



United Way
of London & Middlesex



Canvasser Guide

without you, there would be no way

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Table of contents

Role of Canvasser	2
Successful canvassing	2
Re-canvassing and tips to remember	4
Giving guidelines and United Way tax tips	5
United Way impact areas	6
Community investments	8

Role of the Canvasser

By becoming a Canvasser, you are joining a group of dedicated volunteers who will raise millions of dollars this year in workplaces throughout London and Middlesex County.

As a United Way Canvasser, you are the person closest to the donor. Your understanding of United Way and community impact will assist you in asking your coworkers for their personal contributions.

A Canvasser is someone who acts as an ambassador for your workplace campaign and provides coworkers with the opportunity to make an informed decision about charitable giving by:

- Explaining what United Way does and why it is important to support its work
- Requesting donations from coworkers
- Providing United Way member agency information to those who may need it
- Answering questions
- Thanking donors

We thank you for volunteering to help those in need in the communities of London and Middlesex County.

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Successful canvassing

1. Prepare

- Get informed about United Way by reviewing the package of materials provided to you
- Attend your canvassing training session
- Familiarize yourself with the programs and services United Way supports by reviewing the information provided in this guide or by visiting www.uwlondon.on.ca
- Make your own pledge first, so you can ask others to join you in giving
- Identify those people on your list who are past donors and approach them first
- In communication with your Employee Campaign Coordinator (ECC), plan or promote incentive draws for return pledge cards to encourage commitment to the campaign

2. Inform

- Explain what United Way does and why it's important to support United Way's work
- Outline your campaign timelines, special events, incentive prizes
- Provide information on United Way through brochures and presentations

3. Ask

- Arrange brief meetings with each staff member you are assigned to canvass by calling ahead or sending them an email
- Approach people with whom you have a good personal relationship. This will help you build confidence and momentum in your canvassing
- Do not interrupt someone at an inconvenient time. Remember, if you make the effort to be as considerate and as flexible as possible, there are very few people who will deny you two to five minutes of their time
- Thank your colleague for agreeing to see you and for his/her past support
- Ask every potential donor whether you can count on his/her support this year
- Explain the purpose of your visit. Talk about your United Way experience or story; speaking from the heart is far more convincing than reciting a memorized speech

Try the following approach:

"If you've contributed to United Way before, thank you. Let me take a few minutes to tell you how United Way has changed lives in our community."

- Explain your own personal reasons for supporting United Way (Have you or someone you know used a United Way funded program or service?)
- Talk about a program area that you feel strongly about or discuss a certain agency that you have researched or visited
- Outline key facts in your organization's campaign, e.g. past achievements, campaign goal, prizes, events
- Encourage payroll deductions by giving each employee a pledge card and a United Way brochure
- Use giving guidelines (see page 6) to suggest a specific donation amount (e.g. the cost of a cup of coffee per day or increase their donation by one or two dollars per pay)
- Ask every potential donor whether you can count on his/her support this year.
- Give a timeline for the donor to return his/her pledge card. This is especially effective when there are prizes or draws for early returns
- If someone is unable to respond immediately, be sure to establish a date for follow-up.
- Let each person know that you would be happy to answer any questions they might have either now or at a later date
- Listen carefully to any concerns. If you are unable to answer a question, make note of it and tell your co-worker that you will get back to him/her. Contact your Canvassing Coordinator, Employee Campaign Coordinator, committee chair(s) or United Way staff contact to obtain a response

4. Thank

- It is important to thank everyone, even those who do not donate
- Thank people for their time as well as their contributions

5. Follow-up

- Follow-up with people who don't return their pledge card
- Follow-up with anyone who was away or out of the office
- Follow up to provide answers to people's questions

Re-canvassing

In some campaigns (or in particular areas/departments), there is an occasional need to re-canvass people after the initial approach has been made. Your ECC can help you develop an effective re-canvassing strategy.

