



IMPORTANT REMINDER:

Please reference the Community Investments Overview from the [Agency Resources webpage](#), which includes information about United Way’s population focus, Community Vision for Change, and types of investments. This resource contextualizes the Thriving Families RFP within the overall framework of the United Way.

Thriving Families RFP

As stated in the introduction, United Way envisions a community where all families can thrive and reach their full potential. Families in every community, including ours, come in all different forms, sizes, relationships, and encompass all ages. For the purposes of this RFP, “families” is an inclusive term that will represent any form that programs support, including individuals (i.e., households of one).

Eleven percent of all people in our community have a disability¹ (more than 126,000 people) and 15% are age 62 or older² (more than 170,000 individuals). United Way recognizes that creating stability for persons with disabilities and older adults is critical, and typically necessitates longer-term supports. Our investments in these areas will make sure that all people are afforded the opportunity to thrive in our community.

We also know that investments need to be made to support families on their journey from crisis to stability and from stability to thriving. In South Hampton Roads, approximately 186,000 households are considered ALICE or living in poverty (see chart on p. 1). Poverty, especially generational poverty, is incredibly complex, and breaking the cycle means families must overcome multiple internal and external barriers. Poverty causes toxic stress for families; daily decision-making becomes about survival, and the ability to plan and set long-term goals can be physically impossible due to stress hormones in the brain. It is widely recognized that living in poverty can have negative outcomes for both adults and children in the household.

We understand that vulnerable families may cycle between needing emergency services that provide the foundations for life and services that support increasing stability as they journey towards self-sufficiency. United Way is committed to making investments that work cohesively across the service areas outlined in the South Hampton Roads Bridge to Self-Sufficiency (Bridge) in order to support upward mobility for families in our community.

¹ <http://www.ghrconnects.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=355&localeId=134193>

² U.S. Census Bureau (2016). 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

For example, when looking at the Bridge sub-pillar of Housing, the following information highlights the different ways families may need support as they journey to self-sufficiency:

During the 2018 point-in-time count, there were over 800 individuals experiencing homelessness in South Hampton Roads³. Those families have the lowest level of stability on the tiers of the Bridge and need access to essential services such as emergency shelter that provide a foundation to build upon. Families that rent their homes would likely be considered to have higher levels of stability than those who are homeless or in temporary housing. Renters may identify with higher tiers on the Housing sub-pillar on the Bridge. Unfortunately, those families can still find themselves in need of support, and stability is not a given. According to the Eviction Lab at Princeton University, South Hampton Roads cities are among the top 15 worst cities for evictions across America⁴. For example, there were 4,318 evictions in Norfolk in 2016, which means about 12 families were kicked out of their homes every day. Similarly, homeowners would be considered even higher in their level of stability, and from an outsider's perspective may be considered "thriving," but if they start to fall behind on mortgage payments then the stability they have built gets put in jeopardy. The city of Portsmouth has the highest rate of foreclosure actions in the state of Virginia; in the month of July alone over 60 families lost their homes⁵.

As this data illustrates, there are families in our community needing support who represent all tiers on the Bridge, and similar data stories could be written about every pillar or sub-pillar on the Bridge (i.e. employment, physical and mental health, etc.).

The Thriving Families RFP invites applications for both *Essential Services* and *Program Investments* as described in the introduction above. When reading the strategies set out below, please refer to the Bridge in Appendix B, and become familiar with the Bridge pillars, sub-pillars, and tiers.

Essential Services Strategies

Longer-term supports for those whose conditions are not likely to change because of circumstances related to physical conditions, developmental or intellectual disabilities, or behavioral health disorders:

1. Access to supportive services for any of the Bridge pillars of Family Stability (e.g. housing, transportation), Well-Being (e.g. physical and mental health, food insecurity), Financial Management (e.g. debts and savings), Employment (e.g. education and income) for individuals with disabilities (any age) or older adults (age 65+) who may identify with any tier on the Bridge.

