UNITED, WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

2021-2022 ANTI-POVERTY POLICY AGENDA
PUBLIC POLICY ENGAGEMENT
Engaging in public policy is a powerful way to support the mission of United Way of Greater Cleveland and address the effects of poverty throughout our community. Advocacy is core to our mission and goes beyond volunteering and donations to drive long-term change to reduce poverty. Public policy and advocacy is essential to drive our impact in the community and a critical part of our transformation.

We engage in public policy and advocacy because we recognize that our experience, knowledge, partnerships and influence can help inform policymakers’ decisions regarding the policies that impact our community. We provide a unique, nonpartisan platform where our engagement with policymakers can make a meaningful difference.

WE ACHIEVE RESULTS BY:
• Partnering with local, state and federal government to address community needs in Greater Cleveland
• Educating and mobilizing people in our community to help advocate on behalf of those in need
• Engaging community partners in policy and funding opportunities
• Partnering with stakeholders to advance our advocacy efforts through a racial lens

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO CREATE LASTING, GENERATIONAL CHANGE – THAT’S WHAT UNITED WAY’S MISSION IS ALL ABOUT:
Harnessing the power of our community – people, nonprofits, academia, business and government – to work together to right poverty and racism, deliver smart solutions and create lasting change.

PUBLIC POLICY VISION:
TO IMPROVE HEALTH EQUITY IN GREATER CLEVELAND

ANTI-POVERTY POLICY AGENDA
This policy agenda serves as our platform for issue advocacy at the state and local level, but does not limit any new policy issues which may arise to support our policy goals. This agenda is focused on policy issues that we believe will have traction in the upcoming legislative session to address health disparities, as well as policies centered on race, diversity, equity and inclusion. We also advocate on policies to support our funding and 211 HelpLink priorities, which directly support health equity to all Greater Clevelanders. This is necessary as we adapt and rebuild from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic over the next two years.

1. BASIC NEEDS
Expand access to healthy food and safe, affordable housing and 2-1-1 HelpLink for children, working adults, and seniors to support our traditional Community Hub for Basic Needs and Impact Institute

2. RACE, DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION
Proactively dedicated to address systemic racism and policies to advance diversity, equity and inclusion

3. OTHER STATE AND LOCAL ISSUES
Advocate for emerging state and local policies that are important to our community, such as police and bail reform

4. CHARITABLE GIVING
Maintain and expand philanthropic policies to support resource development
TO BE A FOCUSED LEADER AND EFFECTIVE PARTNER, WE PRIORITIZE OUR POLICY ISSUES INTO THREE CATEGORIES:

UNITED WAY AS AN ADVOCATE

DEDICATE SIGNIFICANT TIME AND ENERGY TO PROACTIVELY LEAD AND BRING VISIBILITY TO CRITICAL HEALTH EQUITY POLICIES

1. Promote city, county and state policies to help address the social determinants of health, including greater access to healthy food, safe housing stability, affordable healthcare, and financial stability. This includes advocating for policies and strengthening funding streams for basic needs to assist children, seniors and working adults, such as Ohio Biennial Budget safety net funding.

2. Proactively support development and implementation of action plans to support City of Cleveland’s declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis and advocate for passage of statewide declaration.

3. Support the Accountable Health Communities policy platform to improve coordination between health and human service providers and systems to better provide holistic care and improve health outcomes in our community.

4. Seek government resources to maintain and expand 211 HelpLink’s ability to provide this safety net service to people in need and explore opportunities to expand its role to support state and local governments’ public health and emergency preparedness goals.
1. Healthy food access with Greater Cleveland Foodbank and Hunger Network
2. Eviction and homelessness prevention with Right to Counsel- Cleveland and Seimer Institute stakeholders
3. Childhood lead poisoning prevention with the Cleveland Lead Safe Coalition
4. Effective Medicaid program with the Center for Community Solutions and Ohio Medicaid Coalition
5. Expand trauma-informed addiction and mental health care with Mental Health & Addiction Advocacy Coalition
6. Partner with social justice organizations to inform our community of police reform measures in the City of Cleveland and State of Ohio
UNITED WAY AS A SUPPORTER

MONITOR AND LEND OUR SUPPORT ON ISSUES THAT ALIGN WITH OUR POLICY PRIORITIES BY SIGNING JOINT LETTERS, COMMUNICATING WITH PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND/OR OUR ADVOCACY NETWORK

1. Access to utility assistance
2. Access to public transit
3. Eliminate digital divide
4. Bail reform to create a system based in fairness and equity
5. Cuyahoga County Workforce Connect to provide vulnerable populations with training to access in-demand jobs in manufacturing, IT and health care sectors
6. United Way Worldwide federal policy priorities with Congressional delegation
7. Get Out the Vote and oppose voter suppression
8. Other health/poverty-related advocacy opportunities
United Way of Greater Cleveland is a nonpartisan organization that recognizes public policy advocacy as an effective tool for making systems changes in order to fight poverty and strengthen families and our community. To find out more or how to get involved, please contact our Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs at 216-436-2105. Together, we create a strong, unified voice by working with our United Way network in here at home, across Ohio, and across the nation.