

United Way Simcoe Muskoka Urgent Needs Fund

Providing financial support to households experiencing or at-risk of poverty, who have emergency or time-sensitive urgent needs that cannot be filled by other available community supports.

Simcoe Muskoka Urgent Needs Fund: Overview

Over the last two years, our community consultations and ongoing work have identified a financial gap in existing supports, and a need for flexible discretionary funding. To address this need, United Way Simcoe Muskoka (UWSM) has partnered with 211 Community Connection and The District Municipality of Muskoka again to deliver **The Urgent Needs Fund (UNF)** in each of our (6) sub-regions.

UNF is available to households in Simcoe Muskoka experiencing or at-risk of poverty. The program offers emergency financial assistance with modest one-time grants to address basic needs (e.g. groceries, clothing, transportation, housing startup costs, health and wellness, personal identification). **UNF does not address housing payments or arrears.** Please visit our '[Get Help Now](#)' page on our website for more information on how to access services for housing or utility related expenses.

The **District Municipality of Muskoka** will act as the **Regional Agency Lead** and is the first point of contact for **all** individual/agency referrals for Muskoka residents (Town of Bracebridge, Township of Georgian Bay, Town of Gravenhurst, Town of Huntsville, Lake of Bays, Township of Muskoka Lakes).

211 Community Connection will act as the first point of contact for **all** Simcoe County individuals/agency referrals and six Regional Agency Leads will provide the grant to Simcoe County residents:

- **CHIGAMIK Community Health Centre** (North Simcoe – Town of Midland, Town of Penetanguishene, Township of Tay, Township of Tiny)
- **Catholic Family Services of Simcoe County** (Orillia and Area – City of Orillia, Township of Oro-Medonte, Township of Ramara, Township of Severn) **AND** (Barrie and Area - City of Barrie, Town of Innisfil, Township of Springwater)
- **South Georgian Bay Community Health Centre** (South Georgian Bay – Town of Collingwood, Township of Clearview, Town of Wasaga Beach, Town of Blue Mountains)
- **CONTACT Community Services** (South Simcoe - Township of Adjala-Tosorontio Township, Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, Township of Essa, Town of New Tecumseth)
- **Barrie and Area Native Advisory Circle (BANAC)** – North Simcoe Muskoka
- **District of Muskoka** (Town of Bracebridge, Township of Georgian Bay, Town of Gravenhurst, Town of Huntsville, Lake of Bays, Township of Muskoka Lakes).

Expectations of First Point of Contact Agencies

District Municipality of Muskoka and **211 Community Connection** will conduct screening and intake activities for referrals to the Urgent Needs Funds by **connecting individuals with all existing community services and programs as a first step**. Once all those options have been explored, eligibility will then be considered for the Urgent Needs Fund. District Municipality of Muskoka and 211 Community Connection will also perform additional follow up and outcome measurement reporting.

Expectations of Simcoe County Regional Agency Leads

- Attend portal training provided by 211
- Complete required reporting and liaise with 211 Community Connection as needed
- Manage delivery of approved grant amount to client (method of money transfer is at the discretion of the RAL)
- Provide in-kind administration in the role of Regional Agency Lead
- Actively promote the Urgent Needs Fund to community partners and regional tables
- Participate in scheduled conference calls with UWSM and 211 Community Connection
- Provide reporting, including information for program promotion and support of funding requests

Eligible expenses may include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- food security (e.g. grocery gift card, baby food, restaurant gift cards, etc.) **Food related grants are maximum \$50/per person per household;**
- transportation (e.g. gas gift card, taxi voucher, bus ticket, medical transportation, etc.);
- basic needs (e.g. clothing, cleaning supplies, personal hygiene supplies, footwear, etc.) including delivery of items;
- employment readiness (e.g. professional clothing, professional development opportunities, workshops, training certificate, etc.)
- social integration (e.g. access to a cellphone or phone cards, computer rentals, etc.);
- health and wellness (e.g. medication, emergency dental, eyeglasses, etc.);
- housing start-up costs (e.g. furniture, kitchen supplies, bedding, mattress, etc.);
- child care;
- family supports (e.g. parenting courses, educational resources and supplies for children/youth);
- personal Identification (e.g. birth certificate, health card, SIN, driver's license);
- student assistance for elementary and high school students (books, supplies, registration / application fees); and/or,
- mental health supports;
- income tax filing costs;
- utilities

Applicant financial need and qualification to be determined by:

- Proof of household income: e.g. 30-day bank statement, previous Tax Return, Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support, last pay stub, Financial Trustee, letter from employer indicating individual has been laid off due to COVID-19, OSAP payment (taking into account tuition fees, books and timeframe of the semester OSAP is provided for).
- Personal Identification: e.g. birth certificate, health card, SIN, driver's license, to confirm residency in sub-region. If an individual does not have a fixed address and is staying in a temporary shelter, a referral from the shelter will suffice. To accommodate those that may be providing ID electronically, clients can take a photo of their government issued ID.

For additional information, please contact:

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