

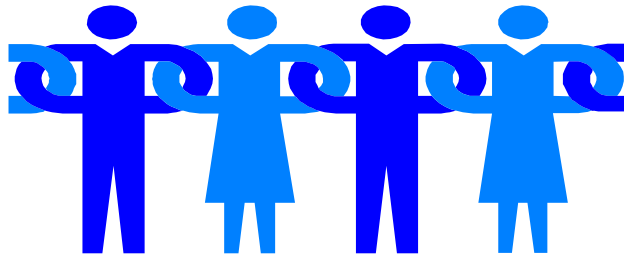


Get Connected. Get Help.™



United Way  
of Marathon County

# Helplink Subscriber's Guide



[helplink@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:helplink@unitedwaymc.org)

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## **What is Helplink?**

Helplink provides organizations with an opportunity to share information with each other for the benefit of the subscribed organizations and their clients.

## **How Does Helplink Work?**

Helplink is a *closed, moderated* email group whose subscribers include agencies, churches, clinics, schools, businesses and other community organizations that serve Marathon County residents.

Messages from subscribers are sent to the Moderator (United Way's 211) at [helplink@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:helplink@unitedwaymc.org). Messages are approved and then forwarded, via blind carbon copy, to all subscribers. Explanatory subject lines briefly describe the message type, so only Helplink email postings that are of interest to the subscriber need be opened and read. United Way's 211 reserves the right to edit messages/information for length, clarity, etc.

Subscribers may submit messages that fall into four subject types. Each type of Helplink message has its own guidelines and instructions, which are explained in this guide. The four subject types are:

1. INFO
2. CLIENT-NEED
3. DONATION
4. VOLUNTEER

## **How Can Someone Subscribe to Helplink?**

Send an email to [helplink@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:helplink@unitedwaymc.org) with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line from the email address to be added to the subscriber list. Make sure the body of the email includes the subscriber's name, title, organization, business address, and business phone. If all this information is in the subscriber's signature block, no additional text is necessary.

Remember, Helplink subscribers must be affiliated with an organization or community initiative/coalition. Individuals cannot subscribe if they are not affiliated.

## **Who Can Answer Helplink Questions?**

Julie Hofmann, 211 Information and Referral Specialist and Helplink Moderator  
715-298-5728 or [jhofmann@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:jhofmann@unitedwaymc.org)

Megan Schreiber, 211 Program Director  
715-298-5727 or [mschreiber@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:mschreiber@unitedwaymc.org)



## **INFO Postings**

Helplink's INFO component allows sharing of information to positively impact agency communication, benefit people in our community, or be pertinent to the human service delivery system.

Acceptable postings include:

- Agency program offerings that are free or offer financial assistance to participants
- Agency events held in Marathon County
- Forums
- Agency or program changes and updates
- Professional development opportunities
- Grant opportunities

### **To Create an INFO Posting**

1. Type INFO on the email subject line, along with short descriptive phrase.  
Examples: INFO: Parenting Workshop  
INFO: Holiday Open House  
INFO: Self Care Workshop Offered
2. Include organization contact name, phone number and email and other relevant details in body of message. Attachments totaling less than 1 MB are acceptable.
3. Email complete posting to [helplink@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:helplink@unitedwaymc.org) to be forwarded to subscribers.  
NOTE: Subscribers should try to limit postings submitted to 1 per day. Overwhelming inboxes with multiple postings that could have been combined can be a nuisance to other subscribers. Multiple postings per day may be combined before posting at the Moderator's discretion

### **Sample INFO Posting**

*(subject line) INFO: United Way CommUnity Fest*

*The United Way CommUnity Fest is this Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>. Join the fun! See attached flier for more details.*

*For more information contact Sue Haupt, 715-848-2927 or [shaupt@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:shaupt@unitedwaymc.org)*



## **CLIENT-NEED Postings**

Helplink's CLIENT-NEED component provides a way for community organizations to respond to and satisfy hard-to-fill basic needs. When existing resources have been exhausted, Helplink subscribers may be able to help fill a basic need that would otherwise go unmet. Helplink subscribers may be Sponsors (posting a need for a client) or Donors (fulfilling a CLIENT-NEED request).

Clients must have attempted to access existing programs and services before posting CLIENT-NEED to Helplink. United Way's 211 is available to assist in locating existing resources. Sponsors (Helplink subscribers) should be significantly engaged with any client they submit postings for and explore the client's personal resources before submitting a CLIENT-NEED posting. Helplink relies on the discretion of the Sponsor to determine that the need is valid and justifiable.

Acceptable requests include basic needs like housing, material goods, transportation, and one-time financial assistance.

Unacceptable requests include requests for ongoing financial assistance or income maintenance; requests by an agency, business, school, church, or other institution for the benefit of their own organization; and requests for volunteer services for clients (ex. volunteer drivers to provide transportation).

### **To Create a CLIENT-NEED Posting**

1. Type CLIENT-NEED on the subject line, along with short descriptive phrase.  
Examples: CLIENT-NEED: Refrigerator for large family  
CLIENT-NEED: Twin bed and dresser for fire victim
2. Write the request on behalf of the Client using the guidelines and sample posting on the following pages. Include your name and organization name in the posting.
3. E-mail complete posting to [helplink@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:helplink@unitedwaymc.org) to be forwarded to subscribers.
4. Notify Moderator when CLIENT-NEED has been met, or confirm unmet need to the Moderator 3 weeks after posting. CLIENT-NEED postings will be deleted after 3 weeks.

