

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

United Way is working with its labor partners and nonprofit agencies to assist those affected by the shifting federal policy landscape and address vital needs.

Q: I'm a federal worker; what kind of services are available in the southwestern Pennsylvania region?

United Way works with community partners to address needs and provide assistance with utilities, rent, mortgage payments, food and other necessities like diapers, health care, dental care, child care and much more. During a crisis, the services provided may change as new resources become available.

To find out what services are available at a particular time, check with your local 211 resource contact center, by visiting <https://southwest.pa211.org/>. You can also dial 211 from any phone or text your zip code to 898-211 to be connected to a resource navigator. 211 is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Contacts to 211 are free and confidential. Resource navigators are also available via web chat on the PA 211 Southwest website: <https://southwest.pa211.org/>. By contacting 211, you can get connected to resources for food, essential personal care items such as diapers and period products, rental assistance, child care and much more.

In addition, some businesses may provide grace periods on loans, mortgages, telephone and utility bills, car payments, transportation relief and more. Ask your creditors if they offer these grace periods.

Q: How do I access services?

The best way to access services is to dial 211 on any phone, which will put you in touch with someone who can assist. You can also text your zip code to 899-211, or search resources and chat directly with navigators on the 211 website, <https://southwest.pa211.org/>. When you contact 211, you will be connected to a resource navigator who will listen to your need(s) and provide referrals to resources in your community. Please know that 211 does not provide direct financial assistance or help. You will be provided with resource referral information to help you locate support in your community. *Please let that person know you are a government employee or contractor, so they can refer you to the right resources.*

Q: What can I expect when I contact 211?

- Resource navigators will ask you where you live to help locate resources in your community if available. They may also ask additional questions including about your age and military status to identify resources you may be eligible for closest to you.
- The navigator will also tell you what documentation you will need to get assistance.
- It's a good idea to have pen and paper nearby to write down the agency contact information.

Q. How long does it take to get assistance? If I call today, will I get help today?

It depends on your needs and what the organizations have available. In most cases, food pantries have food available daily.

Q: What if I need to access services in a language other than English?

211 has the capacity to communicate in a variety of languages. If the organization that 211 refers you to does not have language capacity, please call 211 again to see if there is another organization in your community that speaks your language.

Q: What if I call an organization and they don't call me back?

Most organizations will inform you of when you can expect a return call. If you do not receive a callback within that time frame, call again or dial 211 to find additional resources.

New resources are becoming available daily, so it may be helpful to call again.

Q: What documentation do I need to be eligible for services?

If you are seeking assistance with rent, utilities, etc. you will need to provide a copy of the bill proving your need. Always ask the organization ahead of time what documentation you need before your visit.

In addition, there may be assistance available from local charities that United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania is funding. The services available from these organizations change daily, so it is best to check with each organization directly.

To access a list of nonprofit websites, open your smartphone's camera app and point it at the QR code. Tap on the QR code to access the webpage.