³ <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/2018-point-in-time-counts/>

⁴ <https://evictionlab.org/rankings/#/evictions?r=United%20States&a=0&d=evictionRate>

⁵ <https://www.realtytrac.com/statsandtrends/foreclosure trends/va>

Short-term, one-time, or limited engagements:

2. Access to crisis and/or emergency interventions in the Bridge pillars of Family Stability (e.g. housing, transportation, childcare), Well-Being (e.g. physical and mental health, food insecurity), and Financial Management/Employment (e.g. debts and income) for individuals who identify with tiers 1 and 2.

Program Investments Strategy

This funding opportunity aims to invest in programs that support the success of families by:

3. Providing evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions or preventative approaches that move individuals to higher levels of stability across any of the Bridge pillars of Family Stability, Well-Being, Financial Management, or Employment. Program Investments strategies aim to support individuals who identify with Bridge tiers 2 and above.

Embedded within these, we aim to address systems issues that are barriers to helping families thrive.

Depending on the fit for your organization's programs, applicants may choose to apply under a single strategy or multiple strategies.

Grantee Expectations

Thriving Families Grantee Engagement

Grantees agree to participate in convenings and activities that explore best practices, facilitate learning, solve problems, and establish shared measures. This could also include professional development for direct service staff and supervisors provided through United Way on relevant topics.

Process Requirement for Essential Services Strategy 2

If applying for funding for **rental, mortgage and/or utility assistance** under Essential Services Strategy 2, your organization will be required to use the newly established central intake process through the Housing Crisis Hotline operated by ForKids. This new centralized intake allows for many benefits, including providing clients with a single point of access which simplifies the process for getting assistance; streamlining referrals to organizations by pre-screening clients and connecting them to services for which they are more likely to qualify, and which have funding available; and strengthening the data our community has to better understand issues related to housing instability and homelessness.

To carry out the centralized intake process, agencies must have a licensed Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) user within their organization, so that they are able to receive and act on referrals initiated through the Housing Crisis Hotline.

Unite Us Option

To make measurable progress across the investments in Early Childhood Success, Youth Success, and Thriving Families RFPs, every organization will have to play their part. Families typically have multiple pillars of the Bridge to Self-Sufficiency on which they need to focus, often requiring support from multiple organizations. Organizations applying for funding through United Way have the opportunity to opt-in to using the Unite Us software (see the “Our Tools” section from the Introduction, p. 4). The cost of user licenses and training will be covered by United Way during the grant period if the organization elects to become a Unite Us partner. Organizations that are interested in opting-in are encouraged to reach out for technical assistance so that the United Way staff can help determine organizational fit. The opportunity to use Unite Us will be ongoing.

Performance Accountability

United Way will be using the Results-based Accountability (RBA) approach to measure the contributions of our work across all investments. Grantees will be responsible for bi-annual (twice per year) quantitative and qualitative reporting.

RBA is made up of two interrelated parts:

Population Accountability is about the well-being of whole populations.

[For neighborhoods, communities, cities, counties, states, nations]

Performance Accountability is about the well-being of client populations.

[For programs, agencies, and service systems]

Performance accountability measures are broken down into four quadrants (although example measures for each quadrant are given below, other measures may be chosen based on the program’s activities and expected results):

		Quantity	Quality					
Effort		How much did we do? # of activities (by type) # of people served	How well did we do it? Program retention rate Client/Participant satisfaction					
	Effect	Is anyone better off? <table border="1"> <tr> <td># of individuals who increase their wages</td> <td>% of individuals who increase their wages</td> </tr> <tr> <td># of individuals with improved mental health and/or functioning</td> <td>% of individuals with improved mental health and/or functioning</td> </tr> <tr> <td># who maintain housing stability</td> <td>% who maintain housing stability</td> </tr> </table>		# of individuals who increase their wages	% of individuals who increase their wages	# of individuals with improved mental health and/or functioning	% of individuals with improved mental health and/or functioning	# who maintain housing stability
# of individuals who increase their wages	% of individuals who increase their wages							
# of individuals with improved mental health and/or functioning	% of individuals with improved mental health and/or functioning							
# who maintain housing stability	% who maintain housing stability							

Campaign Participation

Grantees are expected to run a United Way campaign at their organization, although there is no expectation for the amount that needs to be raised or the percent of individual participation.

