



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Southern Interior BC

United Way launches COVID-19 recovery and response plan

New relief fund and resources launched to rally support for social & community services sector supporting the most vulnerable people impacted by this crisis.

March 24, 2020 — Today, United Way Southern Interior BC along with the Community Foundations of the North, Central and South Okanagan and other community partners, are asking the community to come together to support the most vulnerable members of our communities, as we continue to coordinate community and social service supports in response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) across our region.

After consulting with social and community service agencies, they have identified emerging needs for people who live in poverty, seniors, and support for the front-line community service workers who continue to provide non-medical essential services to those needing it the most. For more info, to donate to the United Way Relief Fund or to access additional resources, visit: unitedwaysibc.com/covid19.

“For so many of us, the temporary closures, disruption of services and economical, social and cultural impacts of this virus will be felt beyond this time of crisis response, and it is to this end we appeal to all of you to give in this time of need,” says Kahir Lalji, Executive Director of United Way SIBC. “Please consider giving your time, your resources, or your knowledge so we can ensure we not only get through this but that we can rebuild our communities. Many of the services being offered to those that need it the most have been compromised. We need your help. During this difficult time, I send wishes for safety, health, and a return to stability across the Southern Interior and throughout the world.”

Working with community and corporate partners, United Way has identified the following needs, while anticipating they will continue to grow:

- **Basic needs** – ensure people have access to life’s essentials, such as food and shelter.
- **Help for seniors** – ensure that while vulnerable people are isolated, they are also supported.
- **Capacity for community services** – ensure that community partners can continue to do their vital local work.
- **Mental health support** – enable and support system navigation services such as BC211.ca
- **Support for volunteers** – there are amazing people rallying to support others – they need our help too.

United Way has launched this initiative with support from community partners to help with coordination efforts and raise funds, resources and awareness for the needs of the most vulnerable. For those that prefer to volunteer and/or donate items, the site links them to a new Community Marketplace and volunteer opportunities hosted by Do Some Good. The Community Marketplace enables community members and charities to connect and exchange items and services.

The relief fund is hosted by local fundraising platform, Trellis.org where local champions can easily create 3rd party fundraisers that go directly to their charity of choice. They also have a suite of resources for creating virtual fundraisers as charities are forced to cancel any in-person events in the foreseeable future.





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Community Response and Recovery Partners Info: About United Way Southern Interior BC:

Working with communities in the Okanagan Valley, Columbia, Shuswap and Similkameen, United Way Southern Interior BC invests resources where they are needed most and will have the greatest impact. Through research, evaluation and partnerships with community experts, we identify the root causes of the biggest social challenges facing our communities and help find solutions that change tens of thousands of lives for the better. All the donations to United Way are put to work in the communities where they are raised to help those most in need. More info at: www.unitedwaysibc.com

For more information, please contact:

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Community Foundation of the North Okanagan (CFNO):

The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan is pleased to partner with other leaders, funders, and community supporters to provide rapid response in this challenging time. Those looking to support front line charities in the North Okanagan are encouraged to give what you can to our BETTER TOGETHER - COVID-19 Community Response Fund. This non-endowed fund is to get funding through to ensure our most vulnerable citizens get the food and supports they need. We encourage you to take care of yourselves, take care of those around you, and help out wherever is appropriate for you. We are all in this together.

About CFNO:

The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan has been supporting the communities of the North Okanagan since 1977. About the Community Foundation of the North Okanagan: we provide an ongoing contribution to the quality of life in our communities through building endowments, grant making, and community leadership. Donate now at www.cfno.org

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Central Okanagan Foundation (COF):

In times of crisis, our donors have always stepped forward to respond. "I've been fielding many calls and emails from our community to ask how best to support those in need at this difficult time," says David Knapp, Executive Director at the Central Okanagan Foundation. "We have established the Central Okanagan Community Response Fund which will support charities across the Central Okanagan during this difficult time. There's no better time for us to come together as the three area community foundations and partner with our valued partners at the United Way to deliver much needed funding."





About Central Okanagan Foundation:

For over 43 years, the Central Okanagan Foundation (COF) has been supporting registered charities from Peachland to Lake Country. Supporting a broad field of interest, the COF provides opportunities for legacy giving as well as immediate spend-down funds to support the community in times of crisis. More info at: www.centralokanaganfoundation.org

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Community Foundation of the South Okanagan Similkameen (CFSOS):

The Community Foundation of the South Okanagan Similkameen is committed to connecting donors, volunteers and community supporters with the causes that matter to them. In these unprecedented times we are grateful for the opportunity to serve our communities, in partnership with our donors, to meet some of the immediate and urgent needs created by this pandemic. CFSOS has created the South Okanagan Similkameen Community Response Fund to help our communities in any way that we can. In addition to monetary support, we will be doing whatever we can to assist our community partners in weathering the consequences of this dramatic situation. More info: www.cfso.net/covid19

About CFSOS:

The Community Foundation of the South Okanagan Similkameen has been supporting the communities within the boundaries of the RDOS since 1991. The Foundation is committed to supporting a broad cross-section of community needs with the goal of building healthy, vibrant, smart and caring communities. We do this by working with donors to build endowment funds that create stable long-term funding for local charities and by embracing innovative solutions to meet emerging and urgent needs in our region.

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Corporate Partners:

About Do Some Good:

Do Some Good connects people like You, Charitable Organizations, and Businesses to make a meaningful impact in communities all across Canada. We help Nonprofits, Businesses, and Individuals share their giving stories and equip them with tools to drive more social impact. Our Good Company Memberships allow the platform to be FREE to use for Community Organizations, Youth and Community Members - everyone can start creating positive impact right away, simply by joining Do Some Good. More info: www.dosomegood.ca

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About Trellis.org:

Trellis is a social enterprise enabling charities and third-party fundraising champions to raise funds for the causes they care about. Through virtual and in-person events, donation campaigns, silent auctions and e-commerce fundraising tools, Trellis helps the charitable sector automate and simplify the fundraising process. For more info: www.trellis.org

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