

# FAQS



## **What does United Way Greater Victoria do?**

United Way's mission is to improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action and we do this through our dual role as a year-round fundraiser and impact funder. We aim to address the immediate needs of our most vulnerable citizens today, while also focusing on the future, to address the root causes of social issues and create sustainable change.

As collaborator, facilitator and convener we unite community partners, volunteers, donors, business, labour and government in a common cause.

We are the largest non-government funder in Greater Victoria. In 2015, United Way invested \$4.5 Million across the region. These funds stayed local and supported for over 110 programs which helped 62,000 individuals, 27,000 children and youth, and 8,000 families access a broad network of services. That's a total of 97,000 lives changed.

## **What is United Way Greater Victoria's geographic scope?**

We serve all Southern Vancouver Island - our region is a compilation of 13 municipalities (Central Saanich, Colwood, Esquimalt, Highlands, Langford, Metchosin, North Saanich, Oak Bay, Saanich, Sidney, Sooke Victoria, View Royal), the Juan de Fuca electoral area and the Southern Gulf Islands (Salt Spring Island, Galiano Island, Mayne Island, Saturna Island and North and South Pender Islands) and over 369,000 residents.

## **How much of my donation goes into the community?**

Of every \$1 raised from campaign revenue 75 cents goes directly back to help fund a network of services and programs in our community. 20 cents goes to direct fundraising costs to engage more people in the United Way movement to change lives and build a strong community.

## **How does United Way keep their fundraising costs low?**

- We operate by utilizing volunteers on our fundraising cabinets and committees.
- We partner with companies who provide employees to United Way as loaned representatives to support campaign activities for 16 weeks per year.
- Sponsorships offset our special events.
- We work with many businesses who supply products and services through in-kind partnerships such as printing and advertising.

United Way complies with General Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP) and is annually audited by KPMG. We report to Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) on our overall operations and revenues, following specific requirements on how dollars are rolled up and reported. For those who want further details, our financials along with our Annual Report, are available on our website [uwgv.ca/reports](http://uwgv.ca/reports).

## **Why should I give to United Way when I can give directly to one of your agencies?**

United Way is an expert in knowing where the needs are most immediate for vulnerable people in our community. We keep a pulse on the trends and research affecting the areas of kids, poverty and strong communities. We invest in local solutions and can demonstrate the impact donor dollars are making in Greater Victoria.

People in crisis often require more than one service to get the assistance they need to improve their lives. In order to keep a vital network of social services strong and stable, United Way must support a number of agencies all working together.

**I have heard of CEOs in charitable organizations being highly paid and receiving many extra benefits.**

From time to time misinformation is circulated about the salaries of CEOs at various charities. These are usually either international or American organizations which bear no relationship to United Way Greater Victoria. Full details of our finances, including executive salaries, can be found on the CRA website <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/> under the Charities and Giving tab. Our CEO is compensated at a level that is in line with other organizations in the sector and has no additional benefits or perks beyond standard health care and vacation. All of our salaries are established within the context of the local non-profit environment and similar sized United Ways across the country. Our United Way is a fiscally prudent organization whose goal is to maximize investment in our community.

**Does United Way fund religious or political projects?**

No. We do support some agencies with religious roots, but only those with programs that are open to all community members and do not promote religion to participants. We are a non-partisan organization, and we do not fund political parties or projects.

**How are your investment decisions made?**

Experienced staff and subject matter experts related to our three priority areas make investment decisions based on community needs, research and funding criteria. We invest to minimize duplication among programs and we look for measurable results, quality performance and innovative approaches.

**Why does United Way charge \$12 for processing each donor choice designated gift?**

Donor Directed Giving is a service provided as a convenience to donors who want to consolidate their charitable giving to United Way and other charities. To offset administration costs, United Way charges a very small \$12 cost recovery fee per designation to another charity.

**Is personal information from donors protected?**

Absolutely. We do not share or sell donor information outside the organization.