



United Way of
Benton & Franklin Counties

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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United Way announces “Double Your Dollar” matching funds for COVID-19 relief *Nonprofits providing mental and behavioral health services now eligible to apply for funding*

KENNEWICK, Wash—United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties has launched a “Double Your Dollar” campaign that will match individual donations made to the local [COVID-19 Community Response Fund](#).

A grant from a national foundation will allow United Way to maximize the impact of individual donations through a one-for-one match as well as ensuring that 100% of those donations support local programs.

“This will enable us to fill even more gaps in desperately needed services in our community,” said United Way’s president & CEO LoAnn Ayers. “The generosity of our donors combined with this grant supports local nonprofits who are struggling to meet rising needs.”

Additionally, United Way’s dedicated COVID-19 Community Response Fund, originally established in mid-March to support local nonprofits providing food and childcare during the COVID-19 pandemic, is being expanded to include support for agencies providing mental and behavioral health services.

Within the first two weeks of the fund being active, United Way received 17 proposals requesting \$85,000 to fund local programs, primarily related to food insecurity. As the “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” directive continued, local agencies began to see a rise in the need for other types of services, particularly mental and behavioral health support.

“The pandemic creates tremendous stress, which affects the mental health of so many,” said Ayers. “Stressors including loss of employment, school closures, people using drugs or alcohol as a coping mechanism, fewer ways to escape violence in the home—these are making our community less safe.”

She said Benton and Franklin Counties are seeing an increase in suicide attempts, child neglect and abuse, domestic violence, assault and rape, and human trafficking. “Local nonprofits have changed their outreach to support individuals, victims, and families in new ways. They need support for technology, training, and outreach to implement new methods and serve these needs.”

United Way's COVID-19 Community Response Fund has already awarded nearly \$10,000 to The Salvation Army, Senior Life Resources Meals on Wheels, and the Children's Developmental Center. Grants are awarded on a rolling basis as donations are received.

"Double Your Dollar" now at <https://give.uwbfc.org/givenow>

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About [United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties](#)

United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties strives for a community where all individuals and families achieve their potential through education, financial stability and healthy lives. We partner with local nonprofits, businesses, and government and social service agencies to address our community's greatest needs and build pathways for individuals and families to independence and happiness.