

RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Thanks to the contributions from donors, volunteers, and incredible partnerships we have across the community, United Way of Central Iowa has been able to nimbly and decisively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic – creating resources to address new and urgent needs. Living UNITED means helping all central Iowans, especially the most vulnerable, as we navigate the COVID-19 pandemic together.



DISASTER RECOVERY FUND

United Way of Central Iowa, the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, and several other organizations established the Greater Des Moines Disaster Recovery Fund (DRF). The DRF gives donors the reassurance their funds will be responsibly invested to meet the community's most urgent needs. United Way committed \$100,000 upon activation.



VOLUNTEERING

United Way of Central Iowa rallied local organizations to centralize volunteer opportunities in a special COVID-19 section of our Get Connected volunteer portal, allowing them to post their most urgent in-person or virtual volunteer and donation needs.

NONPROFIT RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

United Way of Central Iowa collaborated with community partners to establish resources and support for the central Iowa nonprofit community. Through the generosity of We Write Code, an Iowa based custom software development company, we were able to launch the following:



COVID-19 Nonprofit Update Portal streamlines collecting services and program updates from central Iowa nonprofits, along with challenges they are facing as a result of COVID-19.



211Updates.org provides a new platform for nonprofits statewide to share service changes as often as necessary, ensuring 211 provides real-time accurate information to individuals seeking assistance.



COVID-19 Related Challenges Survey provides a means for nonprofit leaders to share directly with community leaders how the pandemic is creating operating and programming challenges.

COMMUNITY CIRCLE CONVERSATIONS

We host a weekly virtual conversation with regional nonprofits in partnership with the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, Mid-Iowa Health Foundation, Polk County Housing Trust Fund, Bravo Greater Des Moines, and additional members of the Central Iowa Funders Forum.

Conversations allow nonprofits to explore collaboration, share resources, and connect during this challenging time.

Our community is at its best when we leverage strengths and partner for the greater good.

211 IOWA: THE STATEWIDE COVID-19 HOTLINE

United Way of Central Iowa operates 211 in 57 Iowa counties. The free helpline is available 24/7 and connects Iowans to essential services including food, shelter, and more. Early in March, the Iowa Department of Public Health enlisted 211 as the statewide hotline for general information about the COVID-19 pandemic.



Get Connected • Get Help™



Within 12 hours of starting as the COVID-19 hotline, 211 was able to upscale staff and equipment to take on this enormous task.

33,313

total calls statewide in

**March
2020**

VS

10,841

total calls statewide in

**March
2019**

211 Representatives are answering questions and calming fears related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In partnership with Polk County Health Systems, we added a **phone bank of healthcare professionals** to answer questions about symptoms, diagnosis, and testing for COVID-19 – taking an enormous pressure off our community doctors' offices and clinic phone lines.



Mental health professionals are now available, helping Iowans cope with the stress and fear associated with the pandemic.

As always, 211 connects Iowans to the essential resources they need now more than ever at a time when these resources are more difficult to access due to closures and increased need.

MEETING THE NEW NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY

Navigating the landscape of public and nonprofit assistance can be challenging. For many, the financial and emotional strife caused by the COVID-19 pandemic represents their first time needing support from human services such as food banks, rent assistance, and more.

Our 211 operators deliver accurate information with empathy and patience. Callers truly appreciate the opportunity to speak directly with a local expert willing to do whatever they can to help.

211 is here for all Iowans, not just our community's most vulnerable.

211 is **free, accurate, confidential**, and available 24/7.

Learn more at **211Iowa.org**