



Mile High United Way FAQs and Common Misconceptions

Campaign Information

1. What programs does Mile High United Way offer to the community?

Mile High United Way provides direct service to the community through our 2-1-1 Help Center, Bridging the Gap, Personal Investment Enterprise (PIE), United for Families, United for Schools, and United for Business programming. Additionally, we strategically invested \$7 million in over 100 Strategic Investment Grant partners each year. To learn more about our work, visit <https://unitedwaydenver.org/what-we-do/>.

2. How much does Mile High United Way invest in the community each year?

In 2020, donors like you helped Mile High United Way invest more than \$52 million into the community. 91 cents of every dollar spent was for programs, which far surpasses the Better Business Bureau standard of 65 cents of every dollar.

3. What is a “designated gift?”

Mile High United Way is proud to promote philanthropy and honored to provide the service of facilitating donor gifts to other charitable organizations. When that gift is directed to a program or organization outside of Mile High United Way Community Impact Fund or one of our direct service programs, it is considered a “designated gift.” Donors can designate contributions to any valid 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

4. Does Mile High United Way have a processing fee for designated contributions?

Yes, a fee up to 5% capped at \$450 may be charged on designated contributions. This fee exists in order to cover the costs associated with verifying the eligibility of the organization, processing ongoing contributions through payroll deduction and direct payments, distribution of payments to the designated organization, and providing a single tax receipt for all contributions.

5. Is there a minimum to give?

A gift of any amount to Mile High United Way’s Community Impact Fund or Direct service programs (such as the 2-1-1 Help Center) makes an incredible impact on our work. If a donor chooses to designate their gift to another 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, there is a \$24 one-time gift or \$2/month minimum. Any gifts less than \$24 will be allocated to Mile High United Way’s Community Impact Fund.



6. When does payroll deduction start?

For campaigns running in the fall, typically payroll deduction begins January 1st of the calendar year following your campaign.

7. What is the difference between donor pledge detail and payment detail?

Donor pledge detail provides Mile High United Way with the specific pledge amount and designation information for each donor at your company at the end of the campaign. Payment detail provides itemized accounting of how much is contributed by each employee.

8. Why trust Mile High United Way?

Ranked by Charity Navigator, we are a 4-star charity. This means, “[we] exceed industry standards and [outperform] most charities in [our] Cause.” Mile High United Way is also an Accredited Charity through the Better Business Bureau and meet all 20 of their standards.

9. If I donate to a nonprofit, when will they receive my gift?

Contact your company’s campaign leader to find out when your company will distribute funds to Mile High United Way. After we receive funds, Mile High United Way distributes money to donor-designated organizations once each month, when the total gifts reach or exceed \$250. Organizations receiving gifts that are under \$250 will receive funds when the minimum is reached or semi-annually in January and June, whichever comes first.

10. Which nonprofits can I give to? And can I give to more than one nonprofit?

You can give to one or multiple nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization(s) in the US that the IRS designates as able to receive charitable donations. Gifts to other nonprofits are subject to a minimum donation of \$2 per paycheck per organization, or a one-time gift of \$24 per organizations. Gifts less than this amount will be directed to Mile High United Way’s Community Impact Fund.

11. Where do I send my team’s pledge forms?

Once your campaign has concluded and you have collected pledge forms from individuals who would like to donate, you can scan and email, mail, or contact your United Way representative to collect the forms from your office. If you do not know who your United Way representative is, please scan the forms and email them to info@unitedwaydenver.org, or mail them to:

Mile High United Way
Attn: Community Giving
711 Park Ave W
Denver, CO 80205



Common Misconceptions

1. I heard that you can only give to Mile High United Way through our employee giving campaign, but I'd like to support another cause.

You can designate your donation to any 501(c)3 organization through Mile High United Way. We want to promote employee choice and encourage households to streamline their year-round charitable giving through the campaign for convenience.

You can give to Mile High United Way's Community Impact Fund, which will help support all our programs and work, or you can designate your gift to any one of our programs, initiative areas, another Local United Way, any registered 501c3 nonprofit organization, or any combination of programs and organizations.

2. Doesn't Mile High United Way charge too much overhead?

Mile High United Way's administrative costs (including the costs of doing business and executive salaries) for this past fiscal year were 9% of our annual budget. The other 91% is invested into the community.

Better Business Bureau's recommended percentage of administrative costs for nonprofits is 35%, with the remaining 65% being invested in the community.

While overhead should be one consideration when researching nonprofits, it is also important to look at staff turnover, organizational sustainability, and the strength of executive leadership. All these factors, if not prioritized by the nonprofit, can create greater expenses in the future and an unstable organization.

It is also important to consider what organizations that vet nonprofits have to say: consider the Better Business Bureau, GuideStar, and the IRS as organizations that monitor nonprofits for their effectiveness and ethics. (Mile High United Way has the highest-possible GuideStar rating, maintains our 501c3 status with the IRS, and is BBB-accredited.)

3. Isn't Mile High United Way a pass-through organization without direct impact on the community?

Mile High United Way is not just about transactions—we are about transformation. While we allow donors to direct their funds to other nonprofit agencies and causes, we provide significant value to the community through our direct service programs (Bridging the Gap, 2-1-1, United Neighborhoods); Strategic Investment Grant program; capacity building; public policy work; and thought leadership. These programs together help ensure long-term community change.

4. I have heard that your CEO or executives earn high salaries, and I think those dollars should be invested into the community instead.



United Way executive salaries follow processes outlined by the IRS for nonprofits and uphold industry standards for executive salaries across factors like geographic region, organization size, and services provided. Mile High United Way's executive compensation is in alignment with nonprofit industry standards for our market.

Paying employees competitively ensures a strong organization, with effective programming that ensures that community investments are delivering a solid and proven return on investment. To attract and retain that quality of leadership, we need to pay relatively competitive salaries for the marketplace.

5. Does Mile High United Way fund Planned Parenthood?

Mile High United Way does not directly fund organizations such as Planned Parenthood that provide abortion services. However, if an individual designates their donation to an organization like Planned Parenthood, we send that donation to its intended nonprofit, as we do with all eligible 501(c)3 organizations.

6. I heard that United Way's CEO was charged with embezzlement.

In 1992, a man named William Aramony resigned as president and CEO of United Way of America in Washington, D.C. under federal allegations that he conspired to defraud United Way of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Aramony served six years in a federal prison for his crimes, and United Way of America instituted reforms to prevent that type of crime from being committed in the future.

Each Local United Way, such as Mile High United Way, is independently and locally governed by its own Board of Trustees, and is set up as its own 501(c)3 organization with the IRS. This means that each United Way is independent of one another. United Way Worldwide provides branding and strategic support, capacity building, and guidance to Local United Ways.