

Code of Ethics

Introduction

United Way of the Brazos Valley is committed to the highest ethical standards. The success of our United Way depends upon the ethical conduct of everyone affiliated with United Way of the Brazos Valley. This Code establishes key guidelines to assist United Way of the Brazos Valley employees, volunteers and representatives in making appropriate decisions that are ethical and in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Our Mission

United Way of the Brazos Valley brings the community together to find solutions that change peoples lives.

WHY Strengthen our community by changing systems and processes that will make lasting change for the common good.

HOW Collaborative Impact as a business model that balances Community Out-Reach Engagement (CORE) and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD).

WHAT Make meaningful and measurable progress in improving education, financial stability and health by inspiring people to LIVE UNITED or advocate (i.e., give voice, actively promote), volunteer for and give to United Way's mission.

Our Core Principles

United Way of the Brazos Valley (UWBV) is a leadership organization working for lasting change for the common good with meaningful and measureable results to strengthen Brazos Valley area communities.

This critical community role requires that all of us involved in UWBV to integrate and embody the mission and core principles in all decisions. All of us are called to start our individual and collective impact work by taking fiduciary responsibility for being and doing what is strategically smart for the long-term sustainability of UWBV and the future of our seven-county service area.

Accordingly, United Way of the Brazos Valley plays a unique role both as a leader in the health and human services sector and as a major resource to United Way partner organizations to build trust through all that we do. This bond of trust goes far beyond legal or regulatory requirements to include our core principles and ethics.

To fulfill this special obligation, our core principles, or fundamental unchanging truths, provide the foundation on which we base our actions and decisions.

1. Meaningful and Measureable Improvement

We make a positive difference and have a measurable impact of enduring consequence.

- We make a difference in our community and collectively in our world.
- Our efforts transform lives by identifying leaders that are ready to work for community change.
- We assume responsibility as good stewards of and are accountable for our work and sustainable results.

2. Community Interdependence and Collaboration

We value innovation in community building to affect positive change that embodies Asset Based Community Development and Community Out Reach Engagement.

- We are effective informers, communicators, educators and conveners—bringing all segments of the community together to promote individual well-being and common good.
- We are leaders of processes that multiplies the impact of people's innate desire and capacity to care for one another.
- We help transform vision of compassion and giving into dynamic reality.

3. Volunteer Value Driven

We value and are grateful for the respect, courage, generosity and compassion of our volunteers.

- We are made relevant and impactful through the spirit of volunteerism.
- United Way is outstanding in the way it invites volunteers to express their philanthropic beliefs and their personal passion.
- We believe that the most effective models of service and excellence are created through the leadership of volunteers.

4. Inclusiveness

We are strong only when we are inclusive.

- We aspire to involve every segment of the community in every aspect of our work.
- We act in ways that respect the dignity, uniqueness, and intrinsic worth of every person—the community, the donors, our own employees, representatives, boards, and volunteers.
- We believe in a movement built from the rich diversity and gifts of all people in all systems.

5. Stewardship

We act with integrity that justifies trust and an ethic that embodies responsible investment, planning and management of community resources.

- We uphold our core mission in a manner that promotes the trust of our volunteers, donors and stakeholders.
- We maintain the highest standards of excellence and accountability, including prudent use of finances, and accurate and honest disclosures of information.
- We take pride in our role as stewards to the people and community.

6. Adaptive Organization

We understand the importance of growth and change in our own practices.

- We are committed to understanding the political, economic, social, and cultural context of our work and activities.
- We are committed to a United Way that is relevant to all people, all cultures, all communities and the times.

Code of Ethics

United Way of the Brazos Valley is committed to the highest ethical standards. Indeed, based on the unique trust placed in UWBV to serve the public good, we have a special obligation to act ethically.

The success of the United Way system and our reputation depend upon the ethical conduct of everyone affiliated with the UWBV. Volunteers, employees, and representatives set an example for each other, and for member United Way organizations, by their pursuit of excellence in high standards of performance, professionalism, and ethical conduct.

This UWBV Code of Ethics (Code) is based on our mission and guided by meaningful and measurable improvement, community interdependence and collaboration, volunteer value driven, inclusiveness, stewardship and adaptive organization.