Application and Review Process

Blackbaud Grantmaking Application Portal

United Way has transitioned to a new grant management software, Blackbaud Grantmaking. All applications will be submitted electronically through the online application portal. Please follow instructions for logging in and completing the application, which can be referenced in the recorded training that will be available on the [Agency Resources webpage](#) by January 3, 2019.

Application

In order to be considered for the Thriving Families funding, your organization will complete the application specific to this RFP. The application link will be available on the [Agency Resources webpage](#). To help with planning, please see a list of questions for the Thriving Families Application on pages 8-11.

Multiple Programs

It is likely that some organizations will have multiple programs applying for United Way funding through the Early Childhood Success, Youth Success, and Thriving Families RFPs. We typically recommend that organizations complete separate applications for each program within the RFP that best fits that program. However, depending on how the organization's programs are defined and structured, in some instances it may be best to write a single RFP application for multiple programs. Technical assistance for support in determining the best way to apply for multiple programs is encouraged; see technical assistance options below.

Collaborative Applications

Collaboration between multiple organizations when responding to United Way RFPs is also likely for some projects or initiatives. Organizations submitting a collaborative application for the Thriving Families RFP must choose a lead organization that is a United Way Certified Agency to submit the application and be the fiscal agent if the grant is awarded. Roles, responsibilities, and budgets of the collaborating organizations will need to be articulated clearly in the application. Other organizations collaborating with the lead agency do not need to be United Way Certified Agencies. We strongly recommend signing up for a technical assistance appointment if submitting a collaborative application.

Submission Deadline & Technical Assistance

All Thriving Families applications need to be submitted electronically by **March 22, 2019** (see important dates outlined below). The application will open on or before **January 28, 2019**.

Technical assistance will be provided by United Way staff through the day prior to the application deadline (**March 21**) in an effort to prevent last minute issues when United Way staff may not be available. Technical assistance will be done by email, phone, and appointment, depending on the type and complexity of the assistance requested. Please find contact information and a link for scheduling an appointment on our [Agency Resources webpage](#).

Thriving Families RFP	
Application Opens	January 28
Technical Assistance Ends	March 21
Submission Deadline	March 22
Agency Interviews	May 1 or 3

Review Process

Each year, community volunteers play a leadership role in the review process for United Way certification and funding. This year, funding review panels of approximately 9-12 volunteers each will be split according to the RFPs in order to keep similar applications together. A portion of the panel volunteers will have subject matter expertise in the strategies of the RFP they are reviewing.

Panel volunteers will read all applications assigned to their panel in full, so there is no need to repeat responses in the application; you may refer to an answer on another question if applicable. Agency representatives for programs applying under the Thriving Families RFP will then meet the Funding Review Panel during the in-person Agency Interviews at United Way on either **May 1, 2019 or May 3, 2019**. There are two interview dates to accommodate the amount of organizations expected in this focus area. These short interviews will be discussion-based and will allow for the Panelists to ask specific questions to the agency representatives based on their proposals. Each applicant will be assigned an interview time shortly after the submission deadline.

Panel volunteers will score both the applications and interviews based on selection criteria outlined below. Panelists will then deliberate and make recommendations to United Way's Community Investments Committee, which make final recommendations to the United Way Board of Directors for approval.

Awards will be made no later than May 31, 2019, with the grant period starting July 1, 2019.

Selection Criteria

Both the application and interviews will be evaluated based on strength across the selection criteria.

