

WORKPLACE CAMPAIGN EVENT & ACTIVITY GUIDE

2026





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Kickoff Event Guide

A kickoff event marks the start of your United Way campaign, generates excitement, and sets the stage for the rest of the campaign! Campaigns with kickoff events have proven to raise more dollars in support of our community.

Why Host a Kickoff Event?



Build Awareness:

Let everyone know the campaign is coming and why it matters.



Show Leadership & Passion:

Demonstrate visible support from leaders and colleagues.



Unite Your Team:

Rally employees around a shared community cause.



Show the Impact:

Help employees understand how their donation changes lives.



You're Not Alone:

Your United Way representative will help you plan your event.

How to Get Started

1

Choose Your Format:

In-person, virtual, or hybrid.

2

Know Your Audience:

Plan around what motivates your team.

3

Pick Your Host:

Your Employee Campaign Chair leads.

4

Bring in Leadership:

Invite your CEO or executives to speak.

5

Make It Engaging:

Blend fun, fundraising, and awareness activities.

6

Share the Impact:

Include United Way speakers and videos.

7

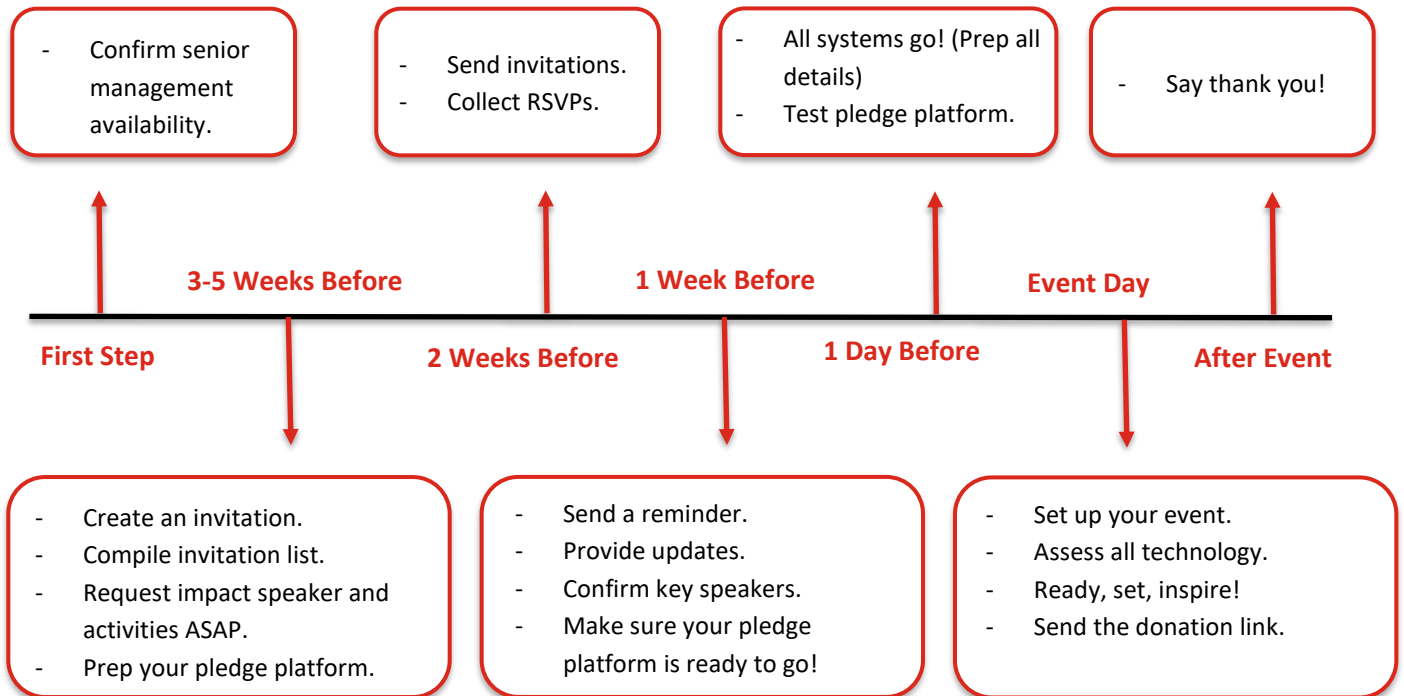
End With Action:

Clearly show how people can give and get involved.





Kickoff planning timeline





Wrap-Up Event Guide

A wrap-up event marks the end of your United Way campaign and gives your organization an opportunity to come together and celebrate!

Why Host a Wrap-Up Event?



Show Appreciation:

Thank donors, volunteers, and participants.



