

United Way Policy Against Coercion

United Way understands that fund-raising success depends on how much potential donors know about organizations seeking support. Fund raising should always be conducted in a voluntary manner; coercion creates animosity, hinders communication and understanding and eventually leads to decreased support.

United Way has been concerned for years about the use of undue pressure in fund raising and is opposed to any type of coercion. Any semblance of pressure — whether real, implied or perceived — is contradictory to the operating standards of United Way. United Way continually tries to prevent the use of coercion in their campaigns by encouraging peer solicitation, rather than solicitation of employees by managers. In addition, they conduct training programs for fund raisers that stress information and education, and discourage the practice of seeking 100 percent participation in a campaign, as that may inadvertently encourage coercion.

To underscore their conviction about this policy, United Way of America's Board of Governors adopted the following policy statement:

The Board of Governors of United Way of America believes that the most responsive contributors are those who have the opportunity to become informed and involved. A well-planned campaign with an effective communications program, conducted by committed volunteers, will ensure responsive contributors. While we have always been unalterably opposed to coercion, we do recognize a responsibility to state our beliefs formally, as freedom of choice is a basic tenet of our democratic society. Giving is a personal matter and decision; no form of coercion is acceptable to United Way of America.