

## Framing the Need

### Here in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro. . .

Social and economic disparities are impacting thousands of our neighbors, making it hard for them to afford the essentials they need to grow, thrive and provide for themselves and their families.

### Did you know?



Out of the top 100 metropolitan areas, Omaha has the highest percentage of working poor. **70%** of families in poverty in our area have at least one worker, but are still unable to make ends meet. (*American Community Survey 5-year Estimates 2015-2019, Table B17016*)



More than **50,000** local families are paying too much on rent, making it harder for them to afford other essentials. (*Source: ACS 2019 5-year data*)



The poverty rate for people of color in our community is **more than twice** the overall poverty rate in our community. Women also have a poverty rate over our metro area average of 10.3%. (*American Community Survey 5-year Estimates 2015-2019, Table S1701*)



**40%** of Americans have less than \$300 in savings, meaning relatively small, unexpected expenses – such as a car repair or medical bill – can leave families struggling to afford food or rent. (*Go Banking*)



Non-Hispanic Black adults (**48%**) and Hispanic or Latino adults (**46%**) are more likely to report symptoms of anxiety and/or depressive disorder than Non-Hispanic White adults (41%). Historically, these communities of color have faced challenges accessing mental health care. (*Kaiser Family Foundation*)



Among those with family income less than \$50,000, **35%** went without some medical care because of cost. (*Federal Reserve: Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in 2020 - May 2021*)

## Recovering from COVID-19

COVID-19 created an entirely new demographic of need in our community and compounded existing challenges. And for some, the road to recovery may be just as challenging as this past year, taking months or even years. While many economic indicators have returned to pre-pandemic level, experts predict recovery will be delayed for low-wage workers, women, and people of color.

Experts estimate food insecurity increased **15%** in Douglas and Sarpy County, and **26%** in Pottawattamie County between 2019 and 2020, and we still have not returned to normal levels.  
*(Feeding America)*

Students have experienced learning losses due to COVID-19, with their math skills being most severely impacted. And across the board, disadvantaged populations experienced more severe setbacks in all subjects. Yet for every student in afterschool care, there are at least one to two waiting. *(McKinsey & Company and Omaha World-Herald)*

Industries with a high percentage of women workers were impacted the hardest by COVID-19. **4.2 million** fewer women are on the payroll than at the start of the pandemic, compared with 3.5 million fewer men. *(Bureau of Labor Statistics)*

During the pandemic, adults in households with job loss or lower incomes reported higher rates of symptoms of mental illness than those without job or income loss (**53% vs. 32%**).  
*(Kaiser Family Foundation)*

### But YOU can make a difference.

This past year was one of the most difficult for our community in recent memory. Yet – in an incredible testament to this community’s caring spirit – we didn’t give up or back down. As the end of the pandemic draws near, we have an opportunity to carry this incredible sense of community spirit forward.

**By joining together with thousands of others to support the United Way campaign, you create a circle of support around our community.** Your dollars fund more than 100 nonprofit programs that are addressing social and economic disparities and helping people here in our community meet their most pressing basic needs so they can begin rebuilding their lives.

While we know that life after COVID-19 can never be the same as it was before, we also know that – united – we can lift each other up and build an even stronger tomorrow for everyone here in our community.

To learn more about United Way-funded programs, visit [unitedwaymidlands.org/programs](https://unitedwaymidlands.org/programs).  
To make a donation, please give through your company’s United Way campaign or visit [unitedwaymidlands.org/donate](https://unitedwaymidlands.org/donate).



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