



United Way of the Bay Area

# United Way Non-Coercion Policy

Giving is a personal matter and decision; no form of coercion is acceptable to United Way. United Way understands that fundraising success depends on how much potential donors know and understand the organizations seeking support. Fundraising should always be conducted in a voluntary manner; coercion creates animosity, hinders communication and understanding and eventually leads to decreased support.

For years, United Way has been concerned about the use of undue pressure in fundraising and we are opposed to any type of coercion. Any semblance of pressure—whether real, implied or perceived—is contradictory to the operating standards of United Way. United Way works to prevent the use of coercion in their campaigns by encouraging peer solicitation, rather than solicitation of employees by managers. In addition, United Ways conduct training programs for fund-raisers that stress information and education, and discourage the practice of seeking 100 percent participation in a campaign, as that may inadvertently encourage coercion.

To underscore their conviction about this policy, United Way of the Bay Area's Board of directors adopted the following policy statement:

The Board of Directors of United Way of the Bay Area believes that the most responsive contributors are those who have the opportunity to become informed and involved. A well-planned campaign with an effective communications program, conducted by committed volunteers, will ensure responsive contributors. While we have always been unalterably opposed to coercion, we do recognize a responsibility to state our beliefs formally, as freedom of choice is a basic tenet of our democratic society.

## **Q: What if I feel pressured to give?**

A: United Way has a non-coercion policy, so no one should be forced to give. United Way's community impact is made possible because so many people give voluntarily. Any semblance of pressure—whether real, implied or perceived—is contradictory to the operating standards of United Way. After all, volunteerism is what the United Way is all about. Your decision is a personal matter. If you feel that you have been pressured to give, please contact your Employee Campaign Chairperson to express your concern, or contact United Way of the Bay Area Contributor Services at (800) 273-1779.