

News Release

United Way Waterloo Region Communities

For Immediate Release – April 4, 2022

## **United Way Waterloo Region Communities launches Waterloo Region Relief Fund**

***April 4<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> you can help by thinking globally and acting locally. By helping others, we help everyone.***

Waterloo Region – Poverty is on the rise. COVID-19, rising inflation, war, and global unrest have all put extreme stress on our community. We must continue to think globally and act locally. United Way Waterloo Region Communities (UWWRC) embodies the idea that instead of waiting for universal resolutions, we should implement local solutions into our everyday actions.

On top of existing local issues, our community will potentially become host to people who have been displaced due to the mounting crisis in Ukraine. Over 3 million people have already fled Ukraine, and experts predict that up to 7 million more will be forced to leave before the conflict is over. The scale of civilian casualties is alarming and will without doubt grow over the coming days and weeks.

For over 80 years, United Way and our robust network of agencies have helped welcome and integrate refugees and newcomers into our community. In order to support people who are being severely impacted by community conditions right now, and those who will be joining our community seeking a safe haven, UWWRC has launched The Waterloo Region Relief Fund. From April 4<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> every dollar received will go to our local agencies who provide critical services such as basic needs, mental health supports and isolation reduction services as well as....

- Housing (short term shelter, assistance finding and securing permanent housing)
- Education supports to children and families
- Culturally sensitive family and child counselling
- Translation services
- Navigating government applications and systems
- Culturally appropriate trauma support and referrals
- Pre-employment and employment services
- Connecting with local cultural communities
- Advocacy work
- Overall community coordination and strategy work

“Our community is in dire need of support and these needs continue to grow. These people are our friends, neighbours, and colleagues. Every quarter we receive requests for funds that average twice the amount we are able to disperse,” says Joan Fisk, CEO of United Way Waterloo Region Communities. “We will continue the important work of funding agencies who can help people in our community when and where they need it most, but we also must be prepared to support the influx of newcomers the region may experience due to the on-going crisis in Ukraine. We want to be ready and welcoming, and we want our local partners to have the means to provide the required services and programs to people who have had their homes, lives and families torn apart”.

Donations can be made at [www.uwaywrc.ca/relief-fund](http://www.uwaywrc.ca/relief-fund)

Digital Assets:

Please visit [www.uwaywrc.ca/about-us/communications/](http://www.uwaywrc.ca/about-us/communications/) to download our digital assets and further information, including photos, CEO bio and photo, and other United Way materials.

- 30 -

About United Way Waterloo Region Communities

United Way is the second largest funder of social service programs across the country, second only to government. Thanks to generous donors and partners, United Way is creating change on key social issues such as food security, mental health, and isolation in seniors by investing almost \$3.2 million in critical services to 209 agencies and programs across Waterloo Region and beyond in 2021.

For more information or for media interviews, please contact:

United Way Waterloo Region Communities

Hilary McCann

Senior Director, Marketing and Communications

United Way Waterloo Region Communities

Direct: 226-898-1394

[hmccann@uwaywrc.ca](mailto:hmccann@uwaywrc.ca)