



For Immediate Release:

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United Way Selected to Oversee Distribution of Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Funds to Local Agencies.

Strengthening Local Safety Nets to Support Vulnerable Families in Need.

Sunbury and Bloomsburg, PA, November 20th, 2024 – Susquehanna Valley United Way (SVUW) has been chosen to oversee the distribution of \$100,013 in federal funds under the Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program.

“We are grateful for the opportunity to disburse these funds to organizations across our region,” said Christine Orlando, Director of Community Impact at SVUW. *“We are fortunate to have existing resources in place in our community to ensure these funds will aid community members most in need.”*

A recent report from United For ALICE (unitedforalice.org) paints a concerning picture for many families in our region. As high as 47% of households fall below the ALICE Threshold. This ALICE population, defined as those living above the poverty line but unable to afford basic necessities, represents a growing segment of our community struggling to stay afloat.

“ALICE households and households in poverty are forced to make tough decisions every day, such as deciding between quality childcare or paying the rent,” said Adrienne Mael, President/CEO. *“These funds will directly support nonprofits that provide essential services to these households, offering a lifeline to families struggling to make ends meet and ensuring our community has the resources it needs.”*

These funds will supplement emergency food assistance and shelter programs in Northumberland, Union, Snyder, and Columbia Counties and were made available through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency for Phases 41 in all four counties. The specific amounts available per county are: Northumberland County – \$40,583; Union County – \$13,579; Snyder County – \$16,114; and Columbia County – \$29,737.

A national board chaired by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency selected SVUW to distribute the funds to expand the capacity of food and shelter programs in high-need areas around the country. Representatives including individuals from the American Red Cross; Catholic Charities, USA; National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA; The Jewish Federation of North America; The Salvation Army; the Union-Snyder Community Action Agency, Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc.; The ARC Susquehanna Valley; and Susquehanna Valley United Way will make up the local board and determine how these funds will be distributed to local service agencies in the area as well as any additional funds made available under this phase of the program.

Under the terms of the grant, local agencies selected to receive funds must: 1) be private voluntary non-profits or units of government, 2) be eligible to receive federal funds, 3) have an accounting system, 4) practice nondiscrimination, 5) have demonstrated the capability to deliver emergency food and/or shelter programs, and 6) if they are a private voluntary organization, they have a voluntary board.

Public or private voluntary agencies interested in applying for Emergency Food and Shelter Program funds must go to www.svuw.org/efsp. The deadline to apply is Friday, November 29, 2024.

If you have any questions or need additional information about the EFSP application or process, please contact Christine Orlando, Director of Community Impact at SVUW, at corlando@svuw.org or (570) 988-0993.

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About Susquehanna Valley United Way:

The United Way fights for the Health, Educational, and Financial Stability of every person in Columbia, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union Counties. We do this by addressing the root cause of social issues and serving as a leader, partner, and catalyst to identify and address areas of need by engaging communities to develop long-term social change. We are located at 228 Arch Street in Sunbury, PA, and in the new Mulberry Mills Building at 160 W. 6th Street in Bloomsburg, PA. To learn more, please visit www.svuw.org.