1. Clarity and Completion: All questions on the program application are answered adequately and accurately. The content and presentation of information in the application and interview is easily understood and provides a level of depth that is sufficient for the reviewer to understand the program's purpose, goals, approaches, and results.
2. Program Purpose & Implementation: Clear program goals that align with organizational mission. Thoroughly describes strategic alignment to chosen United Way strategy. Core activities are detailed and appropriate based on program goals and results, and other evidence that indicates program is implemented with attention to detail, results, and participant experience.

3. Program Budget: Budget is complete, accurate, and clearly depicts the income supporting the program and the expenses required to operate it. Expenses are realistic and reasonable to sufficiently perform the activities described in the application and there are no unexplained concerns based on the information provided. The budget and funding strategy have enough diversity and/or security to assure the organization has the financial means to continue sustaining the program.
4. Collaboration: A commitment to authentic collaboration is visible within organizational values, existing plans and activities, and through successful relationships with other nonprofits, educational and health institutions, businesses, and government. Results of collaborative efforts are demonstrable. Depending on the depth and intensity, they will vary from coordination of referrals and information sharing to systems change.
5. Culture of Learning: A strong commitment to continuous learning and improvement as evidenced through the ability to adapt based on issues identified through data monitoring and feedback loops, and the promotion of a culture that shares information openly, tests new ideas, and learns from mistakes in order improve results and participant experience.
6. Capacity to Track & Use Data: Utilization of effective measurement tools, ability to collect, organize, and use both formal and informal sources of data, and the existence of effective technology infrastructure and management systems that are systematically used to track, analyze, and report on robust program and participant data.
7. Informed by Evidence: Relevant, recent research from multiple sources inform the program's existence, design, and implementation practices, including best practices that are evidence-based or evidence-informed and are customized for the local context to ensure that services have the greatest impact potential.
8. Program Results: Reported results are appropriately defined and measured in the context of the program's goals and intensity. Strong evidence demonstrates that participants are better off and/or that design and implementation are high-quality and effective.
9. Participant Voice, Choice, & Dignity: Participants are directly involved in feedback and decision making. Program design elements are strength-based, inclusive, individualized, and informed by participants. High levels of trust exist between participants and staff/volunteers.
10. Targeting Program Resources: Agency demonstrates the ability and willingness to effectively target existing program resources to neighborhoods and/or populations with high levels of risk or vulnerability, and/or to focus program's resources on a specific demographic to maximize impact potential. Directing resources requires disciplined attention to addressing barriers that prevent participation and other equity-related issues.

Thriving Families Application Questions

The following list reflects questions for the Thriving Families Application. As we build out the applications in the online portal, there may be minor adjustments to these questions.

Questions for Strategies 1- 3

Program Overview

1. Program Name
2. Provide an executive summary for your program. [This may be used for promotional purposes.] (Word count = 250)
3. Define your program's target or service population using the lists below.
4. Which strategy is your program applying under as your primary strategy? [The primary strategy chosen should be the MOST aligned with this program's core activities.]
 - a. Access to supportive services for any of the Bridge pillars of Family Stability (e.g. housing, transportation), Well-Being (e.g. physical and mental health, food insecurity), Financial Management (e.g. debts and savings), Employment (e.g. education and income) for individuals with disabilities (any age) or older adults (age 60+) who may identify with any rung on the Bridge. [Essential Services]
 - b. Access to crisis and/or emergency interventions in the Bridge pillars of Family Stability (e.g. housing, transportation, childcare), Well-Being (e.g. physical and mental health, food insecurity), and Financial Management/Employment (e.g. debts and income) for individuals who identify with tiers 1 and 2. [Essential Services]
 - c. Providing evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions or preventative approaches that aim to move individuals to higher levels of stability across any of the Bridge pillars of Family Stability, Well-Being, Financial Management, or Employment. Program Investments strategies aim to support individuals who identify with Bridge tier 2 and above. [Program Investments]
5. Is there any other strategy (or strategies) that could be considered this program's secondary strategy (or strategies)? [The secondary strategies chosen should be VERY closely aligned with this program's core activities. Do not choose strategies that are aligned with other programs at your organization, only those that align with the program applying for funding.]

