



Health Strategy

Request for Proposal

United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region (UWDOR) issues this Request for Proposal as a part of our commitment to improve the health of our neighbors affected by poverty and limited resources. UWDOR's commitment to health investment targets strategies that aim to increase food security and access to healthy foods.

The goals outlined in this RFP represent a multi-faceted plan developed in partnership with community leaders defining government, businesses, nonprofits, educators, students, parents and the larger community. Through this RFP process, UWDOR seeks partnerships with nonprofit organizations during the time period **of July 2026 to June 2027**. United Way's Community Fund is divided into two funding categories:

- **For previously funded programs**, please indicate the amount you are requesting (maximum request of \$20,000, with awards typically about \$10,000). **For programs not previously funded**, you may apply for up \$10,000. *If your program is selected for funding, you may be eligible for additional future funding. This is contingent on your organization remaining in good standing with regard to all United Way contract requirements. Future additional funding is not guaranteed.*

Key Dates

Activity	Date
RFP Released	February 2nd, 2026
Questions & Answers	Please submit questions to: ci-inbox@uwdor.org Responses will be issued within 48 business hours
Technical Guidance "How to Apply"	Video/Written statement
Application Due Date	March 13th, 2026 by 5pm
Anticipated Award Notifications	June, 2026

Core Funding Criteria

In partnership with our community, United Way utilizes a cohesive strategy to address the needs of children, families, and individuals with limited income in Dutchess and Orange Counties. This RFP is designed to reduce hunger and increase access to healthy food. In some cases, we may support pilot initiatives that have the potential to be expanded upon with future funding. UWDOR is seeking to support partners who share the following commitments:



- A commitment to **community-level outcomes** focused on demographics and geographic locations with the greatest need;
- A commitment to cross-agency and cross-community **collaboration** in developing effective strategies; and
- A commitment to strategies that demonstrate success using **evidence-based or evidence-informed models**.

Community-Level Outcomes

United Way has conducted extensive research and held community forums to address the goals and indicators that determine community success. Together, we have identified and are working toward key indicators of success. We hold our partners and ourselves accountable to achieving success by using concrete metrics based on local, state, and federal data to measure our progress.

Annual Goal	Community-Level Outcome
Increase access to healthy food for families in our community.	Families will experience greater food security.

Collaboration

Strong collaboration among all partners is necessary for our community to realize outcomes that will demonstrate lasting and meaningful change for our region's children and families.

***Programs that rely on ANY PARTNER to accomplish stated goals (school districts, nonprofit organizations, etc.) are required to provide letters of commitment that demonstrate support from the outside organization.**

Please note only year round programs (not seasonal) will be considered for community investment.

Evidence-Based or Evidence-Informed Models

United Way is committed to changing our community in a positive and meaningful way. In order to do so, we seek to establish partnerships with programs that are evidence-based or evidence-informed, meaning that they have proven successful in the past.

From the Child Welfare Information Gateway:

Evidence-based practices are approaches to prevention or treatment that documented scientific evidence validates. This includes findings established through controlled clinical studies, but other methods of establishing evidence are also valid.

Evidence-based programs use a defined curriculum or set of services that, when implemented with fidelity as a whole, has been validated by some form of scientific evidence.

Evidence-informed practices use the best available research and practice knowledge to guide program design and implementation. This informed practice allows for innovation while



incorporating the lessons learned from the existing research literature.¹ For your convenience, the evaluation tool follows below:

Application Evaluation Scoring Rubric

United Way evaluates applications based on the following criteria:

- Program Design (50 Points)
 - Application should demonstrate the ability to achieve identified community-level outcomes;
 - Application should demonstrate evidence of active collaboration; and
 - Application should demonstrate identification and implementation of evidence based/informed models.
- Justification of Need (20 Points) – Application should demonstrate - through data - the need for this program and value added to our community.
- Organizational Infrastructure (30 Points) – Application must demonstrate that the organization has the capacity to implement program design and collaboration.

Our Community's Challenge

Limited food access and food insecurity are issues that continue to afflict our communities. The USDA considers food insecurity as when one is uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food to meet the needs of all their family members due to insufficient funds or other resources for food. Many families in our community (7% in Dutchess and 10% in Orange) receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, according to the Food Research & Action Center. Unfortunately with new SNAP restrictions in place we anticipate a greater need for feeding programs.

Unfortunately, the lack of financial resources is not limited to a select few — it is pervasive. Poverty rates hover around 6% in Dutchess County and 10% in Orange County, but are upward of 26% in some city centers. With high population density in the city centers, thousands of people are experiencing the cost of poverty. Children are unfortunately impacted the most and face poverty at higher rates (9% in Dutchess County and 20% in Orange County) often as a result of being in a household headed by a single parent.

For those living in low-income communities, healthy food is simply out of reach. Finding quality fresh food often means traveling significant distances. Therefore, food choices are often limited to packaged convenience foods available at walkable corner stores and fast food restaurants. Simply put, fresh fruits and vegetables are scarce. With these burdens, it is no surprise that these same communities face the highest risks of obesity, diabetes, and other preventable food-related health challenges.

¹ "Evidence Based Practice Definitions and Glossaries." Child Welfare Information Gateway. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/management/practice-improvement/evidence/ebp/definitions/>



According to the CDC, obesity rates in our youth are growing. Within our nation, the childhood obesity rate is close to 20%.² Our community shares these national trends; 38% of children in Dutchess County are considered overweight/obese, as are 36% in Orange County. School districts with high poverty rates across the two counties present indicators demonstrating overweight and obese students totaling 40-50% of the total student population. Adults with limited access to economic resources also are prone to obesity (one in three) as accessing healthy low-cost food presents a significant challenge.

Our Community's Opportunity

Access to healthy food determines the nutrition habits of community members. To combat the scarcity of nutritious food, UWDOR seeks to establish partnerships with community nonprofits. We aim to ensure access by partnering with community feeding programs/food distribution programs that emphasize nutritional value in regions with high poverty rates. Programs may target both children and families, especially in areas where transportation is limited. Areas designated as “food deserts” present significant challenges to their low-income residents. By partnering with programs that aim to reduce food insecurity by providing food to families in need, with a focus on healthy food access, we will combat hunger in our community.

Selection Process

The United Way Community Impact Committee and supporting councils review all applications. Additionally, UWDOR invites community leaders to serve as evaluators to ensure a diverse representation of our community serves to further this crucial process. Applications will be scored based on the set criteria (see page 3). The Community Impact Committee reserves the right to take into consideration previous granting history and to request additional information during this process.

² Obesity Fact Sheet. CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity. Accessed December 30th, 2025
<https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/docs/Obesity-Fact-Sheet-508.pdf>

⁴NYS Obesity Report, 2022. Accessed December 30th 2025
https://health.data.ny.gov/Health/NYS-Dutchess-Obesity-Report/5ipt-ucwg/about_data