DIGITAL FUNDRAISING GUIDE
PREPARE

• Set fundraiser dates. Allow plenty of time to create strategic messaging and to get your online donation portal set up.

• Assemble a fundraising team to help distribute United Way messaging across each department or team. A good ratio is one fundraising team member per every 25 employees.

• Set a fundraising goal that your fundraising team and employees can rally behind.

• Set key points for distributing company-wide messaging, e.g. fundraising announcement, launch day, mid-fundraiser, final push, and thank you.

EXECUTE

• Use your planned messaging to launch your fundraiser. Consider using video messages from your organization’s leadership to encourage donating.

• Send messaging while fundraising on a company-wide level.

• Run team challenges to encourage participation. Example: The team or business unit with the highest participation wins lunch with the CEO or other company leaders.

• Utilize your fundraising team members to keep the fundraising top of mind on team conference calls or through personal ask emails. Conduct regular calls with the team leads to discuss strategies and needs for their team.

WRAP UP

• Finalize results with your online giving platform. Submit payroll deduction information to your HR or payroll processing department.

• Consider sending a thank you note to the entire company and those that donated.

• Thank your fundraising team.

• Celebrate your results!
S  SHORT & SWEET
Digital fundraising works best when kept to two weeks or less. The longer the time, the less momentum.

O  OVERALL GOALS
Clearly state your goals – dollars raised, number of participants, average donation, volunteer hours, etc.

C  COMMUNICATE
A picture is worth a thousand words! Use photos or videos when possible in your communications and storytelling. This helps connect people to the mission.

I  IMPACT
Provide impact numbers – what does my donation do at various levels?

- $20 provides an eye exam and glasses for one person.
- $60 buys six healthy, nutritious meals for a family in need.
- $250 gives five area kids computer tablets to help bridge the digital divide.
- $750 covers a year of transportation to and from meetings with mentors and service providers for veterans in our Veterans Treatment Court program.

A  ACCELERATE SUCCESS W/ GAMES
Daily prizes, trivia, raffles, etc. are a great way to keep people connected. Consider having individual prizes for those who reach their personal goal and for teams who reach their goals.

L  LIVE UPDATES ON GOAL PROGRESSION
Celebrate your wins! Keep momentum going by celebrating daily wins and keeping progress of the fundraiser at the top of all communications.
BEST PRACTICES

KICKOFF:
• Record a video from a senior executive to be distributed electronically to all employees. United Way speakers are also available to talk about the impact of gifts made to United Way of Central Maryland.

UTILIZE AVAILABLE RESOURCES:
• The Workplace Fundraiser toolkit is available online at uwcm.org/resources. The toolkit includes email messages, videos, social media posts, presentations, and more.
• Your United Way Relationship Manager can guide you through steps, as well as help you goal set, train your team and more.
• Need something that is not available in the online tool kit? Ask your Relationship Manager!

COMMUNICATIONS:
• Consolidate and coordinate outgoing communications to avoid overwhelming employees.
• Promote any corporate match, corporate gifts or other incentives to increase contributions.
• Have your Fundraising Committee make individuals asks of their team. Consider phone calls instead of emails when making these asks. People give to people.

INCENTIVES:
• Popular prizes include a day off with pay, rewards, or raffles for unique experiences. Check uwcm.org/resources for more ideas.
• Consider using an employee’s donation as entrance into a raffle, rather than an additional cost for a ticket.

EVENTS:
• Encourage employees to participate in virtual volunteer opportunities on their own, or as a company. Opportunities include writing encouraging notes to health care providers or teachers, or making videos of yourself reading books to be shared with local non-profit agencies supporting children.
• Find opportunities to create virtual events: host a Zoom kickoff for employees to hear from company and fundraising leadership, have a virtual silent auction with prizes like gift cards or lunch with the CEO, or have a virtual day of impact.
• If possible, consider having in-person events once your workplace fundraiser is launched to promote donation options and have a little fun.
• Popular in-person events include dress down days, potluck lunches, silent auctions and bake sales. Your United Way Relationship Manager can provide you with messaging and talking points for these events.
• A full list of opportunities available can be found at volunteermd.org.

MEMBERSHIP GROUPS:
• There are many ways to get involved and meet others who share your passion for positive change. By donating your time and energy in the community and advocating to help advance our work, you’ll have an active role in creating change in our communities. All of United Way’s membership groups include networking events, volunteer opportunities, and personal and professional development workshops.
  » Tocqueville Society ($10,000+)
  » Leaders United ($1,000+)
  » Women United ($1,000+)
  » Emerging Leaders United (40 and under, $260+)

RECOGNITION AND THANKS:
• Send thank you e-cards from your CEO, Community Impact Leaders (CILs), or other team members.
• Send personal thank you notes to each of your fundraising committee members.
• Highlight givers of a certain level on a team call or monthly e-newsletter.
• If possible, host an event for donors who give at a certain level.
• Publicize results and reiterate the impact of gifts via your company newsletter, email or intranet.
Q: HOW LONG SHOULD OUR VIRTUAL WORKPLACE FUNDRAISER RUN?

A: The average workplace fundraiser runs for one or two weeks. Longer campaigns often take up additional time and resources for both the Community Impact Leaders (CILs) and employees. One to two weeks is sufficient to kick off your fundraising, get the message out effectively, and make your ask. An exception could be if you are the CIL at a very large or multi-site company.

Q: HOW CAN WE COLLECT DONATIONS ONLINE?

A: United Way of Central Maryland offers a free online giving platform to collect your employee donations. This platform offers various levels of customization depending on your company’s size and needs, and can collect payroll deduction, credit card, and e-check. For more information, contact your United Way Relationship Manager.

Q: ARE DONATIONS TO UNITED WAY TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

A: Yes. For additional information, please visit uwcm.org/faq.

Q: WHEN SHOULD WE HOLD OUR WORKPLACE FUNDRAISER?

A: Most fundraising takes place from July to November, but they can happen any time that best suits your organization.

Q: WHEN DOES PAYROLL DEDUCTION START?

A: Payroll deduction usually runs from January 1 – December 31. However, United Way does not set your payroll schedule; it is a company decision.

Q: CAN EMPLOYEES DESIGNATE THEIR DONATION?

A: We make it possible to donate to any 501(c)3 nonprofit through United Way. If you choose to give directly to United Way, your investment will help to strengthen our local communities through our impact work. Learn more about the impact of your gift at uwcm.org/givingguide.
PROVIDING What’s NEEDED,
Where IT’S NEEDED.