



United Way
of St. Johns County



THE COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
FOR NORTHEAST FLORIDA
Giving Back. Giving Forward.

Nine St. Johns and Putnam County Agencies Receive Grants from Florida's First Coast Relief Fund
\$110,000+ mobilized to help agencies respond with food, financial assistance, and shelter

JACKSONVILLE, Florida – April 22, 2020—Florida's First Coast Relief Fund has granted more than \$110,000 to nine nonprofit organizations based in St. Johns and Putnam Counties to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. These agencies are on the front lines of supporting residents with food, financial assistance, and shelter. Florida's First Coast Relief Fund is a collaboration of United Way of St. Johns County, United Way of Northeast Florida, The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, and the Jacksonville Jewish Federation and Foundation. It was created following Hurricanes Matthew and Irma, and re-activated to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Across our community, life has been disrupted due to the speed and severity of Florida's necessary but devastating COVID-19 safer-at-home order. The disruption can be exceptionally frightening — not just for those who were financially vulnerable before the crisis, but for so many more who are now wondering how significant the blow will be to their family," noted Melissa Nelson, President and CEO of United Way of St. Johns County. "Parents, and many of our senior citizens, are worried about keeping a roof overhead or food on the table. The need has escalated to alarming levels, and the support provided by Florida's First Coast Relief Fund is desperately needed."

Nonprofit agencies in St. Johns and Putnam Counties who have received funding so far include:

St. Johns County

- Catholic Charities (St. Augustine) to provide Financial Assistance
- St. Francis House to provide Shelter
- Epic-Cure to provide Food Assistance
- Hugs Across the County to provide Food Assistance
- Betty Griffin Center to provide Shelter

Putnam County

- Feed the Need of Putnam County to provide Food Assistance
- Palatka Christian Service Center to provide Financial Assistance
- Putnam Habitat for Humanity to provide Financial Assistance
- Lee Conlee House to provide Food Assistance

In addition, Florida's First Coast Relief Fund has made grants of \$100,000 to Feeding Northeast Florida; \$100,000 to The Salvation Army and \$50,000 to ElderSource. All three organizations are responding to frontline needs for St. Johns and Putnam Counties, as well as several other Northeast Florida counties. In total, Florida's First Coast Relief Fund has granted nearly \$1.3 million to agencies across the First Coast.

“From working closely with these agencies prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we know they represent the most efficient way to get support into the community in a way that helps mitigate the devastating effects of this crisis,” noted Mark LeMaire, The Community Foundation’s senior program officer overseeing St. Johns and Putnam Counties. “It’s not an exaggeration to say these agencies are confronted with extraordinary challenges and are urgently trying to meet the growing need.”

Applications from nonprofit organizations continue to be accepted online and are reviewed and vetted weekly. Agencies can apply for help in the following categories:

- Short term housing assistance to support shelters to safely distance residents and prevent the spread of COVID-19
- Food assistance, non-food items and supplies for agencies with missions to serve low-income individuals and families who are food insecure due to COVID-19 impact (ex: job losses and school closings, etc.)
- Financial assistance for individuals and families impacted by the crisis to help meet their basic household needs
- Child-care support for first responders and other frontline staff working to prevent the spread of the virus while their normal childcare is not open or available
- Medical, safety supplies and equipment for community-based safety net service providers as they carry out essential community services
- Technology support for safety net providing nonprofits to enable remote work and continued delivery of services

One hundred percent of Florida's First Coast Relief Fund dollars benefit local COVID-19 relief efforts. The fund provides resources to meet needs not met by government programs.

Contributions continue to be accepted to Florida’s First Coast Relief Fund, which has had significant support from philanthropic partners such as the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, Shad Khan of the Jacksonville Jaguars, Jim Moran Foundation, Weaver Family Foundation Fund, Michael Ward and Jennifer Glock, Lucy Gooding Charitable Foundation, The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, and GuideWell/Florida Blue, each of which donated \$100,000 or more to the effort.

HOW TO APPLY TO FLORIDA’S FIRST COAST RELIEF FUND

<https://unitedwaynefl.org/disaster-relief/application/>

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE TO FLORIDA’S FIRST COAST RELIEF FUND

Online: unitedwaynefl.org/COVID19response

By mobile phone: Text COVID19RELIEF to 40403

By check: Pay to the order of United Way of Northeast Florida and mail to P.O. Box 41428, Jacksonville, FL 32203-1428 ** Be sure to note “Florida’s First Coast Relief Fund” on the check **

About United Way of St. Johns County

Serving both Putnam and St. Johns Counties, United Way of St. Johns County is the only organization that brings together agencies, businesses, organizations, faith-based groups, government and individuals to focus on the community problems that matter most. Partners share the vision and have the energy, passion, expertise and

resources to get the work done. For over 60 years, United Way-SJC has improved lives and built a strong, healthy community by strategically investing in quality programs, building partnerships, advocating for better policies, engaging the community and leveraging resources. Success is measured not by dollars raised, but by lives improved and changed. Visit unitedway-sjc.org for more information.

About The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida (www.jaxcf.org), Florida's oldest and largest community foundation, works to stimulate philanthropy to build a better community. The Foundation helps donors invest their philanthropic gifts wisely, helps nonprofits serve the region effectively, and helps people come together to make the community a better place. Created in 1964, the Foundation has assets of \$482 million and has made approximately \$550 million in grants since inception.

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