The following questions relate to understanding where this program fits on the South Hampton Roads Bridge to Self-Sufficiency (Bridge). You can find a copy of the Bridge in Appendix B. of the Thriving Families RFP.

6. Select your program's primary Bridge sub-pillar. [Based on the services that are provided by this program.]
7. For your program's primary Bridge sub-pillar, what tiers does your program regularly achieve results for?
8. In addition to the primary sub-pillar selected above, which Bridge sub-pillars does this program regularly achieve results for?

Program Narrative and Strategic Alignment

9. Describe the program for which you are seeking funding. You may choose to include your theory of change, the goals and objectives, core activities, implementation details such as how staff and/or volunteers are utilized and trained, and any other relevant details. Be sure to include how this program aligns with your chosen primary strategy, including how it fits with your work. [Use this section to cover what is not prompted in other questions.]
10. If this is a collaborative proposal, identify if this is a new partnership and discuss the reasons why you are working collaboratively. Identify your key partners and describe the roles and responsibilities of each partner. If this is not a collaborative proposal, discuss what you have learned about authentic collaboration in the context of your program or organization. Provide at least one lesson learned with an accompanying example from the past two years. [See page 6 of the RFP on collaborative applications.]
11. Describe the program's target or service population, based on verifiable data that your organization collects. Describe unique challenges in working with this population and how your organization has addressed these challenges in the past. Include the average number of participants served by this program annually.
12. Discuss whether membership or participant fees are used for your programs or services. What fee structure is used? What specific criteria or qualifications are used to assess eligibility for your programs and services? What accommodations are made if individuals or families are unable to pay the fee?

Data-Driven Decision Making

13. Describe how your program (or the approach/technique(s) used in your program) is either evidence-based or evidence-informed. Examples of research and/or best practices, and how they relate to program implementation are highly encouraged. [See RFP Glossary for definition of evidence-based and evidence-informed.]
14. Describe a recent situation (within the past three years) in which data was used to inform a change in programming with the goal of improving results. The description could include: the problem that was identified, key data points that led to a decision, the change that was made, and/or comparison data from before and after the change was made.

Measuring Impact

15. What are your program's key results (i.e. key outcomes or performance measures)? Include specific measurements and targets for your program. Describe the successes and challenges in achieving these key results. What evidence do you have that demonstrates whether program participants are better off?
16. Discuss the types of data collection methods you use to monitor program quality and measure results. [Methods could include: surveys, assessments, interviews, observations, tracking program activities or attendance, etc.]

17. Upload important measurement tools used to track results (e.g. surveys, assessments, etc.).

Budget

18. Total program budget: ____ (number)
19. Total requested amount: ____ (number)
20. Upload program budget using template with line item explanations
21. Budget narrative (overall) - Provide any additional explanation or clarification about your program budget, such as any major changes projected for next fiscal year or anticipated increases or decreases in expenses or revenue for the upcoming year. If collaborating on this proposal, be sure to explain any complexities that may not be clear to the reviewers within the budget template, such as how funds would be distributed to sub-grantees.

Questions for Unite Us Opt-in Opportunity

1. What partners do you work with most frequently when sending or accepting referrals for services? List 3 to 5 partners.
2. Which best describes your organization?
 - a. My organization already has Unite Us licensed users and we don't need any more licenses at this time.
 - b. My organization already has Unite Us users and wants to add additional licenses.
 - c. My organization does not currently use Unite Us and we want to become a partner.
 - d. My organization does not currently use Unite Us and we are not interested at this time.
 - e. My organization does not currently use Unite Us and we are unsure about whether to become a partner at this time.
3. If selecting to add additional users or to become a Unite Us partner for the first time, who should we contact to follow up? Provide name, title, and email for one or more contacts.

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

Please refer to the RFP Glossary & Appendices document on the [Agency Resources webpage](#) for definitions of key terms and the Appendices referenced in this document. Information for requesting technical assistance is also available on this page.