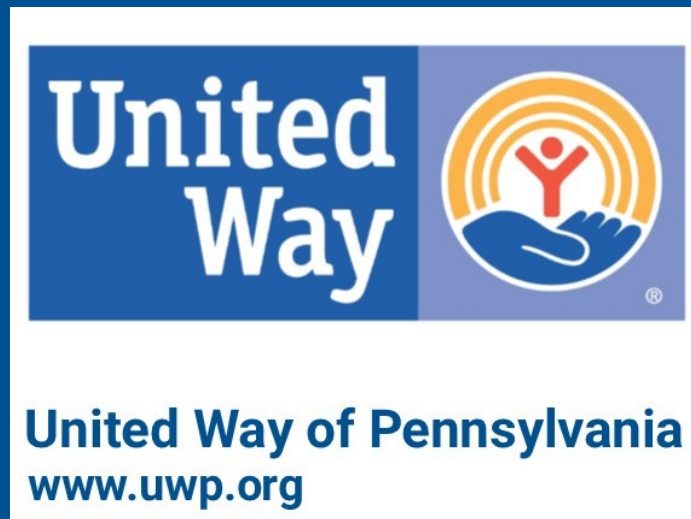


UNITED WAY OF PENNSYLVANIA

2019-2020 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA





GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

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LIFE UNLIMITED

**WE FIGHT FOR THE HEALTH,
EDUCATION AND FINANCIAL
STABILITY OF EVERY PERSON
IN EVERY COMMUNITY.**

United Way of Pennsylvania's

2019-2020

Public Policy Agenda

This public policy agenda represents all current public policy positions of the United Way of Pennsylvania. This agenda is UWP's platform for issue advocacy at the state level. In addition, UWP will engage in federal level advocacy consistent with the United Way Worldwide public policy agenda.

The UWP public policy committee, comprised of representatives of local United Way staff, strategic partners and United Way volunteers around the state, is responsible for adopting positions for the organization and recommending priorities to the Board of Directors. UWP adopts priorities for each two-year legislative session.



EDUCATION

HELPING CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS

EDUCATION: HELPING CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS

UWP Goals:

- Increase school readiness
- Ensure students read at grade level by third grade
- Success in middle grades and on-time high school graduation
- Encourage overall educational experience which prepares young adults to obtain employment in today's economy
- Increase accessibility to high-quality, affordable child care

UWP Supports:

- Ensuring all children have access to consistent, high quality, and affordable early learning and all families are trained on parenting skills and child development.
- Promoting research-based parent and community engagement programs to reduce non-academic barriers to learning throughout the school years.
- Ensuring all children have access to high-quality and affordable child care options that aid in early learning development.
- Employing targeted interventions and early warning indicators in order to identify truant students and students at risk of dropping out and provide those students with tailored school, family and community supports to complete high school.
- Increasing opportunities for education re-entry for disconnected youth who have discontinued their education, including support for interagency dropout recovery systems.
- Encouraging public-private partnerships to support education, including the PA Education Improvement Tax Credits, the arts, and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs.
- Incentivizing the recruitment and retention of high quality educational and pupil support personnel, particularly in schools with the greatest need.
- Enhancing out-of-school time programs that improve academic, social and workforce development skills in all off-school time hours, including nights, weekends and summers.
- Credentialing, training and compensation programs for early childhood educators which are aligned with standards and benchmarks to assure all children in Pennsylvania have access to high quality early learning opportunities.
- Incentives for aligning school activities with Pennsylvania's projected work force needs in order to prepare Pennsylvania's kids for high-demand, family sustaining jobs.



INCOME

PROMOTING FINANCIAL STABILTY

INCOME: PROMOTING FINANCIAL STABILITY

UWP Goals:

- Family-sustaining employment
- Access to income supports for those who need it
- Address affordability of housing
- Grow savings and assets

UWP Supports:

- Encouraging policies and investments that support sector-based workforce partnerships which identify promising growth sectors in Pennsylvania, and align education, training and workforce development programs to support these sectors.
- Inclusive employment policies, laws and regulations which prevent discrimination in the workplace based on race, sex, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, age and life experience, nationality and language, ancestry, veteran status, actual or perceived disability, mental or physical disability, genetic information, familial status, marital status or the reasonable use of guide or support animals and/or mechanical aids.
- Income support policies which supplement lower-wage earners' income while removing barriers that diminish families' progress toward financial stability. Specifically, United Way of Pennsylvania will support state and federal policies to preserve and improve:
 - The Federal Earned Income Tax Credit
 - Emergency Food and Shelter Program
 - Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA)
 - Child Tax Credit (CTC)
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - Subsidized child care
- A careful phasing out of benefits as incomes rise to allow families to build long-term financial stability.
- Policies and initiatives that aim to improve Pennsylvania's affordable housing options in rural and urban areas for media and low-income individuals and families, along with veterans, seniors and the disabled.
- Expanding availability of financial literacy programs to help create long-term family financial sustainability, especially for those receiving public benefits.
- Personal income tax policy which increases financial stability for low to moderate income families.
- Maintaining Pennsylvania's strong laws, which prohibit predatory lenders from taking advantage of individuals with limited to no income.



HEALTH

IMPROVING PEOPLE'S HEALTH

HEALTH: IMPROVING PEOPLE'S HEALTH

UWP Goals:

- Improve access to healthcare
- Promote personal responsibility for achieving a healthy lifestyle, with a strong prevention foundation

UWP Supports:

- Expanding access to vital and affordable health care programs including Medicaid and CHIP which provide all essential health benefits including behavioral health services.
- Assuring that payment policies and quality measures support the development of a viable provider network to meet the demands of increased access.
- Lowering infant mortality rates by improving health care access and quality for high-risk pregnant women, mothers and newborns in at-risk communities, including racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse communities.
- Combatting preventable chronic diseases through the promotion of strategies that support wellness and healthy lifestyles.
- Improving access to affordable healthy food and beverages and creating opportunities for physical activity programs in schools and neighborhoods to reduce childhood obesity.
- Ensuring older adults have access to home and community-based supports in order to maximize their choice to age in place.



COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING

BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY TO ADVANCE
THE COMMON GOOD

COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING: BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY TO ADVANCE THE COMMON GOOD

UWP Goals:

- Enhance the non-profit sector's capacity to serve
- Encourage philanthropy, volunteering, and innovation

UWP Supports:

- Maintaining and growing a statewide 2-1-1 system to serve as the central source of information and referral for health and human services, and to coordinate health and human service needs resulting from emergencies or natural disasters with state and local emergency management agencies.
- Fair and adequate funding for human services.
- Amendments to state law which protect Pennsylvania's service recipients and service providers by assuring that federal dollars allocated to the Commonwealth, and state dollars for essential services that directly impact the health and safety of Pennsylvanians, continue to be paid during a budget impasse. We also support changes to the state budget process which will decrease the likelihood of future budget impasses.
- Fair, efficient, and transparent contracting practices between service providers and government funders.
- Efforts to reduce unnecessary state administrative burdens on human service providers and their programs.
- Creating and preserving charitable giving incentives in the state tax code and federal law.
- Protecting the purely public charities exemption from property taxes.
- Preserving the ability of the nonprofit sector to garner revenue through payroll deduction.
- Policies that encourage philanthropy and volunteerism in Pennsylvania to advance the common good.

UNITED WAY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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