

2026 - 2027

# EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR GUIDE



**UNITED WAY**  
Champaign County

# WHAT IS A WORKPLACE CAMPAIGN?

A workplace campaign is a company fundraising effort that gives employees the opportunity to support United Way of Champaign County through payroll deduction, a one-time gift, or other giving options.

Most campaigns take place over a designated period of time—typically one to three weeks—and include employee communications, fundraising activities, and opportunities to learn about the impact of United Way's work in our community.

## A TYPICAL WORKPLACE CAMPAIGN INCLUDES:

- A campaign kickoff or announcement
- Employee giving opportunities through payroll deduction or direct donations
- Campaign communications, such as emails, flyers, posters, and digital content
- Fun engagement activities like raffles, contests, dress-up days, or fundraising events
- Information about local community needs and how United Way addresses them
- Recognition and celebration of employee participation and generosity

## YOUR ROLE AS EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR

As an Employee Campaign Coordinator (ECC), you play a crucial role in the success of your company's United Way campaign, acting as a bridge between United Way and your colleagues. With our resources and support, you'll educate your coworkers about United Way's initiatives and motivate them to take action. Whether you volunteered or were invited, we value your dedication and are here to support you at every step of the way.

## ECC DUTIES:

- Working with United Way to set campaign goals and timelines
- Sharing campaign materials and impact information
- Coordinating fundraising activities and incentives
- Encouraging employee participation
- Celebrating successes throughout the campaign

## MORE THAN A FUNDRAISER: MAKE IT YOUR OWN

The best fundraising and incentive ideas reflect your company's culture. Choose what feels fun, inclusive, and engaging for your team. No matter which activities you try, every dollar raised helps create lasting change right here in Champaign County.

A workplace campaign is more than a fundraiser—it's an opportunity to engage employees around a **shared purpose**. Through education, participation, and friendly fun, campaigns help employees **connect** with their community while supporting programs that **strengthen** Champaign County.

# CAMPAIGN BEST PRACTICES

## ASSEMBLE A TEAM

Invite team members from various departments to help plan and execute your campaign. This helps spread the word and ensures all employees feel included and encouraged to participate.

- Recruit representatives from different departments or locations.
- Assign specific roles such as communications, events, incentives, and campaign tracking.
- Hold a short planning meeting before the campaign begins.

## GET LEADERSHIP INVOLVED

Employees are more likely to participate when they see company leaders actively supporting the campaign and sharing why they give.

- Ask leaders to share a personal message about why they support United Way.
- Invite executives to speak at the campaign kickoff.
- Include leaders in fundraising activities like raffles, challenges, or themed events.

## INCENTIVIZE PARTICIPATION

Fun incentives can help create excitement and encourage employees to get involved.

- Offer gift cards, company swag, or reserved parking spots as prizes.
- Hold daily or weekly prize drawings for participants.
- Reward departments that achieve the highest participation rates.

## COMMUNICATE EARLY AND OFTEN

Consistent communication helps build awareness, maintain momentum, and keep employees engaged throughout the campaign.

- Announce campaign dates and events several weeks in advance.
- Send regular email updates highlighting goals, progress, and upcoming activities.
- Display posters, flyers, and digital signage in common areas.

## CELEBRATE AND THANK DONORS

Recognizing participation helps employees feel valued and reinforces the impact of their generosity.

- Share campaign results and celebrate milestones reached.
- Thank donors through emails, newsletters, or staff meetings.
- Highlight the difference employee contributions will make in the community.

# CAMPAIGN CHECKLIST

## BEFORE

- Planning Meeting-** Schedule a meeting with your United Way of Champaign County contact to kick off your planning process.
- Recruit Help-** Based on the size of your organization, recruit team members from across departments to help plan events and communicate to employees.
- Set a Timeline-** Establish your campaign start date, key milestones, and end date.
- Order Supplies-** Submit your supply order for physical and/or digital materials and pledge forms.
- Set a Goal-** Review last year's campaign totals and set this year's targets- a dollar amount, a participation rate, or both.
- Plan Activities-** Map out any special events, theme days, or volunteer activities you want to incorporate.
- Build a Communication Plan-** Decide how and when you'll reach employees- emails, digital platforms, in-person events, employee mailboxes, and more.
- Engage Leadership-** Present your plan to your CEO and leadership team for approval, including your timeline, goal, communication strategy, and corporate gift confirmation.

## DURING

- Host Your Kickoff-** Launch your campaign with an in-person meeting or email/video announcement. Invite a speaker from UWCC to present- even 10 minutes makes an impact.
- Send Midpoint Reminder-** At the halfway mark, remind employees of the campaign deadline and how to turn in their pledge forms.
- Send Final Reminder-** As the deadline approaches, send one last nudge to make sure no one misses their chance to give.
- Track Progress-** Keep running totals and share updates with your CEO, your team, and your UWCC contact throughout the campaign.