We are mindful that these core values must be clearly articulated, communicated and continuously reinforced. In addition, more detailed policies, guidelines, explanations, definitions and examples are often needed to bring these values into actual practice. While no document can anticipate all of the challenges that may arise, the Code communicates key guidelines and will assist UWBV volunteers, employee and representatives in making good decisions that are ethical and in accordance with applicable legal requirements. All are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns they have with any supervisor, the President/CEO or the UWBV Board Chair.

Personal and Professional Integrity

A personal commitment to integrity in all circumstances benefits each individual as well as the organization. We therefore:

- ◆ Strive to meet the highest standards of performance, quality, service and achievement in working towards the United Way of the Brazos Valley mission.
- ◆ Communicate honestly and openly and avoid misrepresentation.
- ◆ Promote a working environment where honesty, open communication and minority opinions are valued.
- ◆ Exhibit respect and fairness toward all those with whom we come into contact.

Trust

United Way of the Brazos Valley is responsible to its stakeholders, which include donors, funded programs and others who have placed faith in United Way. To uphold this trust we:

- ◆ Promote good stewardship of all United Way of the Brazos Valley resources, including resource prioritization, grants, and other contributions that are used to pay for program operating expenses, salaries, and employee benefits.
- ◆ Publish and widely disseminate an annual report that conveys information to the public in all critical areas of operation, including board and employee leadership, mission, goals and values of the United Way of the Brazos Valley, the central governance structure, program activities and achievements, and financial information that includes campaign revenues and operating overhead costs.
- ◆ Maintain accurate financial records which are audited annually by an independent certified public accountant.
- ◆ Protect the funds entrusted to us.
- ◆ Refrain from using United Way of the Brazos Valley resources for non-United Way purposes.
- ◆ Observe and comply with all laws and regulations affecting United Way of the Brazos Valley and its membership requirements of United Way Worldwide as an independent licensee of the United Way Brand and the United Way Standard's of Excellence.

Resource Development and Fundraising

Giving is a personal matter and decision; no form of coercion is acceptable. To promote voluntary giving we will only engage in ethical fundraising practices, and as such:

- ◆ Accept only those gifts that are made in a non-coerced manner. United Way of the Brazos Valley management will address allegations of corporate coercion immediately.
- ◆ Use accurate and truthful solicitation and promotional materials.
- ◆ Ensures that fundraising solicitations accurately disclose the intended use of funds.
- ◆ Provides donor acknowledgments in accordance with IRS requirements.
- ◆ Honors donor restrictions on contributions.
- ◆ Complies with requests by donors who wish to remain anonymous.
- ◆ Safeguards the confidentiality of information about donors that they would reasonably expect to remain private.
- ◆ Refrains from compensating fundraising personnel on a percentage of the amount raised or other commission basis.

Conflict of Interest

To avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest which could tarnish the reputation of United Way of the Brazos Valley, all United Way of the Brazos Valley employees, volunteers and representatives shall:

- ◆ Make full disclosure of all potential and actual conflicts of interest by filling out the United Way of the Brazos Valley Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement.
- ◆ Avoid any activity or outside interest which conflicts or appears to conflict with the best interest of United Way of the Brazos Valley, including involvement with a current or potential United Way vendor, grantee, or competing organization unless disclosed or not deemed to be inappropriate by the United Way of the Brazos Valley Board of Directors.
- ◆ Should not knowingly take any action, or make any statement, intended to influence the conduct of United Way of the Brazos Valley in such a way to confer any financial benefit to themselves, their immediate family members or any organization in which they or their immediate family members have a significant interest as stakeholders, directors or officers.
- ◆ Disclose to the President/CEO or Board Chair of Directors any potential conflict of interest as soon as they become aware of it.
- ◆ Decline or refrain from soliciting any gift, gratuity or favor in the performance of United Way of the Brazos Valley duties, except for promotional items of nominal value.
- ◆ Refrain from using United Way of the Brazos Valley resources for personal gain.

United Way of the Brazos Valley employees should:

- ◆ Ensure any outside employment does not adversely affect performance of United Way of the Brazos Valley duties.
- ◆ Ensure that other personal activities do not negatively impact United Way of the Brazos Valley's reputation or credibility.
- ◆ Not serve on any United Way of the Brazos Valley member agency board or major committees.

