

**LIVE UNITED**



**United Way of Northwest Illinois, Inc.**

*Serving Jo Daviess, Stephenson, & Carroll Counties*

# RFP Basic Needs

# For Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Board Approved: July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018

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The United Way of Northwest Illinois aspires to be the critical link which brings together our diverse communities to build stronger, healthier and more sustainable communities as cost effectively as possible.

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This Request for Proposal (RFP) describes United Way of Northwest Illinois' (UWNI) grant-making program, in support of short-term Basic Needs. Grant information, eligibility criteria, and the procedures to follow in submitting your application are included. Please review these guidelines carefully.

### **Purpose**

UWNI is seeking Requests for Funding (RFFs) for its Basic Needs Grant Program. These grants will support programs and services that provide temporary and short-term food and shelter, to stabilize those individuals and families faced with barriers in being able to meet their immediate needs due to loss of employment, housing, domestic violence, etc.

UWNI recognizes that when an individual is unable to meet their basic needs, it becomes more difficult to focus on long-term goals such as education, employment or housing. United Way of Northwest Illinois wishes to assist those in need with services and assistance through local agencies and programs to bring back the stability they need to get back on track.

Organizations should not approach this application with the expectation of ongoing annual operating support.

Grants will be awarded for a period of 12 months. The purpose of the Basic Needs Grant Program is to support and sustain strong communities in Stephenson, Jo Daviess and Carroll Counties.

**The Basic Needs Grant program has two focus areas to assist people in meeting emergency and basic needs. The grants are intended to fund intervention-related activities that address short-term client needs (as opposed to the long-term prevention related strategies of Collective Impact in the areas of Education, Health and Financial Stability).**

**Programs seeking grants in the Basic Needs focus areas are required to collaborate with, and refer to, UWNI Community Impact Initiatives where appropriate to help move individuals toward long-term self-sustainability.**

**Shelter:** Short-term housing for people who are: homeless or escaping domestic violence.

**Food:** Support short-term food assistance for people facing economic hardship and/or isolation (homebound), with the goal of moving them to food security. This will include food pantries, meal services, and completing SNAP applications.

The mission of United Way of Northwest Illinois is to mobilize people and resources to strengthen our communities. As an organization, we advance this mission by connecting all segments of the community toward achieving the goal of producing healthy, well educated, and economically stable individuals and families. We accomplish our work through grant making, volunteer engagement, community engagement and public policy and advocacy.

Our strategic plan envisions a thriving, caring region where individuals have opportunities to realize their human potential, are economically self-sufficient, and contribute collectively to improve the quality of life in their communities. We also remain aware of the need to help people of all ages who are struggling to obtain their basic needs when faced with a life altering event.

### **Overview of the Basic Needs Grants Program**

The Basic Needs Grants Program funds emergency and short-term services provided by organizations having an office in and serving the people of Stephenson, Jo Daviess or Carroll counties. The organization's grant-making programs are one of several ways that UWNI provides support for the communities and people in our region.

### **United Way of Northwest Illinois Community Impact**

For UWNI, Community Impact is about improving lives by mobilizing people to create lasting change through increasing educational outcomes for children and youth, assisting families to become economically self-sufficient and improving the health and wellness of our community. In addition to focusing on long-term sustainable change by targeting its work in support of community outcomes in the areas of Education, Financial Stability and Health, UWNI continues to invest in Basic Needs to assist individuals and families facing life changing situations to get back on their feet (stabilization) and on the road to Economic Self-Sufficiency.

**The Basic Needs RFP is focused on meeting needs of people moving toward security and stability.**

#### **All funded partners are required to:**

1. Clearly define how the program aligns with the outcomes identified in this RFP
2. Demonstrate the match between current community needs and the proposed program Services
3. Clearly define pro-active outreach strategies to connect with "hard to reach" populations e.g. senior citizens, veterans, residents in rural communities, and etc.
4. Clearly define how UWNI support will enable the organization to maintain existing programming and state if United Way dollars can be leverage for obtaining other funding sources.
5. Report on at least one unit of service as defined by UWNI
6. Use UWNI funds to maintain, add to or improve services, not to fill gaps in funding left from government cuts or use for debt reduction
7. Participate annually in a United Way workplace fundraising campaign
8. Participate in UWNI social media campaigns to increase public awareness of regional resources

## **Basic Needs Grants Support the Following Services**

### **Shelter**

UWNI funds will be used to fund qualifying organizations that provide direct short-term shelter focused on moving individuals and families who are homeless to shelter within the UWNI covered area or that indirectly through information and referral enhance access to short-term shelter. This may include, but is not limited to, individuals or families who are homeless because of financial hardship, and survivors of domestic violence.

### **Food**

UWNI seeks to reduce food insecurity by supporting programs that indirectly through information and referral enhance access to short-term food assistance or directly assist clients who are in need of food assistance due to economic hardship or isolation (homebound), and move them to food security. This will include food pantries, meal services, and assistance with completing SNAP applications.

### **Units of Service**

Funds through United Way of Northwest Illinois Basic Needs Program are expected to help maintain the amount of people that you currently serve or to provide additional services to people you currently assist. UWNI evaluates your performance by using Units of Service that you will provide as well as the collaborations formed and utilized to move individuals toward stability.

Please select each **Unit of Service** below that you will report on if you receive this grant:

1. # bed nights
2. # meals served
3. # bags of food distributed
4. # of Information and referrals made to secure shelter and food assistance and success of moving referred individuals toward stability and security.

