

PUBLIC POLICY PLATFORM & FRAMEWORK



UNITED WAY
BAY AREA



Vision

We envision an equitable Bay Area where all people have the opportunities and resources needed to thrive.

Our Strategy

We work toward our vision by mobilizing our partners for action across our eight counties. This means we advocate together for policies that dismantle the root causes of poverty and build systems that work for everyone.

Mobilizing the Region

United Way Bay Area (UWBA) is a convener and trusted connector with deep relationships, a trusted brand, and the ability to mobilize networks across the Bay Area's nonprofit and civic landscape. We bridge the gap between traditional policy organizations and community organizers, service providers and research institutes, and philanthropy and the public sector. Through activities like public education campaigns, direct advocacy with elected officials, and joining coalitions for policy campaigns, we leverage UWBA's unique assets to advance equitable solutions that address root causes of poverty.

Real Insights

Our advocacy is grounded in the lived experiences of community members and in data from our impact initiatives, including 211, SparkPoint, Free Tax Help, Emergency Food and Shelter Program, and Youth Opportunity Pathways. These resources provide us with unique insights into the systemic barriers that our communities face. Combining these insights with evidence-based strategies, we shape policy conversations and elevate community-driven solutions.

Each year, we develop an annual priorities agenda comprised of specific legislation, budget items, and local initiatives to guide advocacy efforts for the given year. These priorities will be informed by community needs and UWBA program insights, current policy landscape, and organizational strengths and capacity.

Our Approach

Centering our work:

We will include the communities we serve in our impact work, goals, strategies, fundraising, and operations. We will listen to and amplify community voices to affect change on the issues that impact them the most.

Collaboration:

We will initiate and support open, honest, and mutual relationships to break down silos and achieve common goals.

Speaking up and speaking out:

We will stand with equity and justice even when it is unpopular or uncomfortable.

Leverage the United Way network:

Through partnership across our state with United Ways of California and across our nation with United Way Worldwide, we multiply our advocacy efforts at all levels of government.

Guiding Community Outcomes & Policy Strategies

People's Basic Needs Are Met

We support policies that:

- Ensure access to services such as emergency shelter and food
- Increase information and resources needed to navigate the safety net system
- Increase information and support to access public benefits

People Have High Quality, Living Wage Jobs & Careers

We support policies that:

- Ensure access to social capital and social networks
- Increase opportunities and support to achieve educational and career goals

People Are Financially Stable And Prosperous

We support policies that:

- Ensure people's income matches our region's cost of living
- Increase opportunities to build credit, savings, and wealth
- Decrease the racial wealth gap

People Have Safe, Stable, And Affordable Housing

We support policies that:

- Increase affordable housing
- Decrease evictions and displacement
- Preserve the region's current stock of affordable housing

People Are Able To Live Their Lives With Dignity & Agency

We support policies that:

- Address systemic and structural inequities that disproportionately impact marginalized populations who have been historically and persistently disempowered and oppressed.
- Advance justice, safety, and security for all.
- Account for and respect the intersectionality of people's lives and our communities.