



United Way  
of Greater Rochester  
and the Finger Lakes

## VIRTUAL CAMPAIGN KICKOFF GUIDE

Thank you for hosting a United Way campaign this year! This guide will help you successfully kick off your campaign virtually. Here are a few benefits of a virtual kickoff:

- **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 physical distancing.
- **Stage Setting.** It demonstrates the passion your organization, your senior management team, and your colleagues have for the campaign and building our community.

*Your United Way representative is here to support you, and can help you plan and customize your kickoff event.*

### PLANNING A VIRTUAL KICKOFF

Here are some recommendations and considerations for planning your United Way workplace campaign kickoff. For more virtual tools please visit [UnitedWayROCFLX.org/campaigntoolkit](https://UnitedWayROCFLX.org/campaigntoolkit).

**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 Relationship Manager can help you build your kickoff agenda and activities for the platform. If you cannot host your kickoff on your own technology platform, please speak to your United Way Relationship Manager about your options.

### Senior Management Support

Support from your executives is critical to show 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 below for suggested talking points and presentation content that your President/CEO or senior management team can personalize.

### 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.

## **PLANNING A VIRTUAL KICKOFF – cont.**

### **Determine the Meeting Host and Other Company Speakers**

It is best if you as Campaign Coordinator acts as facilitator to ensure your kickoff sticks to the agenda. If you need support, your United Way Relationship Manager can act as a co-host. Invite your CEO and 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.

### **Make it Interactive**

Engage your colleagues during your kickoff by incorporating interactive activities like online polls or quizzes to keep their attention. Your United Way Relationship Manager can help you build this activity.

### **Raise Awareness about Impact**

United Way speakers can join your virtual meeting and/or recordings can be provided to help share the impact of donation and inspire people to give. You can also show the United Way campaign video. Your United Way Relationship Manager can help you determine the best awareness-building activity for your agenda.

### **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 are feeling inspired.

## RECOMMENDED AGENDA

You are welcome to use the following agenda template as you plan your event.

<b>Virtual meeting login details:</b> [include details here]	
<b>Opening – 5 minutes</b> Time: XXX am/pm CEO/ECC/Sr. Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome</li> <li>• Value of United Way and [Company]partnership</li> <li>• Importance of United Way during the past 100 years and now</li> <li>• Encourage all to get involved with campaign activities</li> <li>• Interactive poll or quiz to get people engaged</li> </ul>
<b>United Way Community Update – 7-12 minutes</b> Facilitated by United Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview on the status of our community</li> <li>• United Way campaign video</li> <li>• Optional: guest speaker from United Way partner organization</li> </ul>
<b>Closing Remarks – 5 minutes</b> CEO/ECC/Sr. Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank participants and reiterate importance of United Way</li> <li>• Call to action/donate now</li> <li>• Show company fundraising/participation goals</li> <li>• How to give</li> <li>• Instructions on next steps – donation link to come, who to contact with questions, etc.</li> </ul>

## KEY SPEAKING POINTS

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

### OPENING REMARKS

- Welcome, and thank you for joining [Company Name's] United Way campaign kickoff!
- My name is...
- Before we begin, I would like to welcome our guest(s) who are with us this morning. [Introduce United Way speaker(s)]
- 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 we continue to face a global crisis that will create longstanding and historic consequences.
- But our United Way has been working diligently to address our community's needs during this pandemic. It's what they've done for more than 100 years, and when COVID-19 hit our community, they were the first ones to ask "what do you need?"
- What inspires me is that as a community we have all pulled together and individually asked "what does our community need?" to ensure our neighbors didn't go without. But the work isn't done.
- In these historic times, United Way needs all of our help to respond to these challenges and build a stronger community for the future.
- We are [continuing to] partner[ing] with United Way because they have been on the front line of our community's response 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 community where we live, raising over \$XXXX with XX% participation/XX employees participating.
- [Key points about last year's campaign – your United Way Relationship Manager can provide some information if needed.]
- [Personal reflections]
- Thank you again for your personal leadership and generous support of United Way.
- [Introduce the next speaker.]

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

- Thank you, [United Way Speaker(s)], for joining us today. United Way plays such an important role in our community, addressing our community's most complex challenges so that 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 incredible. Thank you, [Campaign Volunteers] for your enthusiastic leadership for our campaign.
- **OPTIONAL:** 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 [DATE].
- Our organization's donations to United Way are part of how we are building a stronger region for all.
- Thanks everyone!