Re-canvassing strategies:

- Organize a special group meeting and show the United Way video if people have not had the chance to see it
- Distribute a second pledge card asking for people's support
- Launch a communications campaign (posters, flyers, etc.) that emphasizes the goal and progress to date and urges those who have not yet done so to submit their pledge card
- Report your results promptly and regularly to your ECC

Tips to Remember

- The number one reason people don't give is because they weren't asked
- Be sure to ask everyone assigned to you
- Remember you are asking on behalf of the whole community
- Don't fake it. If you can't answer a question, obtain the correct answer and get back to the donor
- Be yourself! Your enthusiasm and commitment will motivate others to give
- Don't take things personally. If someone says no, try to determine why and address his or her objections.
- If you encounter a problem, remind that person that you are a volunteer taking time out of your own day to approach him/her on behalf of United Way
- If you are still denied a meeting, speak to the ECC
- The impression you leave is the one people will remember when they think of United Way

Giving guidelines

“How much should I give?”

Many donors and potential donors ask this question. Every decision is a personal one and the best response is to suggest guidelines from a few perspectives.

- Donate one hour’s pay per month (to calculate this conveniently, multiply your annual salary by 0.00065)
- Donate the equivalent of a coffee break (15 minutes) per pay period or the cost of a cup of coffee per day
- Match the average donation in your organization
- Increase your donation from last year by one or two dollars per pay period
- Donate 1% of your annual salary

United Way tax tip

United Way issues charitable tax receipts that will reduce your federal and provincial income tax. For example:

Your gift of	Total tax savings	Actual cost to you
\$50	\$10.53	\$39.47
\$100	\$20.05	\$79.95
\$200	\$40.10	\$159.90
\$500	\$160.58	\$339.42
\$1,000	\$361.38	\$638.62
\$5,000	\$1,967.78	\$3,032.22

United Way Impact Areas

United Way continually assesses community concerns and monitors current trends to ensure that our funding meets the most urgent needs. As part of its community impact agenda, United Way of London & Middlesex has defined three impact areas: **poverty, mental health, and beginnings & transitions**. These impact areas are based on extensive community research and approved by the Board of Directors, guide United Way's work in resource development and mobilization.



Poverty

Supporting urgent needs and promoting independence and long-term financial stability

- \$85 provides an individual living in poverty with a full year of weekly meals in a safe setting with access to mental health counselling, support workers and a public health nurse
- \$100 enables a senior living below the poverty line to receive subsidized meals for one month
- \$500 meets the urgent needs for 50 at risk or homeless youth

Mental health

Promoting healing, resilience and recovery for individuals living with mental health issues

- \$67 ensures a family will be able to receive one hour of counselling that helps prevent emergency medical intervention, involvement in the psychiatric and criminal justice systems and supports success for children and youth
- \$200 provides one woman who has experienced abuse with one-on-one crisis counselling, a safety plan and access to essential community resources.
- \$500 provides 95 people with information, resources and education about mental health, mental illness and how to access the help they or their loved ones might need

Beginnings & transitions

Helping children reach their full potential and enabling immigrants to engage, contribute and thrive

- \$180 provides one year of tutoring for child, providing them an essential base of literacy skills for lifelong learning
- \$300 provides a child from a low-income family a one-week, residential camp experience where they have the opportunity to develop positive social, emotional and physical growth
- \$30 provides one hour of translation services for an immigrant family to assist with communicating with legal or health care professionals, teachers and potential employers
- \$150 provides one year of weekly practice learning English while receiving community support and making new friends

Notes:

Investing in real change

When you invest in United Way, you help create lasting change through organizations that provide proven results for our community:

Across Languages*	London & District Distress Centre*
Big Brothers Big Sisters of London & Area*	London Coffee House Program
Boys' & Girls' Club of London	London Employment Help Centre*
Canadian Hearing Society*	London InterCommunity Health Centre
Canadian Mental Health Association*	LUSO Community Services
CNIB*	Meals on Wheels London
Changing Ways*	N'Amerind Friendship Centre
Children's Aid Society*	Ontario March of Dimes*
Community Living London	SARI Therapeutic Riding*
Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre	Scouts Canada*
Daya Counselling Centre*	Sexual Assault Centre London*
Epilepsy Support Centre*	South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre
Family Service Thames Valley*	Stevenson Children's Camp*
Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre	Women's Rural Resource Centre*
Horton Street Seniors' Centre	YMCA of Western Ontario
Hospice of London*	Youth Opportunities Unlimited*
John Howard Society of London & District*	
Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario – London Region*	

*provide United Way funded services in Middlesex County

For more information about United Way visit www.uwlondon.on.ca