Celebrate Success:

Recognize what your campaign achieved.



Reconnect Your Team:

Bring employees back together around the cause.



Highlight Community Impact:

Show how their efforts will change lives locally.

How to Get Started

1

Choose Your Format:

In-person, virtual, or hybrid.

2

Know Your Audience:

Plan around what resonates with your team.

3

Pick Your Host:

Engaging company speakers.

4

Bring in Leadership:

Invite your CEO or executives to speak.

5

Keep It Engaging:

Make it interactive and celebratory.

6

Share the Impact:

Include United Way speakers and videos.

7

Share the Results:

Communicate outcomes of your campaign





Special Events Guide

In addition to a kickoff and wrap-up event, we recommend hosting a variety of special events throughout your campaign.

Tip: Any event can include a fundraising element — simply charge for entry, run a raffle, or add a donation component. Your United Way representative is here to support you in organizing your campaign’s events through our fundraising platforms. Simply submit your requests at least three weeks in advance to ensure ample time to set it all up.

Why Host Events Throughout Your Campaign?



Stay Top-of-Mind:
Keep the campaign visible and relevant.



Raise More Funds:
Turn engagement into donations.



Build Awareness:
Show how, together, we create thriving communities.



Boost Morale: Give employees a fun break and a shared cause to rally around.

Team-Building Events

- Themed party (Halloween, Ugly Sweater, etc.)
- Paint night or craft activity
- Office games (Minute to Win It, Office Olympics, Murder Mystery)
- Trivia contest
- Scavenger hunt
- Staff talent show
- Artist or performer (on-site or off-site)

Fundraising-Friendly Events

- Sporting event (golf, bocce, tennis)
- Company BBQ or picnic
- Silent auction
- Bake sale
- Heritage-themed potluck
- Garage sale
- Raffle (50/50, prize basket, survivor style)
- Executive challenge (Ice Bucket, Hot Wings, Pie Your Leader)

Awareness-Focused Events

- Volunteer with United Way
- Host a product drive
- Take part in a United Way facilitated engagement activity
- Schedule an impact speaker to come and share their story





United Way Facilitated Engagement Activities

Take part a United Way facilitated engagement activity to deepen understanding of the complex social issues shaping our community. To book a session, contact your United Way representative or email engagementfacilitation@myunitedway.ca



Falling Through the Cracks

An interactive game that reveals how mental well-being, financial insecurity, and educational barriers can impact a child's ability to succeed.



The Brain Architecture Game

A hands-on tabletop activity where participants build a model brain to see how early childhood experiences shape lifelong development.



Make the Month

A powerful simulation that challenges participants to make impossible financial choices faced by low-income households in our community.



Poverty Simulation

An immersive experience that builds empathy and understanding of the complex realities people living in poverty navigate every day.





Final Tips for an Engaging Campaign

Make Participation Accessible

Plan events so everyone can take part, using a mix of in-person, virtual, and hybrid options.

Offer Different Ways to Give

Provide opportunities beyond donations, including volunteer activities and in-kind contributions.

Incentivize Engagement

Consider draws, prizes, or perks like gift cards or a paid day off to encourage participation.

Start with Engagement

Kick off your campaign with awareness-building, no-cost activities for employees.

Choose the Right Timing

Avoid scheduling pledge drives alongside other fundraising activities to keep focus clear.

Separate Fundraising Moments

Hold fundraising-focused events after your pledge drive is complete.

Close with Gratitude

End your campaign by thanking employees and sharing the impact of their support.

Lean on Support

Your United Way representative can help you plan, customize, and strengthen your campaign.





Tax Receipting

1. Are special events able to get a tax receipt?

Some are, such as casual days, donations from bottle drives, telethons, and virtual challenges. Some aren't, such as auction purchases, paint night, and registration fees.

2. Are donated items able to get a tax receipt?

Some are, such as purchased items with an invoice or receipt and if the item was used towards fundraising activities. Some aren't, such as used goods, homemade goods, 're-gifted' goods, and store donated gift certificates.

3. How and when will participants receive their tax receipt?

Tax receipts will be emailed to donors within 10 days of the payment processing for eligible donations made via United Way fundraising platforms.

If a donation is made via cash, credit, or debit machine, tax receipts will be sent by the end of February of the following year. Requests must be made for tax receipts in these instances and event coordinators need to ensure donation details are captured.

Visit the Donation and Tax Receipting section on <https://www.myunitedway.ca/partner-with-us/workplace-campaigns/campaign-toolkit/> for more information and related forms. **To receive a tax receipt, donors MUST include their home address information when completing the forms.**

