

## **United Way for Southeastern Michigan – FY 2023-24 Basic Needs Request for Proposals**

The United Way for Southeastern Michigan is opening a highly competitive RFP process to fund eligible 501(c)3 nonprofits engaged in basic needs services that strengthen and expand access to our region's safety net. As part of this grant opportunity – named Safety Net Services last year – applicants will self-select into tiers of funding based on their interest and eligibility. Funding will be capped at \$100,000. In addition, although past performance of current funded partners will be considered, prior awards do not guarantee awards or award amounts in this grant process. The FY 2023-24 Basic Needs investment process is an open call for applications from both potential and existing funded partners of United Way who meet the criteria and funding priorities laid out in the application.

**Applications are due no later than Friday, March 31, 2023, at 5:00 PM**

### **United Way for Southeastern Michigan's Impact Vision**

The United Way for Southeastern Michigan is committed to advancing equitable communities where all households are stable and all children can thrive in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. Every household should have access to systems and services that help them navigate times of crisis. Every family should have a safe home and the resources it needs to support a child's healthy development. Every household should have adequate access to nutritious food, and individuals and families should be able to financially support and sustain themselves. We partner with organizations across the region to work toward this reality.

### **The Safety Net in the Context of ALICE**

We know that our community will be stronger when access to opportunity is a reality for everyone. And yet, too many in our community continue to struggle. This was true prior to the disruptive economic ripple effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic, and it remains urgently true today. The United Way's most recent [ALICE Report](#) (based on data prior to the pandemic) reveals that beyond the 12.9% of households below the federal poverty limit, an additional 26.5% of households in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties are ALICE – Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. Altogether, this represents 39.4% of households in our community who are unable to afford their most basic needs. In many locations and across a variety of demographic categories, the percentage is much higher.

The ALICE report helps us reframe what it looks like to survive or thrive in our region with a more detailed view of household budgets and the cost of living than what the federal poverty guidelines portray. The ALICE survival budget divides monthly household costs into eight categories: Housing, Child Care, Food, Transportation, Health Care, Technology, Taxes and Miscellaneous Expenses. The 39.4% of households in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties that fall below the ALICE threshold are not earning enough income and/or do not have access to benefits to help them pay for these expenses each month. If people can't meet their basic needs, they'll never be able to create stable households. To complicate matters, these expenses continue to rise. The report outlines several emerging trends that we must recognize in our work including rising health inequity, which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the rise in market instability and the evolving composition of American households as our population ages.

### **Investing in a Strong and Connected Safety Net that Promotes Stability and Health**

Connecting those who are most at risk to the supports they need is evolving and complex. Southeastern Michigan has a myriad of community assets, including a robust collection of safety net and social service providers backed by the 2-1-1 Call Center and Resource Database providing a gateway to information and referrals across our region. Since United Way commissioned a comprehensive safety net study in 2011, much progress has been made to strengthen this system of supportive programs and services. Of note, Michigan's implementation of the *MI Bridges* web-based platform helps eligible individuals connect to multiple benefits including healthcare coverage, food assistance, cash assistance, state emergency relief and child development and care through one integrated system while receiving community-based program support from agencies that they trust. This work has made it possible for more households in Southeastern Michigan to receive the resources they need. United Way recognizes and celebrates this progress and the partnerships that have helped make positive changes but also recognizes the call to action the ALICE report presents.

Our social safety net is not sufficiently meeting the full needs of our community and is often not available to many in the ALICE population. Inadequate program resources and limiting benefit eligibility locks too many households out of assistance that they clearly need. Inadequate access to aggregate data for community planning keeps us in a reactive rather than proactive state. We must also do

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more to integrate clinical health and social care as we continue to recognize that the emerging trend of health inequity is driven, in large part by social determinants of health<sup>1</sup>. We are committed to building a safety net with resources for all who are struggling and one that transforms to meet the challenges of the day at the scale at which they exist. These investments in Basic Needs services are another step in this journey. Our destination is a transformed safety-net ecosystem that is more equitable, more person-centered, more collaborative, and increasingly bolstered by data to better identify and match resources to community member needs, connect agencies with one another to share information about clients and services, and support community planning to analyze trends that can help us build equitable solutions together.

## Identifying Strategic Partners Through Basic Needs Investments

Attaining our vision of a strong and connected safety net that promotes stability and health requires a strong network of partner organizations committed to transformation and new collaborations. United Way is seeking organizations that share our vision for the future of our safety net, demonstrate an ability to leverage resources to expand access, and work each day to help people throughout our region get out of crisis — and stay out. This year, we are opening the call for applications for Basic Needs investments to both potential and existing partners. Investment decisions will be made based on a variety of criteria, including but not limited to the scoring rubric, geographic scope, gaps in services and client population, all of which are designed to identify organizations that have the capability to create the most impact both individually and collectively for our region.

Organizations are invited to apply for funding in one of three tiers ranging from \$20,000 to \$100,000. Funding request and tier selection must consider all funding criteria listed below including item #7 on financial stability.

### **Tier 1: Operational Grant - \$20,000**

- Tier 1 awards are designed to support organizations that are seeking funds to maintain current base operations OR the applicant is a **NEW** partner. Note: **NEW** partners are defined as not having been awarded a Basic Needs/Safety Net Services grant in the past 3 funding cycles beginning in 2020.