## AFTER

- Collect Pledges-** Ensure all pledges are received and follow up on any corporate contribution or employee match.
- Calculate Results-** Review results with your committee members, and prepare your final report envelope for your United Way Contact.
- Announce Results-** Announce the campaign results to all employees and post campaign photos on your organization's social media networks.
- Evaluate-** Analyze the challenges and successes of your campaign. Keep the notes handy for next year.
- Thank Donors and Participants-** Celebrate with an event, letter, or email from your CEO and a presentation from a United Way representative.
- Talk to your campaign coordinator about how United Way can continue to improve its service.

# SAMPLE WORKPLACE CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE

## MONDAY

### Campaign Kickoff

Host an all-company kickoff to share the importance of United Way! Invite someone from United Way to speak to your team.

## TUESDAY

### Campaign Activity #1

Compete in a quiz about coworkers, your company, United Way, your company's campaign theme, or any topic for a chance to win a prize. Other activities could include photo competitions like pet matching, baby matching, or an office or virtual scavenger hunt.

## WEDNESDAY

### Volunteer Day

Encourage employees volunteer by hosting a collection drive or by heading out to a nonprofit partner to volunteer.

## THURSDAY

### Campaign Activity #2

For another campaign event, use time to your advantage. Popular fall activities include a pumpkin carving competition, chili cook-off, Halloween costume contest, cookie baking contest, and more.

## FRIDAY

### Closing Celebration

Celebrate a successful campaign, and encourage last minute donations, by bringing your team together for a final day of fun! This could include a potluck lunch or cookout, virtual games, awarding raffle prizes, and sharing the impact of your donations.

## ALL WEEK

### Auction

Ask employees to donate items or skills and host an online auction as a way to raise additional funds. Auction items can include a donated photography session, babysitting, home cooked meals, an extra vacation day, and more.

# ENGAGEMENT IDEAS

## Friendly Challenges

### Change Wars

Departments compete to collect the highest total in their collection jar.

#### How it works:

- Coins count as positive points for your team.
- Dollar bills placed in another team's jar count as negative points.
- The team with the highest total wins.

### Office Challenge

Raise donations by encouraging leadership participation in fun workplace challenges such as:

- Pie in the Face
- Dunk Tank
- Push-Up Challenge
- Other workplace-friendly competitions

### Trivia, Bingo, or Games

- Trivia contests
- Bingo games
- Board game tournament
- Video game competition

Charge an entry fee and award small prizes to winners.

## Contests & Voting

### Cutest Pet Contest

Employees submit pet photos and coworkers vote with donations.

### Childhood Photo Contest

Display childhood photos and have employees guess who's who or vote for their favorites.

### Best Costume Contest

Perfect for Halloween or themed celebrations.

### Kids Coloring Contest

Invite employees' children to participate and let coworkers vote on their favorite entries.

### Pumpkin Decorating

Painted, carved, or decorated pumpkins compete for votes.

### Door Decorating Contest

Departments or individuals decorate office doors or workspaces around a theme.

## Food & Beverage

### Bake (or No-Bake) Sale

Sell homemade treats—or ask employees to donate to avoid baking altogether.

### Chili or Soup Cook-Off

Employees bring their favorite recipes, coworkers pay to sample and vote.

### Ice Cream Social

Create a sundae bar and charge by scoop or topping.

### Coffee Cart

Bring coffee, tea, and snacks around the office for donations.

### Themed Potluck

Examples include:

- State Fair Favorites
  - International Cuisine
  - Comfort Foods
  - Tailgate Foods
- Charge a small participation fee.



The trophy icon denotes campaign strategies that have shown high levels of engagement.

## CAMPAIGN TIP #1: LEVERAGE LEADERSHIP

**Leverage Leadership:** Visible leadership participation is one of the strongest drivers of campaign success. Encourage executives and managers to actively support the campaign through communications, friendly competitions, kickoff events, and personal participation.

# ENGAGEMENT IDEAS

## Dress-Up/ Theme Days

### Jeans/ Dress Down Day

Employees donate to wear jeans or enjoy a relaxed dress code for the day.

### Jersey or Sports Day

Rep your favorite team or school, pay to play, and turn the office into a sea of team colors for the day!

### Hat Day

Employees make a donation to wear their favorite hat, cap, or themed headwear to work for the day. Add a little extra fun by hosting a "Best Hat" vote or contest with a small prize for the winner.