Equal Employment Opportunities and Inclusiveness

United Way of the Brazos Valley provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment. United Way of the Brazos Valley employees and affiliates are entitled to an environment free of verbal, physical, sexual or visual forms of harassment or intimidation. It is our affirmative commitment to prevent any workplace behavior of these types toward employees, volunteers, donors or donor groups, vendors, or any other United Way constituencies on the basis of age, race, color, ancestry, country of origin, disability, ethnicity, marital status, familial status, veteran status, gender, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the hallmark of professionalism. United Way of the Brazos Valley employees and volunteers:

- ◆ Will ensure that all information which is confidential or privileged or which is not publicly available is not disclosed inappropriately. Any communication regarding such data must be limited only to the persons who are entitled to such data. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential data is a serious breach of trust.
- ◆ Shall respect the privacy rights of all individuals in the performance of their United Way of the Brazos Valley duties.
- ◆ Shall refer requests for information from the media or any other entity to the United Way of the Brazos Valley President/CEO or Vice-President of Marketing and Resource Development.
- ◆ Shall hold in confidence donor lists and other fundraising related information. Such information will not be used for any purpose external to the organization except upon approval by the Board of Directors.

Responsibilities to Volunteers

Volunteers who serve through the Board of Directors or in other capacities are crucial to the success of the United Way of the Brazos Valley. In order to assist volunteers to serve effectively and to obtain satisfaction from their service, United Way of the Brazos Valley directors and employees:

- ◆ Support volunteers so they can perform to the highest level of their contribution and personal satisfaction.
- ◆ Treat all volunteers with fairness, equity and respect, providing appropriate mechanisms for their views and interests to be expressed.
- ◆ Involve volunteers at appropriate levels and phases of the decision-making process.
- ◆ Assist in the development and the understanding of the roles of volunteers and employees, respectively; set clear standards of performance for volunteers; and appropriately recognize their contributions.

Responsibilities of Volunteers

Volunteers also represent United Way of the Brazos Valley and set examples through their ethical conduct and professionalism. Volunteers will:

- ◆ Review the Code of Ethics of the United Way of the Brazos Valley and ensure that they adhere to the spirit of the Code when making policy or otherwise serving the organization.
- ◆ Avoid taking any action or making any statement intended to influence the conduct of United Way of the Brazos Valley in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on such volunteers, their immediate family members, or any organization in which they or their family members have a significant interest as stockholders, directors or officers.

Political Views

As a charitable corporation, United Way of the Brazos Valley is prohibited from making contributions to any candidate for public office or to any political committee. We therefore:

- ◆ Do not make any contributions to any candidate for public office or political committee on behalf of United Way of the Brazos Valley, including the use of United Way of the Brazos Valley facilities for political campaign activities.
- ◆ Do not make any contributions to any candidate for public office or political committee in a manner that may create the appearance that the contribution is on behalf of United Way of the Brazos Valley.

Inspiring People to Advocate (i.e., Give Voice, Actively Promote) United Way

Personal advocacy is driven by individual passion and purpose; no form of forced promotion of United Way is acceptable. To promote voluntary advocacy we will only work to encourage and inspire individual to share how they LIVE UNITED and their United Way story.

- ◆ We will work to share our story of how UWBV makes meaningful and measurable progress in improving education, financial stability and health.
- ◆ We will inspire people to LIVE UNITED or advocate (i.e., give voice, actively promote), volunteer for and give to United Way's mission.
- ◆ Staff and Volunteers are invited to actively promote, communicate and share the mission, core principles, and goals defined in the UWBV Community Impact Plan.
- ◆ Staff will be empowered to effectively communicate and educate the community on UWBV goals, rational and priorities for community impact and development.

Guidance and Disclosure

Volunteers, employees, and representatives are encouraged to seek guidance from the Board Chair and President/CEO concerning the interpretation or application of this Code of Ethics. Any known or possible breaches of the Code of Ethics should be disclosed immediately to either the President/CEO or Board Chair. Reports of possible breaches will be handled in the following manner:

- ◆ All reports of possible breaches will be treated in confidence as much as the organization's duty to investigate and the law allow. If confidentiality cannot be maintained, the individual disclosing the possible breach will be notified.
- ◆ All reported breaches will be investigated expeditiously and, if needed, appropriate action taken based upon the policies of the organization.
- ◆ Retaliation against a person who suspects and reports a breach in good faith will be treated as an independent breach of the Code and will not be tolerated.
- ◆ United Way of the Brazos Valley affirms prompt response and fair resolution of all reported breaches.