### **Guidelines for Writing a CLIENT-NEED Posting**

To expedite a timely and complete Helplink posting, Sponsors are advised to follow these guidelines in requesting help for their Clients.

1. Remain confidential. Do not use names.
2. Include relevant household characteristics to create a Client profile, including:



- Employment status
- Sources of income
- Household size/make up
- Special needs or disabilities
- Public assistance participation

3. List the existing community resources that Sponsor or Client have accessed or attempted to access. (Sponsor has the option of calling United Way's 211 or emailing [askus@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:askus@unitedwaymc.org) to confirm resources have been exhausted)

4. Describe the reason that the need remains unmet.

Reasons may include no program available; program out of funds or not accepting new applications; eligibility barriers; delays or waiting lists; ineligible due to income, residency, age, etc.

### **Sample CLIENT-NEED Posting**

*(subject line) CLIENT-NEED: Crib, mattress and sheets*

*I have been working with a single mother of 3 young children. She is in need of a crib, mattress, and sheets. Mother is employed but income is stretched. She receives medical assistance, childcare assistance, FoodShare, and WIC, and also utilizes food pantries on occasion. Youngest child is 2 months old and is outgrowing bassinette, so safety and comfort is a concern. I have checked the Neighbors Place and other donation programs and nothing is available. A used crib, mattress, and sheets are acceptable.*

*Thank you.*

*Linda Salzman, Marathon County Family Resource Centers  
715-845-6747*

### **To Respond to a CLIENT-NEED Posting**

The Donor indicates their desire to help via a reply to the Sponsor using contact information in original posting. All arrangements for donations or financial assistance are made directly between the Sponsor and the Donor. Potential Donors should contact the Sponsor directly instead of replying to Helplink. Helplink Moderator will not facilitate communication between a Donor and a Sponsor.



## **DONATION Postings**

Helplink's DONATION component facilitates offers of donated or free materials/goods available from a business or other community organization.

Acceptable postings include offers of items like office supplies, equipment, computers, and furniture; non-perishable food; and other items that may benefit community organizations or their clients.

Subscribers may not use this forum to request material donations for the benefit of their organization. Organizations seeking donated items are encouraged to utilize United Way Volunteer Connection to post agency needs as in-kind donation requests. Contact Volunteer Connection staff at [volunteerconnection@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:volunteerconnection@unitedwaymc.org) or 715-848-2927 with questions about posting agency needs.

### **To Create a DONATION Posting**

1. Type DONATION in the subject line, along with short descriptive phrase.

Example: DONATION: 6 office desks and chairs, metal filing cabinet

NOTE: Multiple donated items should be included in one posting. Too many individual postings may overwhelm other subscribers' inboxes. Condense donations into one email when possible. If in doubt, check with Moderator to determine best course of action. Multiple postings may be condensed into one message at Moderator's discretion.

2. Message should include contact name, phone number, email, and pick-up/delivery instructions. Attachments totaling less than 1 MB are acceptable.
3. Email complete posting to [helplink@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:helplink@unitedwaymc.org) to be forwarded to subscribers.

### **Sample DONATION Posting**

*(subject line) DONATION: Conference room table and office chairs*

*Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northcentral Wisconsin is donating a large conference table and 10 chairs. See pictures attached. Please email Linda Koepke at [lindak@bbbsncw.org](mailto:lindak@bbbsncw.org) for more information or to set up a time to view.*

### **To Respond to a DONATION Posting**

Subscribers wishing to claim a donation should reply to the original poster using contact information in original posting. All arrangements for exchange of donated items are made directly between the involved subscribers. Helplink Moderator will not facilitate communication between subscribers.



## **VOLUNTEER Postings**

Helplink's VOLUNTEER component allows organizations to fill unclaimed, time-limited volunteer positions as events draw near.

Acceptable VOLUNTEER opportunities must be:

- Posted on the Volunteer Connection website prior to posting
- Date specific and occurring within 14 days of posting

### **To Create a VOLUNTEER Posting**

1. Type VOLUNTEER on the subject line, along with event name and date.  
Examples: VOLUNTEER: Fill A Backpack August 24 – 26  
VOLUNTEER: Badger State Games Feb. 2 – 4
2. Include specific details about volunteer opportunity, contact name, phone number, and email. Attachments totaling less than 1 MB are acceptable.
3. Email complete posting to *helplink@unitedwaymc.org* to be forwarded to subscribers.

### **Sample VOLUNTEER Posting**

*(subject line) VOLUNTEER: Point in Time Count - January 24*

*The Housing and Homelessness Coalition will again conduct the overnight homeless Point in Time Count on **Wednesday, January 24** in the Greater Wausau Area.*

#### ***Volunteer Opportunity:***

- *Point in Time Count volunteers – teams of no more than 4 people will be assigned an area in Wausau to canvas and survey individuals experiencing homelessness.*
- *To register go to: <http://unitedwaymc.galaxydigital.com/> (attached are registration instructions)*

*If you have any questions or need assistance with registration, please email or contact me at [mmmoua@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:mmmoua@unitedwaymc.org) or 715-298-5726.*

### **To Respond to a VOLUNTEER Posting**

Subscribers wishing to offer their time in response to a VOLUNTEER posting should reply to the original poster using contact information in original posting. All arrangements for volunteer services are made directly between the involved subscribers. Helplink Moderator will not facilitate communication between subscribers.