FAQs

What is the purpose of the COVID-19 Response Fund for Forsyth County?

To provide vital financial support to local nonprofits who will in turn support economically vulnerable populations impacted by the novel coronavirus. By using the robust nonprofit system already in place in Forsyth County, we will expedite getting resources and assistance to those who need it.

Flexible resources will be provided for immediate, emerging, and long-term needs to organizations working with communities who are disproportionately impacted by coronavirus and the economic consequences of the outbreak. The fund is designed to complement the work of government and public health officials to address all aspects of the outbreak in Forsyth County. Long-term needs will be considered in the future and as the fund balance allows.

Funding for the COVID-19 Response Fund for Forsyth County has been made possible by contributions from both private sources (individuals, foundations, and corporations) and by the City of Winston-Salem, and there are different grantee requirements and grants processes for each. The following FAQs pertain to grants funded through private donations that are being administered by the United Way of Forsyth County and The Winston-Salem Foundation, with grant decisions made by a community committee. Information on the process for grants made with City of Winston-Salem funding can be found on the City’s website.

What are the COVID-19 Response Fund’s initial priorities?

The first phase of proactive and responsive grants will fund nonprofits with one-time general operating support in order to assist with the immediate needs of economically vulnerable populations impacted by COVID-19.
Funding will benefit disproportionately impacted individuals and families including:

- Residents without health insurance and/or access to paid sick leave
- Individuals experiencing homelessness
- Healthcare workers
- Hospitality and service industry workers
- Unauthorized immigrant populations
- Communities of color, and in particular, residents with limited English language proficiency

Will the priorities change?

We are in an unprecedented time and can’t know yet what the community will need in the coming weeks and months. While we are prepared to respond to the needs emerging now, we will remain flexible to address to what may be needed later as funds allow. Additional phases of future funding will be developed by evaluating the funds available, community needs, and government response.

Who is eligible to receive grants from the Fund?

Based upon the charitable structure of the COVID-19 Response Fund, grants are limited to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, groups fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, or other charitable organizations able to receive a tax-deductible contribution, such as schools, faith-based organizations, and other public entities. We are not able to fund individuals or businesses directly, labor unions, or 501(c)(4), 501(c)(5), and 501(c)(6) organizations.

I’m an individual who’s been affected by COVID-19. Can the COVID-19 Response Fund help me?

The COVID-19 Response Fund cannot award grants to individuals but will award grants to community-based organizations that will directly support local residents and families who are most affected by emerging economic and health impacts. As we award grants to organizations, we will post information on these websites: covid19forsyth.org, forsythunitedway.org, cityofws.org, and wsfoundation.org.

Where can I call for help for myself or my family?

If you are looking for resources now, please reach out to 2-1-1, a full-service contact center which connects people to the assistance they need to address everyday challenges of living as well as those that develop during emergencies. United Way 2-1-1 is free, confidential and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year in 140 different languages.

Ways to connect: Call 2-1-1, 1-888-892-1162, or visit nc211.org.
Is there a geographic area of focus for the COVID-19 Response Fund?

Yes. To receive a grant from the COVID-19 Response Fund, organizations must be providing services in Forsyth County, North Carolina.

What kinds of grants will the COVID-19 Response Fund award?

The Fund will award general operating support grants that allow nonprofits to scale up their response to the immediate needs brought on by the COVID-19 outbreak. Staff from United Way of Forsyth County and The Winston-Salem Foundation understand that operating support offers the greatest flexibility and is what nonprofits need most in order to quickly deploy resources to those who need them.

What size grants will the COVID-19 Response Fund make?

Award amounts will vary based on organizational capacity, scope of services provided, community needs and total resources available. During the first phase, the total amount organizations can request is $100,000.

How are grantees selected and how quickly will decisions be made?

The grant application is now available online. Applications are being reviewed and grant decisions made by the following representatives: Deborah T. Wilson – United Way of Forsyth County, Nora D. Ferrell and Jason W. Baisden – Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, Maegan Gomez – Community Representative, Courtney James – Community Representative, Peggy S. Reingold – Wells Fargo, Mamie Sutphin – Reynolds American, Inc., Cheryl Lindsay – Hanesbrands, Brent A. Waddell – Truist, Reginald McCaskill – Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity, and Sandra Fishel-Booth – The Winston-Salem Foundation.

Organizations will receive a grant decision within two weeks after application, but ideally sooner. Grants will be publicized and released on a rolling basis as fundraising continues throughout the outbreak and recovery phases of the crisis, making it possible to move resources quickly and adapt to evolving needs in subsequent funding phases.

How will the grant committee know what needs are more in demand in the community?

The Winston-Salem Foundation, United Way of Forsyth County and the Center for Nonprofits are consistently monitoring the most requested services to 2-1-1 in Forsyth County and what resources families and individuals are requesting through their community partners.
Who will process the grants (send the funds out to nonprofit organizations)?

The Winston-Salem Foundation will administer grants from the Fund via ACH, or by check, if needed, for nonprofits to receive the funds as quickly as possible.

How can I find out which nonprofits the COVID-19 Response Fund has supported?

Information about grantees will be posted on United Way of Forsyth County, the City of Winston-Salem, and The Winston-Salem Foundation websites, including short descriptions of the services and support they are providing. This should help the community navigate available resources.

My organization is serving people affected by COVID-19. How can we be considered?

We understand the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting nonprofits in many ways, including increased demand for services and loss of revenue due to closures and event cancellations. In order to move resources quickly, organizations are initially requested to share their needs on the online portal that went live March 25. Organizations may be asked to submit additional information to be considered for funding. Grants will be directed towards services providing immediate response to the needs arising from the COVID-19 event and will not be able to provide lost revenue due to cancellations or suspension of fundraising activity.

Who is making the COVID-19 Fund possible?

Please visit covid19forsyth.org to review a complete list of donors to the fund.

I want to donate. Where should I send my donation?

Contributions may be made at covid19forsyth.org.

Can I restrict my contribution to a specific organization?

No. Our hope is that the COVID-19 Response Fund can flexibly and quickly meet needs wherever they arise in Forsyth County. We encourage you to continue supporting your favorite nonprofit organizations directly. If you are able, we would also appreciate your financial support for the COVID-19 Response Fund.

I own a small business, are there resources for me?

Information about resources for small businesses is available at the NC Business Relief fund website.