For example:

- “We will use United Way funds to serve approximately 500 meals from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.” The Unit of Service that best fits is 2 “# of meals served.”
- “We received 300 information and referral request for food assistance. 200 of the referrals received the service from a local food pantry and their need was met” The Unit of Service that best fits is 4 “# of information and referrals made to secure shelter and food assistance with the success of moving referred individuals toward stability and security.”

### **Availability of Funding and Eligible Uses**

#### **Grant Amounts**

Grant amounts will be determined based on the availability of funds through our annual fundraising campaign and the impact of the proposed program.

#### **Allowable Uses of Funding**

- A. Direct program-related expenses: Funding requests should represent a reasonable proportion of direct program versus indirect program expenses.
- B. Up to 15% for administrative overhead (Accounting, HR, Utilities, etc...)-UWNI recognizes that administrative overhead is critical for nonprofit organizations to be effective in their work. (For example, a grant proposal for \$25,000 should include no more than \$3,750 for Indirect Expenses and Administrative Overhead).

### **Non-allowable Uses of Funding**

1. Capital projects and/or campaigns
2. Debt reduction and funding gaps
3. Academic research
4. Endowments
5. Scholarships
6. Sectarian or religious purposes
7. To support candidates for public office or promote a partisan cause

### **Deadline and Key Dates**

Grants will be for a 12-month period beginning July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. Funding is dependent on the availability of funds for investment in the community through the annual workplace campaign and other fund development efforts.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for funding, an organization must meet the following criteria:

1. Must have offices and operations based in and serve the residents of Stephenson, Jo Daviess or Carroll County.
2. Must collaborate with for UWNI's Community Impact for initiatives in Education, Financial Stability, or Health. The applying organization must investigate if the program fits into a UWNI CI Initiative and exhaust these avenues prior to applying for Basic Needs dollars.
3. Legally incorporated as a municipality or not-for-profit charitable organization under section 501c (3) of the Internal Revenue code and in good standing pursuant to the requirements of M.G.L. c. 12, s. 8E and 8F; or operating under the fiscal sponsorship of a tax-exempt nonprofit organization in good standing pursuant to the requirements of M.G.L. c. 12, s. 8E and 8F with a Memorandum of Understanding, or equivalent agreement, in full force and effect
4. Is financially stable with no adverse opinions
5. According to the NWIL guidelines for financial reporting, you must submit a current financial audit, an accountant approved financial review, or IRS 990 form from the previous fiscal year. An agency without current financial reports will not be funded
6. Have an uncompensated and actively engaged board of directors; a minimum level of board attendance is required and defined as no less than 65% of regularly scheduled board meetings to meet the required quorum under the organization's by-laws
7. Have an affirmative action policy and does not discriminate based on race, religion, gender, or gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin or disability
8. Comply with all federal and state laws and regulations concerning anti-terrorism activities
9. All reports for other UWNI-funded programs must be up-to-date.

### **How to Apply**

Organizations must apply by going to the online application system and completing the UWNI Request for Funding form. The application is due by 4:00 p.m. February 28, 2021

### **Information Sessions**

Applicants are required to attend at least one of the information sessions offered by the United Way of Northwest Illinois. Dates and locations will be announced.

### **The following criteria will be required for all RFFs:**

1. Alignment with UWNI's Basic Needs focus areas as explained in this RFP
2. Alignment with the applicant's organization mission statement
3. Does not qualify for UWNI's Community Impact funding for initiatives in Education, Financial Stability, or Health
4. A clearly defined target population and the Units of Service.
5. Explain in detail how a grant from UWNI will allow you to:
  - 1) Maintain services or
  - 2) Improve services for the people who are currently receiving services from you
  - 3) Collaborate with or refer to United Way Community Impact Initiatives or other local agencies to help individuals and families obtain/maintain financial stability, health, or education relating to UWNI Collective Impact Initiatives.
6. Documentation of your organization's capacity to deliver your program successfully; this should include pertinent experience and expertise.
7. A financially sound budget that effectively defines both the programmatic and non-programmatic expenses that you want UWNI to fund

### **Proposal Review Process**

UWNI is accountable to its donors, volunteers, and Board of Directors to ensure funds are used wisely, deliver results, and produce maximum impact. To ensure accountability and thorough due diligence in the application review process, UWNI will operate as follows:

1. An application for funding will be submitted in accordance with the criteria outlined in this RFP
2. A Basic Needs Grant Review team composed of field experts, community volunteers, business associates and staffed by UWNI will review and assess RFFs and develop recommendations for funding to the United Way of Northwest Illinois Board of Directors.
3. Final approval by UWNI Board of Directors is expected no later than the first week of the last month of the United Way fiscal year.
4. Each applicant will be notified of its award status by June 30 of each grant year.
5. Due to the extensive community-based nature of the decision making process, all decisions made by the UWNI Board of Directors are final.

### **Post Award Requirements**

Organizations that are awarded a Basic Needs Grant will be expected to comply with the following:

1. Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UWNI that will define the Unit of Service, prior to receiving any funds

2. Report on the agreed upon Unit of Service to UWNI in your six month progress report and the annual final reports. Submit program and financial progress reports on time, as requested, 6 months after the grant award is announced.
3. Meet all required reporting deadlines using our online grants platform.
4. Implement publicity and co-branding with United Way of Northwest Illinois on your materials related to the funded program
5. Display the UWNI trademarked logo within their facilities and on all communications materials pertaining to UWNI -funded programs
6. All program marketing materials are to be submitted to UWNI to ensure accurate branding requirements
7. If there are any changes in program operations that impact the organization's ability to fulfill its requirements under this MOU, organizations are expected to meet with UWNI staff to discuss the situation and develop a plan of action