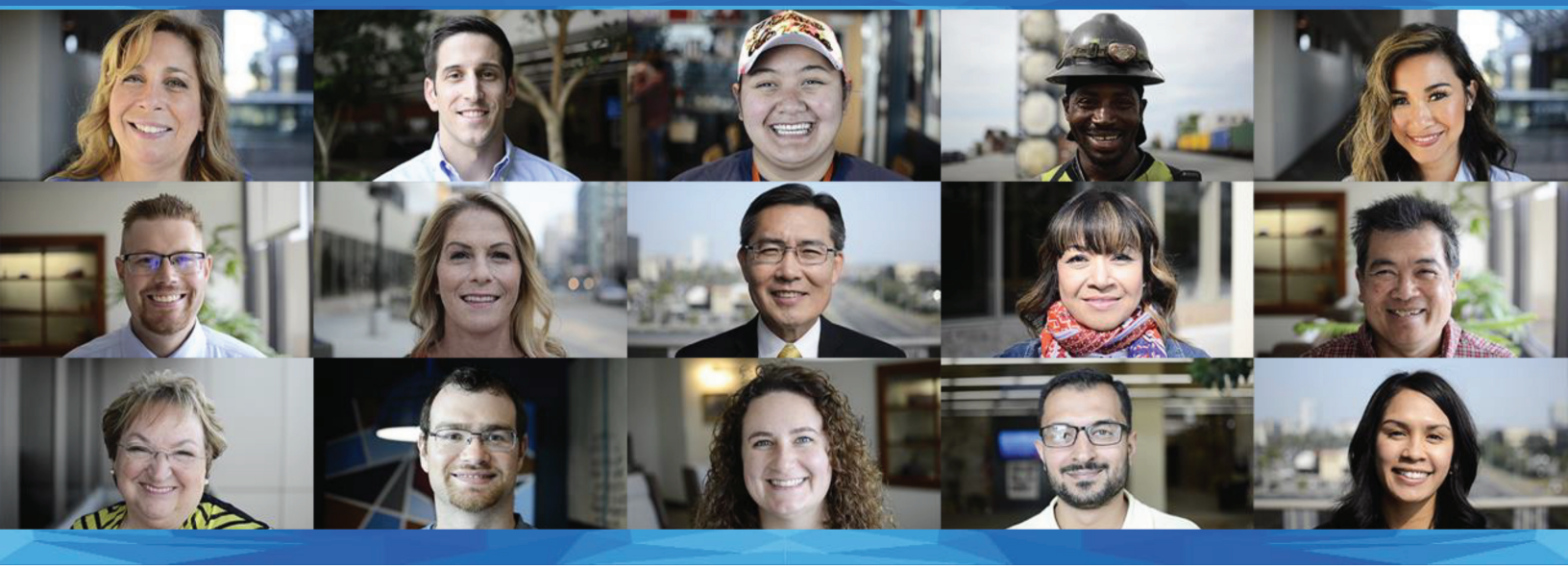
RUNNING A VIRTUAL CAMPAIGN KICKOFF

United Way of Anchorage



As you begin your United Way workplace campaign, a virtual kickoff has many benefits.

- **Ready, Set, Go!** A virtual kickoff clearly marks the start of your United Way effort creating a sense of urgency and a timeline for colleagues. Campaigns with kickoff events have proven to raise more dollars in support of our community!
- **Inspiration.** The kickoff provides employees with an opportunity to hear about the impact of their donations and be inspired, so they can make an informed decision about giving.
- **Team Building.** This is a great chance to bring employees together in a common cause of caring and build morale, which is especially important in a time of social distancing.
- **Stage Setting.** It demonstrates the passion your organization, your senior management team and your colleagues have for the campaign and supporting our community.

Your United Way rep is here to support you and can help you plan and customize your kickoff event. We have created tools and resources to support you in hosting your kickoff virtually.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Key Considerations and Planning

*Helpful Hint: Reference our **Virtual Fun-Raising Ideas** flyer at our website for ideas to make your kickoff and campaign more engaging.*

1. **Technology Platform**
   Confirm the online web conferencing platform that is approved by your workplace and learn about the platform's functionality, so that your United Way rep can help you build your kickoff agenda and activites and the platform. If you cannot host your kickoff on your own technology platform, speak to your United Way rep.

2. **Senior Management Support**
   Support from your Executives is critical to showing your organization is behind the campaign. Book their time so they can participate in your virtual kickoff or see if there may be existing meetings you can piggyback on. See Appendix B for suggested talking points and presentation content that your senior management team can personalize.

3. **Consider your Audience**
   For best results, we recommend a kickoff event is scheduled for no longer than 30 minutes. If your employee base is large, you may consider hosting a series of kickoffs (e.g. by department) throughout the day, or across a few days. While there is no ideal, you want to strike a balance between being able to reach all your employees, and helping people be comfortable enough to ask questions and interact.

