



United Way of Portage County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Heather Rainone

330.297.1424, ext. 3

hrrainone@uwportage.org

United Way of Portage County has raised \$20,000 for Emergency Food and Shelter Programs

RAVENNA, OHIO — United Way of Portage County has raised \$20,000 toward replacing the \$80,000 in Emergency Food and Shelter Program funding that was unexpectedly halted due to executive orders impacting portions of FEMA funding. This local fundraising effort is part of a community-wide response to preserve essential services that support Portage County residents facing food insecurity, utility shutoffs, and housing instability.

For more than 40 years — since EFSP's inception in 1983 — Portage County has relied on annual federal grants ranging from \$40,000 to \$80,000 through the United Way EFSP National Program. These funds have been critical in supporting a network of nonprofit and governmental agencies that provide direct housing, utility, and food assistance across every community in Portage County. The suspension of EFSP grants poses immediate risks to thousands of local residents.

To address this urgent need, United Way of Portage County, together with partner organizations, launched a community-driven campaign to raise \$80,000 to replace the lost EFSP funding. All contributions made through this effort directly assist Portage County residents.

The \$20,000 raised so far will be split among partner agencies — \$8,000 to Axxess Family Services for its Housing and Emergency Support Services program and rent support; \$8,000 to Change Hunger food pantries in Portage to assist with food security; and \$4,000 to Community Action Council for utility assistance.

Impact of EFSP Funding in Portage County

- Supports seven Change Hunger food pantries serving every Portage County community.
- Assists all demographics and circumstances — bridging emergency gaps for residents in crisis.



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- Prevents hundreds of utility disruptions, especially during extreme winter and summer temperatures.
- Supports programs preventing homelessness before it occurs.
- Helps renters and homeowners avoid water utility shutoff.

About United Way of Portage County

United Way of Portage County's mission is to unite people with resources to improve the quality of life of families and individuals in Portage County. We envision a Portage County where no resident is without food, no child is without tools to learn, and no one is without access to care. United Way focus areas are:

- [Youth Education](#): To improve reading proficiency at a young age. Together with our partners, we offer children access to quality early learning programs, literacy programs, and summer learning opportunities.
- [Public Health](#): To promote healthy lives by building a healthier, more resilient community by promoting healthy eating and physical activity, expanding access to quality health care and integrating health into early childhood development.
- [Critical Needs](#): To ensure that every person's critical needs, such as food, shelter, and clothing, are met and supported. Together, we help people who are going through tough times get the assistance they need.

Our goals are ambitious, but with your help, and by utilizing our core strengths — a national network, Local Board Leadership, committed partners and public engagement capacity — we can achieve them. Visit uwportage.org and facebook.com/uwportage to learn more about our service to the community, how to volunteer or to donate.

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