### **Tier 2: Enhanced Operational Grant - \$20,001 - \$60,000**

- Tier 2 awards are designed to support existing or recent partners that are seeking funds to maintain or enhance current operations and/or those who are expanding or implementing new services to meet growing demand or reach more people.

### **Tier 3: Community Grant - \$60,001 - \$100,000**

- Tier 3 awards are reserved for larger organizations that demonstrate scope and scale, those with a wider geographic reach, and/or those that function as a multi-domain partner. Organizations applying for this award type are strongly encouraged to have an annual operating budget of at least \$3M, recorded in the most recently approved organizational budget.

Funding criteria includes (but is not limited to):

1. **Organizations that demonstrate their services are provided within the following domains and that drive down household expenses and employ best practices to meet the needs of those they serve within these specific ALICE survival budget categories and activities:**
  - **Food Services including:** Emergency food as a food aggregator, pantry, or community kitchen, SNAP Application Assistance, or food vouchers and/or subsidies.
  - **Healthcare Services including:** Behavioral health and/or substance abuse services, medical services, screening, and referral from healthcare services to social services, and/or providing screening and referral from social services to healthcare services. Providing affordable prescription drugs and/or healthcare navigation services.
  - **Housing Services including:** Homeless support services including emergency shelter, transitional, and/or permanent supportive housing services; utility assistance; housing relocation services; housing stability services; and eviction and/or foreclosure prevention services (legal aid, rent/mortgage assistance, etc.).
  - Prospective partners will also be able to select a multiple domain category to describe services provided in more than one domain.

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2. **Organizations that serve people living in municipalities with higher-than-average concentrations of ALICE households:**  
There are 40 municipalities within Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb Counties where the number of households that fall below the ALICE threshold is greater than 40%. We are interested in funding organizations whose services are targeting these communities. These municipalities are also listed within the application and include:

Wayne		Oakland	Macomb
Belleville	Lincoln Park	Hazel Park	Center Line
Dearborn	Melvindale	Holly Township	Clinton Township
Dearborn Heights	Redford Township	Keego Harbor	Eastpointe
Detroit	River Rouge	Madison Heights	Memphis
Ecorse	Romulus	Oak Park	Mount Clemens
Flat Rock	Southgate	Pontiac	Roseville
Garden City	Taylor	Royal Oak Township	Utica
Hamtramck	Van Buren Township	Southfield	Warren
Harper Woods	Wayne	Walled Lake	
Highland Park	Westland	Wixom	
Inkster	Wyandotte		

3. **Organizations that demonstrate an ability to leverage dollars through large federal and state programs and other sources of funding.** Organizations that demonstrate an ability to draw both private and public investments to the region with capacity to leverage dollars within the safety net.
4. **Organizations that are working to connect their role in the safety net to other organizations through collaboration and leveraging of community assets, like 2-1-1.** When people are connected to the organization’s services, they also receive referrals to services outside of the organization and the organization also receives referrals from other providers. Organizations are tracking these referrals and outcomes.
5. **Organizations that have data and evaluation capabilities.** Organizations that assess their programs and collect and analyze data to make strategic decisions.
6. **Organizations that place an emphasis on equity in decision making and service delivery.** Organizations that are working to increase access and decrease inequalities, biases, and gaps in the safety net delivery of services. Organizations prioritize using lived experience and community voice in decision-making and program development.
7. **Organizations that are in a stable financial position.**  
An organization’s prior fiscal year revenue and/or operating budget may be considered in the award determination. Generally, the requested amount should not exceed 15% of the prior year’s revenue or current operating budget.
8. **Organizations that are 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations.**  
An organization must be in good standing with the State of Michigan and the Internal Revenue Service and will be required to upload a copy of their IRS designation letter, 990 form, W-9, and financial statements. Organizations may apply via a fiduciary if applicable.

Questions will be answered during a webinar to take place on Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 10:30 AM.  
Please click [HERE](#) to register.

**Applications are due no later than Friday, March 31, 2023, at 5:00 PM**

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## Grant Timeline

Activity	Date	
Application Opens	Monday, March 13, 2023 – 8 AM	
Grant Webinar	Thursday, March 16, 2023 – 10:30 AM	Please register here for webinar: <a href="#">Meeting Registration - Zoom</a>
Application Closes	Friday, March 31, 2023 – 5 PM	
Funding Determination Notifications	Monday, June 12, 2023	

## How to Apply and Grant Resources

All applications will be completed and submitted through United Way's online, grants management platform SurveyMonkey Apply.

- [Basic Needs RFP Application Questions](#)
- [Basic Needs Scoring Rubric](#)
- [Organization and Financial Information Questions](#)
- [SurveyMonkey Apply Manual](#)

### Grant Website:

- [https://apply.unitedwaysem.org/prog/fy\\_2023-24\\_basic\\_needs](https://apply.unitedwaysem.org/prog/fy_2023-24_basic_needs)

## United Way for Southeastern Michigan Contact Information

- For questions on the Basic Needs grant, please contact:
  - Emily Mueller – Director, Basic Needs
    - [safetynet@unitedwaysem.org](mailto:safetynet@unitedwaysem.org)
- For questions on navigating SurveyMonkey Apply, please contact:
  - SurveyMonkey Inbox
    - [sma@unitedwaysem.org](mailto:sma@unitedwaysem.org)

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<sup>1</sup> Hood, CM, Gennuso, KP, Swain, GR, & Catlin, BB. (2015). County health rankings: Relationships between determinant factors and health outcomes. American Journal of Preventative Medicine.