

Media Release

United Way Simcoe Muskoka
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 5, 2020

United Way Simcoe Muskoka launches relief funding for low-income residents and those affected by COVID-19

On May 4, 2020, United Way Simcoe Muskoka launched the second phase of our Urgent Needs Fund, an initiative that was successfully piloted from October 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020. In light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Urgent Needs Fund is being expanded to help even more Simcoe Muskoka residents.

“United Way Simcoe Muskoka has been here for the most vulnerable in our communities for more than 60 years,” says Dale Biddell, CEO of United Way Simcoe Muskoka. “As COVID-19 changes our way of life, there are people looking for assistance who have never had to ask for help before. Our new Urgent Needs Fund is there for those who need it right now, whether that be due to the current pandemic or any other life circumstances.”

This means that the Urgent Needs Fund is available to assist those in our communities living in low-income households and those affected by the novel coronavirus. This assistance comes in the form of prompt, one-time grants when existing services and resources are unable to meet the basic or emergency needs of an individual.

To ensure this financial assistance is available to all residents of Simcoe Muskoka, we have partnered with six Regional Agency Leads to help distribute funds to recipients: CONTACT Community Services, Independent Living Services of Simcoe County & Area, Catholic Family Services Simcoe County, Chigamik Community Health Centre, South Georgian Bay Community Health Centre and the District Municipality of Muskoka. In addition, Community Connection 211 Central East is handling the intake, assessment and client impact, as well as the data collection to help better understand local needs.

“The Urgent Needs Fund has already assisted hundreds of residents across our region to cover basic needs at a time when they need it most,” says Rosslyn Junke, UWSM Director of Community Impact. “We are delighted to partner with Community Connection 211 Central East, the District of Muskoka and our Regional Agency Leads on this important work to provide vital supports for Simcoe Muskoka residents.”

To apply for assistance, individuals living in Simcoe County are encouraged to contact 211 Ontario (dial 2-1-1 or visit 211ontario.ca) and those who live in Muskoka are encouraged to contact the District of Muskoka (705-645-2412 or visit <https://www.muskoka.on.ca/en/district-government/covid-19-help.aspx>). If existing services are unable to provide assistance, an individual may then be eligible for the Urgent Needs Fund.

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