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Requests for Help Skyrocket as Shutdown Becomes Longest in U.S. History:

Utah Philanthropists Rally Support for United Way 211 Emergency Relief Fund

-As requests for support rise by 90%, the Mark and Kathie Miller Foundation donates \$100,000 to the Emergency Relief Fund and calls on others to support Utahns impacted by the federal shutdown-

SALT LAKE CITY, UT – November 5, 2025 – As of today, the federal shutdown is now the longest in U.S. history with no end in sight, leaving an estimated 40,000 federal employees living in Utah furloughed or working without pay, and over 86,000 households without federally funded benefits. The recent announcement that the USDA will use contingency funds to pay partial SNAP payments to families will not be enough for Utahns who depend on federal work supports to meet their basic needs.

Over the past week, 211 Utah experienced a significant uptick in activity across nearly all platforms. For the week of October 24–31, total daily interactions rose to an average of 1,040 per day, compared to 763 per day earlier in the shutdown. This is a 36% week-over-week increase and a 90% jump from pre-shutdown averages.

The top three requests for support through 211 Utah are:

- Housing assistance (30%*)
- Utility assistance (30%)
- Food assistance (25%*)

**Percentage of increase in interaction volume since September 1*

Digital engagement grew even more sharply. Web sessions surged 48% from the previous period (increasing from 422 to 628 per day), now showing an overall 180% increase compared to January–August levels. A newly tracked metric, web searches, continues to stand out, climbing from 834 to 1,318 per day. This represents a 58% increase over the prior period and a 79% overall jump from pre-shutdown activity.

“Our 211 Service Navigators are making countless calls to providers, advocating for callers, and ensuring services are received,” shared Crim. “Their commitment, resilience, and heart truly embody our mission—helping the community stay connected to vital resources, even as many organizations have had to close their doors.”

To respond to this increase in needs, [United Way of Salt Lake](#), [United Way of Northern Utah](#), and [United Way of Central & Southern Utah](#) are maximizing outreach efforts through the [United Way 211 Emergency Relief Fund](#), raising nearly \$120,000 to date. Donors across the state are showing support for their communities as the shutdown continues. The Mark and Kathie Miller Foundation stepped up and donated \$100,000 to provide immediate support and to be a catalyst to others in the philanthropic community. The Foundation’s contribution supports the United Way of Salt Lake service area. (Salt Lake, Davis, Summit, and Tooele counties)

Thanks to Mark and Kathie Miller, as well as dozens of everyday Utahns who donated on average \$128, the first distribution of funds has already been made directly to federal airport employees (\$45k), to Utah Community Action in Salt Lake City (\$45k), and to Catholic Community Services Joyce Hansen Hall Food Bank in Ogden (\$5k). The goal is to make weekly distributions to immediately send funds to Utahns and bolster local partners providing essential support services. This week, Crossroads Urban Center in Salt Lake City was added as an additional community partner to receive funds and primarily help with utility and food assistance.

“Mark and Kathie Miller continually demonstrate a relentless commitment to ensuring Utahns are thriving through financial contributions and actively engaging in communities that need it most,” said Bill Crim, President & CEO of United Way of Salt Lake. “We are grateful for their ongoing partnership and their efforts to rally support for the Emergency Relief Fund.”

“We are deeply grateful to everyone who has already stepped forward to support our Emergency Relief Fund. Your generosity is helping families put food on the table and keep essential needs met during an incredibly uncertain time,” said Julie Johnson, President & CEO of United Way of Northern Utah. “But the need continues to grow – especially for those affected by the suspension of SNAP benefits. Every contribution, no matter the size, makes a difference. Together, we can ensure that no one in our community is left behind.”

With uncertainty about how long the shutdown will last, it is our responsibility to continue raising resources and awareness in response to the growing need for assistance from Utahns through the 211 Service Navigation Center.

How to Support the United Way 211 Emergency Relief Fund

To support and learn more about the United Way 211 Emergency Relief Fund, visit: uw.org/relieffund. Donations will be used to bolster local organizations supporting families affected by the shutdown of the federal government.

Have You Been Impacted by the Government Shutdown?

If you or someone you know is a furloughed federal employee, unpaid essential worker, or are otherwise impacted by the ongoing shutdown of the federal government, dial 211 or visit 211utah.org to get connected to 10,000+ services and resources.

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About 211 Utah

211 Utah is the single access point to Utah's 10,000 different social service programs. Supported by United Ways of Utah (United Way of Salt Lake, United Way of Central and Southern Utah, and United Way of Northern Utah), this vital service helps people navigate complex systems by providing information, support, and one-on-one assistance. 211 Utah is available by phone, online, chat, text, app, and email. For more information, visit 211utah.org.

About United Way of Salt Lake

United Way of Salt Lake mobilizes individuals and communities to action to support basic needs and education, so 100% of kids and families are thriving. For more information, visit uw.org.

About United Way of Northern Utah

United Way of Northern Utah unites people and organizations to build healthy, stable, well-educated communities where individuals, families and neighborhoods thrive. For more information, visit uwnu.org

About United Way of Central & Southern Utah

For over 60 years, United Way of Utah County has been dedicated to building stronger communities through education, financial stability, and health programs. Our mission is to uplift individuals and families, helping them thrive at every stage of life by providing essential support like early education resources, mental health support, and opportunities for community engagement. For more information, visit unitedwayuc.org.