### Theme Days

Pick a theme and encourage employees to donate to participate in themed activities—like a photo booth, competition, or office decorations contest. Ideas include:

- Decades Day
- Holiday Theme
- Favorite Color Day
- Superhero Day
- Career Day

## Auctions & Raffles

### Daily Drawings

Offer available resources (sports tickets, parking spots, donated experiences, etc.) The sooner they pledge during the campaign, the more drawings they qualify for.

### Unique Experiences:

Auction or raffle special opportunities like:

- CEO for a Day
- Lunch with Leadership
- Preferred Parking
- Extra Casual Day Pass

### Raffle

Hold a 50/50 raffle, or sell tickets for donated prizes such as:

- Gift baskets
- Event tickets
- Company merchandise
- Reserved parking spots

### Silent Auction

Auction donated items, gift baskets, experiences, or services.

## Community Building

### Compliment-O-Grams

Donate to send a note of appreciation or encouragement to a coworker. Great for both in-person and remote teams.

### Gratitude Wall

Employees make a donation to post a message recognizing a coworker, sharing what they appreciate about their team, or celebrating something positive happening in the workplace.

### Spirit Week

Choose a theme per day and tie participation to a donation:

- Crazy Socks Day
- Pajama Day
- Twin Day
- Spirit Day

### Guessing Jar

Employees donate for chances to guess the number of candies or small items in a jar, with the winner taking home the prize.



The trophy icon denotes campaign strategies that have shown high levels of engagement.

## CAMPAIGN TIP #2: INCENTIVIZE EARLY GIVING

**Incentivize Early Giving:** Offer employees who submit their pledge early additional chances to win prizes through daily drawings. Examples include reserved parking spots, event tickets, lunch with leadership, extra PTO hours, or company swag.

# INCENTIVE IDEAS

Running a United Way campaign at your workplace is about more than raising dollars—it's about building excitement, teamwork, and community. Fun activities and creative incentives can spark participation, create friendly competition, and help employees feel more connected to the impact they're making.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

## Time-Off Rewards

**Give employees the gift of time.**

- Extra vacation hour or day
- "Flee at 3" coupon (leave work early)
- Long lunch with a food delivery gift card
- Half-day Friday
- Late-start Monday with breakfast or coffee

## Food & Treats

**A little food goes a long way in boosting participation.**

- Ice cream social
- Pizza party
- Food truck lunch
- Snack basket or candy assortment
- Baked goods
- Coffee delivery

## Workplace Perks

**Simple incentives employees love.**

- Prime parking spot
- Casual/jeans day
- Company swag
- Recognition in newsletters, meetings, or internal communications
- Carnival or fair-style celebration for campaign milestones

## Leadership Experiences

**Create memorable opportunities with company leaders.**

- Lunch with your manager
- Golf with the boss
- Leadership-sponsored prizes or experiences
- Car wash provided by leadership or coworkers

## Home & Lifestyle

**Perfect for remote, hybrid, or in-person teams.**

- Custom Zoom background
- At-home movie night or happy hour package
- Gift cards to local businesses and restaurants
- Online team experiences (murder mystery, trivia, etc.)

## Quick Tip!

The most successful campaigns often combine **one grand prize, several smaller incentives, and frequent recognition** throughout the campaign to keep excitement and participation high.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## HOW MUCH OF MY DONATION STAYS LOCAL?

Every dollar from undesignated donations contributes directly to grants for funded programs in Champaign County, supported by the endowment and a select few corporate gifts. This means that 100% of the undesignated funds raised during the campaign goes straight to program services.

## CAN I DIRECT MY GIFT TO A SPECIFIC ORGANIZATION?

Yes, donors have the option to allocate all or part of their contribution to a specific funded program or any external 501(c)(3) organization, without incurring any administrative fees. However, it's worth noting that United Way's expertise in evaluating local needs often allows your undesignated gift to make a greater impact.

## WHEN DOES THE CAMPAIGN RUN?

Most individual workplace campaigns typically take place during August to November, although other timelines can certainly be considered. For more information on the best timing for your workplace campaign, please consult your United Way of Champaign County representative.

## WHY ARE EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGNS AND ECCS SO IMPORTANT?

More than 50% of the funding for the United Way of Champaign County comes from individual contributions made through workplace campaigns. Every donation, regardless of size, plays a vital role in helping United Way make a difference in our community. None of this would be possible without Employee Campaign Coordinators (ECCs) like you.

## WHO DO I CALL IF I HAVE A QUESTION THAT ISN'T HERE?

Reach out to your UWCC contact or visit <https://www.unitedwaychampaign.org/> We're happy to help!



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# UNITED IS THE WAY



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