4. **Determine the Meeting Host and Other Company Speakers**
   It is best if the Employee Campaign Chair (ECC) acts as facilitator to ensure your kickoff sticks to the agenda. If the ECC needs support, your United Way rep can act as a co-host. Invite your CEO or other executive(s) to take part and speak, too, as their leadership can inspire others and demonstrate support of United Way from the top down.

5. **Make it Interactive**
   Engage your colleagues during the kickoff. Consider interactive activities like online polls or quizzes to keep their attention online. Your United Way rep can help you build this activity.

6. **Raise Awareness about Impact**
   United Way has speakers that can join your virtual meeting and online awareness activities like our online poverty simulation **Walk In My Shoes**, online tours, and campaign videos can help share the impact of donations and inspire people to give. Your United Way rep can help you select the best awareness-building activities for your agenda.

7. **Set Clear Action Steps**
   Let people know how they can donate and/or how they can get involved in the campaign. We recommend sending your donation link immediately following your kickoff event, so people can take action while they're feeling inspired.

Need a United Way Speaker for your event? *Please contact your UW rep and submit a booking request at least 10 days prior to your event.*

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APPENDIX A: RECOMMENDED AGENDA

We welcome you to make use of the following template agenda as you plan your event.

Virtual meeting login in details: [include details here]	
Opening – 5 mins Time: XXX am/pm CEO/ECC/Sr. Leaders	• Welcome • Value of UW & Company partnership • Importance of United Way now • Encourage all to get involved with campaign activities • Interactive poll or quiz to get people engaged
United Way Awareness activity – 7-12 minutes Facilitated by United Way	Activity examples: • **Walk in My Shoes** online poverty simulation • UW & Company quiz • Group whiteboard sharing (e.g. "Why I care about community.") • UW videos • Guest speaker from United Way
Closing remarks – 5 mins CEO/ECC/Sr. Management	CEO/ECC to thank participants, and reiterate importance of United Way • Call to action/donate now • Share company fundraising/participation goals • How to give • Instructions on next steps – donation link to come, who to contact with questions, etc.

APPENDIX B:
KEY POINTS FOR SPEAKERS

The below can be customized/personalized to meet the needs of the speaker(s) at your virtual kickoff.

OPENING REMARKS

Introduction

- Welcome attendees, and thank them for joining the call
- My Name is……
- Before we begin, I would like to welcome two very important guests who are with us this morning (introduce UW and UW Speaker).
- As many of you know, I am a strong believer of United Way's work and I am proud to be a part of <COMPANY'S> United Way Campaign.
- We all know that poverty is hurting our community and undercutting what we stand for. This is even more evident now during this very challenging time of Covid-19 - our most vulnerable community members are even more at risk.
- We have seen requests for community services increase dramatically since the beginning of the pandemic. Calls to United Way's ALASKA 2-1-1 helpline are already up over 300% from last year (Jan-September) with neighbors seeking help with everything from food and rent and utilities to child care and much more.
- And that need will continue to climb as we help people get back to work and settle into a new current reality for our community.
- What inspires me is that as a nation, we have all pulled together and looked to how we can help during this pandemic. Everyone is stepping up and doing what they can to help to ensure no one falls through the cracks.
- But we have to look to the future, and what our role will be in our long-term community recovery. These issues we have seen in the last few months (food access, senior's isolation, job security) they are not new and will continue to be addresssed long after we settle into our new reality.
- That is why we partner with United Way, they have been on the front line addressing evolving issues. They provide a vital continuum of care for people and families who need support.
- I want to take a moment to recognize and thank each and every one of you for stepping up to support United Way every year. Our collective commitment demonstrates <COMPANY'S> leadership in the communities where we live, raising over $XX.
- KEY POINT ABOUT LAST YEAR'S CAMPAIGN (your UW Rep can help provide some information if needed.)
- IF THE SPEAKER HAS A PERSONAL STORY ABOUT UNITED WAY OR SOMETHING THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED, ADD HERE.

- Thank you again for your personal leadership and generous support of United Way.
- Introduce the next section of the event <e.g. audience poll, speaker, UW activity> and turn over to the activity facilitator.

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CLOSING REMARKS

- Thank you,< GUEST SPEAKER>, for joining us today and speaking. United Way plays such an important role in our community, investing in a critical social safety net right here at home. This vision ensures we are lifting our community up and that regardless of background and circumstance - everyone can thrive.
- Our annual United Way campaign starts on <DATE>. We have an amazing team that has worked hard to make this year's campaign great. Thank you, <CAMPAIGN VOLUNTEERS> for your enthusiastic leadership in the campaign.
- <By now, a donation link should be in your inbox. I encourage you to make a gift now. Let's demonstrate our commitment to our staff before we officially launch the campaign on the DATE.> ***Optional if there is a multiple kickoff situation and you send out link early.***
- Our organization's donations to United Way are part of how we are building stronger, healthier, more compassionate communities that benefit us all.
- Thanks everyone.