chester County annually. Results and recommendations are presented to the Board of Directors. Copies of our financial summaries are available by calling 610-429-9400. Our most recent 990 is always available by logging on to [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org).

## What are United Way's administrative fees? How much of the money goes to the community?

Administrative fees are charged against all payments to agencies to recover the cost of United Way fundraising and administration. All nonprofits have fundraising costs and - at approximately 11% - United Way of Chester County's are among the lowest in the business. As a result, nearly 90 cents of every dollar received goes to work in the community.