

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## What is United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore, and how is it different from United Way Worldwide?

UWLES is an independent, local, 501(c)3 non-profit organization, established in 1944. Our independence allows us to focus our efforts on the needs of the counties we serve (Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester) to strengthen Health, Education and Financial Stability for all neighbors. We are a member of the United Way Worldwide network, which provides cost saving services, support, advertising and brand recognition.

## Who is the United Way's team comprised of?

UWLES is governed by a local volunteer Board of Directors who represent all communities served on the Eastern Shore. **Meet the 2023-2024 Board of Directors at [www.uwles.org/team](http://www.uwles.org/team)**

Day to day activities such as optimizing stewardship of all donations, managing direct programs & collaborations, volunteer activities, supporting agency partners, processing campaigns and planning special events are handled by a small professional staff located in the Salisbury office.

**Meet the UWLES Staff at [www.uwles.org/team](http://www.uwles.org/team)**

## Where does my contribution go?

- Community Impact Funding: gifts are allocated to local programs through approved partner agencies and support UWLES' direct programs and community initiatives.
- Annual contributions may be designated to an approved local United Way Agency Partner or Direct Program (\$50 minimum gift per designation).
- A benefit of being a member of United Way Worldwide is that we have a reciprocal program, allowing our donors to contribute to any other United Way, and allowing those not living locally to donate to us.

## How does United Way decide how much to distribute to each agency?

UWLES has a Community Impact Committee comprised of local volunteers who invest over 1,100 hours annually to visit and analyze each application including budgets, programs, outcomes and efficiency in meeting local needs. Funds are approved by the Board of Directors based on annual campaign fundraising and are distributed monthly to approved partner agency programs.

## What is United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore's administrative rate?

United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore's administrative rate is 22% which is below the 25% standard to which we hold our non-profit partners, as well as the national average of 35%. For a copy of our annual 990, visit our website or our Guidestar page where UWLES maintains a Platinum Seal of Transparency.

## What about the pressure to give?

UWLES does not condone pressuring anyone to give. The decision to give is a personal one and no one should ever be pressured or coerced into giving. See our volunteer giving policy on page 12.

## How can I be involved beyond my Workplace Campaign?

There are many ways to stay engaged with UWLES all year long. We offer Affinity Groups such as Emerging Leaders, Women United, and volunteer opportunities which can be found through the Get Connected Volunteer Center at [www.shoregetconnected.org](http://www.shoregetconnected.org). Additionally, retirement and planned giving options are available. Also, there are a number of special events throughout the year which are great opportunities to learn more about United Way's work while having fun. And don't forget to engage with us on social media!

## What if I have additional questions?

UWLES staff are happy to help with any questions you may have. For additional information call the office at 410-742-5143 or visit our website at [www.uwles.org](http://www.uwles.org).