



LIFTING UP OUR COMMUNITIES

2025-26 Public Policy Roadmap

20 Erford Rd., Suite 215, Lemoyne, PA 17043 • 717.238.7365 tel • 717.238.7414 fax • www.uwp.org



UNITED WAY
Pennsylvania



Get Connected. Get Help.™



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A FOREWORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

From strengthening local resilience to advancing health, youth opportunity, and financial security, United Way is mobilizing communities to action so all can thrive. This begins with identifying our communities' needs and convening business, government, and nonprofit partners to find responsive and scalable solutions that are practical and sustainable.

Each day, individuals throughout Pennsylvania go to work and still struggle to access basic necessities for themselves and their families. Referred to as **Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE)**, these households often have no safety net and are living paycheck-to-paycheck. In Pennsylvania, ALICE represents nearly 1.5 million (28%) working households that cannot afford housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, a basic smartphone plan and broadband access. Despite facing these financial challenges, ALICE often does not qualify for public assistance and is one emergency away from financial disaster.

ALICE is in every Pennsylvania community, working in essential jobs across a variety of sectors including child care, home healthcare, retail, restaurant/hospitality, and more. When combined with Pennsylvania households who live in poverty, over 2.1 million families are living below the ALICE Threshold, which is a staggering 41% of Pennsylvania's population. Our friends, family members, co-workers, and neighbors are faced with a variety of financial challenges that some of us may take for granted.

United Way mobilizes communities to action so all can thrive. We utilize the ALICE Survival Threshold as a roadmap to support our Pennsylvania communities. For a full description of the ALICE Project, visit <http://www.uwp.org/alice>. Together, we can address challenges at every level, from training parents for careers that support their families to advancing policies that boost our entire economy.

On behalf of United Way of Pennsylvania's 42-member United Ways, and one United Fund, and our Board of Directors, I am pleased to share with you United Way of Pennsylvania's 2025-26 Public Policy Roadmap.

Sincerely,

Kristen Rotz

FINANCIAL SECURITY

Creating a stronger financial future for every generation

ENACTING THE WORKING PENNSYLVANIANS TAX CREDIT

United Way Supports

- Enactment of a refundable Working Pennsylvanians Tax Credit of at least 25% of the value of the federal EITC.
- Extending the Child Tax Credit to provide additional tax relief to households with children, and federal Earned Income Tax Credit to provide more tax relief to working adults without children.

ADDRESSING HOUSING NEEDS ACROSS PENNSYLVANIA

United Way Supports

- Federal and state investments in the development and rehabilitation of affordable housing units through public-private partnerships.
- Initiatives aimed at increasing rental assistance programs and reducing energy costs for ALICE households.
- Local government implementation of zoning changes that support the development of innovative housing and streamline the permitting process for affordable housing projects.
- The enforcement of fair housing laws and educational initiatives to combat discrimination, ensuring equitable access to housing for all individuals.
- Enhancement of emergency shelter services and transitional housing programs that provide stable pathways to housing.

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCIAL RESILIENCY

United Way Supports

- Job training and career development, and workforce retention policies such as Employer Resource Networks (ERN).
- Workforce development initiatives that help more of Pennsylvania's population achieve jobs that provide family- sustaining wages and lift them to a level of financial sustainability.
- Investments in workforce development, job training and skill-building to ensure workers have skills necessary to access and succeed in good jobs that businesses need to fill.
- Amendments to state law which protect Pennsylvania's service recipients and service providers by ensuring 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.
- Fair and adequate funding for human services.

ENABLING FULL WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION THROUGH ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY, AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

- Investment of state dollars in recruitment and retention of the child care workforce.
- New programs that help reduce the cost of child care for households transitioning off of child care subsidies.
- Changes to the existing copayment schedule for subsidy that smooth the benefits cliff and improve opportunities for financial security
- Implementation of cost-of-care models for subsidy reimbursement that allow providers to pay living wages to the workforce.

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COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

Addressing urgent needs today for a better tomorrow

FUNDING PA 211 TO IMPROVE ACCESS

United Way Supports

- Increased investment of state funds to continue a public-private partnership, strengthen PA 211, and ensure consistent experience for every user in the state.
- Exploring ways to increase the efficiency of state and local governments by contracting to provide services currently offered through government- operated information phone hotlines.
- Leveraging PA 211's community data to help Pennsylvania address social determinants of health and build resource coordination platforms.
- Providing data for workforce development and health and human service planning at the state and local level.
- Partnering with state and local government entities to save taxpayer dollars by connecting Pennsylvanians to the right services.

DIGITAL EQUITY

United Way Supports

- Continued investment and education in broadband and digital technology to build out broadband infrastructure that prioritizes Pennsylvania's unserved and under-served communities.
- Digital literacy and education that emphasizes the proper and effective use of digital technology for personal enrichment.

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AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION

United Way Supports

- Policies, programs, and infrastructure investments that remove transportation barriers for low-income individuals and families.

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY

Helping young people realize their full potential

HIGH-QUALITY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

United Way Supports

- Consistent access to high quality and affordable early learning for all children through increased funding for Pre-K and Head Start programs with investments targeted to at-risk kids.
- Increased funding for Child Care Services to continue to provide reliable, high quality and affordable child care.
- Workforce development initiatives that include opportunities for child care workers, both in Pre-K and high-quality child care settings to further their training and career.
- Increased state and federal funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant to support the healthy development and school readiness needs of children.
- Creation of a forum for out of school time program funders, providers, schools, and policy makers to identify stable sources of funding, evaluate quality program standards, and foster partnerships.
- Aligning out of school activities with Pennsylvania's projected work force needs to prepare Pennsylvania's children for high-demand, family sustaining jobs.

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HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Improving health and well-being for all

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

United Way Supports

- Ensuring all children have access to health care by building on the successes of Medicaid and CHIP.
- Increased public sector funding for Medicaid and CHIP and targeted investments for at-risk families.
- Leveraging PA 211's community data to help Pennsylvania address social determinants of health and build resource coordination platforms.
- Providing data for workforce development and health and human service planning at the state and local level.
- Partnering with state and local government entities to save taxpayer dollars by connecting Pennsylvanians to the right services.

FOOD INSECURITY AND NUTRITION PROGRAMS

United Way Supports

- Protecting, strengthening, and increasing access to SNAP and WIC and enhancing benefits to keep up with rising costs.

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ABOUT UNITED WAY OF PENNSYLVANIA

United Way of Pennsylvania is a 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to champion United Way as a leader and partner in building financially resilient families and thriving communities throughout Pennsylvania. United Way mobilizes communities to action so all can thrive.

True to our founding spirit, whenever there is a need in our communities, United Way is there. We bring a comprehensive approach to every challenge, actively listening and responding to local needs. Our reach across tens of thousands of communities means we can share innovations and scale impact to improve lives around the world.

From strengthening local resilience to advancing health, youth opportunity, and financial security, we're working towards a future where every person in every community can reach their full potential. Additionally, United Way commits to advocate for policy change which will help more Pennsylvania families and communities achieve the basic building blocks of a good quality of life in Pennsylvania. United Way of Pennsylvania is a membership organization which serves as the voice for 42-member United Ways and 1 United Fund across the Commonwealth.

For more information about United Way of PA's priorities, please contact:

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