

***For Immediate Release***

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**UNITED WAY OF ESCAMBIA COUNTY ANNOUNCES WAYS TO AID HURRICANE MICHAEL RELIEF EFFORTS**

Pensacola, Fla. – October 15, 2018

In the wake of the devastation Hurricane Michael leveled on much of the Florida Panhandle, United Way of Escambia County is announcing a number of ways to provide support to those affected.

Locally, United Way of Escambia County will be receiving monetary donations. 100% of the proceeds will be directed to the United Way of Northwest Florida. You can donate at <https://app.mobilecause.com/form/X2ib6Q> or by texting MICHAEL850 to 41444.

The United Way of Northwest Florida, located in Panama City, provides services to Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington Counties. You may support them directly by visiting <https://app.mobilecause.com/f/21r3/n> or texting either NWFLUnited, 850, or 850Strong to 41444. All donations will be applied to local relief efforts in the Northwest Florida area.

United Way of Florida is also receiving monetary donations. 100% of contributions will be used for recovery efforts throughout affected regions of Florida. To make a donation, please visit <https://uwof.networkforgood.com/projects/18659-united-way-of-florida-disaster-response-fund>.

Individuals interested in offering support may also do so by donating items to local Goodwill Stores and indicating that you would like the proceeds from your donation to be directed to Hurricane Michael support.

It is important to note that the most immediate and useful way to support recovery efforts is through financial assistance. This allows relief organizations to purchase and provide the supplies and resources most needed. Confirm that there is a need before collecting or sending donated items.

While volunteer support is essential to effective recovery efforts, confirm that there is a need for volunteers before traveling to impacted areas. If you would like to volunteer to support those affected by Hurricane Michael, please visit [www.volunteerflorida.org](http://www.volunteerflorida.org).

United Way of Escambia County's 2-1-1 Northwest Florida information and referral service is also available 24/7 for those in need of assistance identifying or accessing any support services needed in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael. 2-1-1 Northwest Florida serves Escambia, Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington Counties. To access this completely free service, simply dial 2-1-1 from any landline or cellphone. Individuals may also text MICHAEL to 898211 for information on basic services – food, water, and shelter. Please be patient when calling for resources, as the hotline has been inundated by calls.

While there is much work to be done in helping the affected regions of the Florida Panhandle recover, any and all support is valuable to our neighbors to the east. We have seen before, and will again, what is possible when we come together and LIVE UNITED.

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*United Way of Escambia County (UWEC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that fights for the health, education, and financial stability of every citizen in our community. UWEC has operated locally for 94 years with a vision of a community United to create better opportunities for all. By investing in programs, participating in partnerships, and leveraging resources, UWEC works to meet a mission of Uniting our community to improve lives.*

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