



United Way of Northeast Florida ALICE Promise Investments 2026

United Way of Northeast Florida's Vision

We envision a community of opportunity, where everyone has hope and can reach their full potential.

United Way of Northeast Florida's Mission

We solve our community's toughest challenges by connecting people, resources and ideas.

United Way of Northeast Florida's Values

Teamwork, Innovation, Mission Focus, Integrity, Excellence

The Challenge

Despite rising wages, 4 in 10 households (40%) in Northeast Florida cannot afford necessities, according to the 2025 ALICE Report. Across Duval, Baker, Clay, Nassau, and St. Johns counties, more than 260,000 households are living in poverty or are ALICE—working families who earn above the federal poverty level but still fall short of the true cost of living.

ALICE households are essential to the region's workforce yet are often undercounted and ineligible for public assistance. The ALICE Household Survival Budget shows that a family of four needs over \$85,000 annually just to cover basic expenses—without savings or emergencies. Hardship is greatest among young adults and seniors, with 63% of individuals under 25 and 49% of those 65 and older struggling to make ends meet.

Without targeted investments that stabilize families today and create pathways to long-term financial security, hardship will continue to grow— even in a region experiencing economic expansion.

The Solution: ALICE Promise 2030



HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Improving health and well-being for all



Increase successful referrals by 50% and establish a closed-loop model.



YOUTH OPPORTUNITY

Helping young people realize their full potential

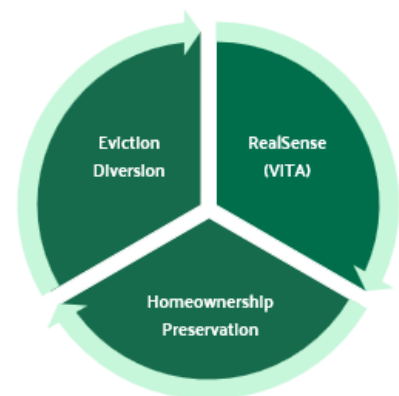


5,000 more young adults employed in jobs earning a wage that enables them to survive and thrive.



FINANCIAL SECURITY

Creating a stronger financial future for every generation



450 senior owned homes repaired and made more energy efficient.

In response to the growing financial instability facing ALICE households, United Way of Northeast Florida launched the ALICE Promise 2030, a five-year, data driven strategy designed to address the root causes of economic hardship and expand pathways to long-term stability. Grounded in the 2025 ALICE Report, the strategy commits United Way to investing in community driven solutions that increase access to essential services, improve upward mobility, and strengthen household resilience across Duval, Baker, Clay, Nassau, and St. Johns counties. Through three integrated impact areas—Healthy Community, Financial Security, and Youth Opportunity—the ALICE Promise 2030 sets clear, measurable goals, including **increasing successful referrals by 50% and establishing a coordinated closed loop model** through 211, 988, and Mission United; helping **5,000 young adults** secure good jobs, and stabilizing housing for **450 senior households**



through critical home repairs. Together, these efforts reflect United Way's commitment to moving families beyond short-term survival toward sustained financial security and community well-being by 2030.

This grant investment process is rooted in addressing that gap—supporting strategies that stabilize ALICE households today while building pathways to long-term economic security in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. Johns counties.

Healthy Community

To maximize community impact with available resources, United Way is refining its Healthy Communities investment strategy to focus funding on organizations and programs that demonstrate strong alignment with priority outcomes in housing stability and food security, while leveraging collaboration and measurable results. This updated framework ensures that every dollar invested contributes to lasting change for households across the Northeast region.

Across Northeast Florida, demand for emergency housing and food assistance has remained persistently high—driven largely by housing instability—with 50,300 total 211 calls in 2025. Of the calls handled, 32% of caller needs were for rent and deposit assistance and 15% for utilities (47% combined). Demand for transitional housing, emergency shelter, and food assistance across continues to exceed available resources, driven by ongoing housing instability and rising food insecurity. Food assistance remains among the top five needs reported by 211 callers, underscoring how rising housing and energy costs are straining household budgets and driving more families to rely on emergency food resources to meet basic nutritional needs.

According to the University of North Florida's JAX Rental Housing Project, Duval County is the eviction filing capital of Florida, with an average of 7.08 eviction filings per 1,000 renters per month in 2022–2023—nearly double the rate of Miami Dade and Pinellas counties. UNF researchers attribute this pattern to sharp rent increases of nearly 30% since 2020 and the growing dominance of corporate and investment-owned rental properties, which account for nearly 72% of large multifamily units and generate disproportionately high eviction filings. As housing costs rise faster than wages, rental and utility assistance programs across Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. Johns counties remain oversubscribed, with limited funds forcing frequent closures and strict eligibility limits. At the same time, food insecurity has intensified, particularly for seniors



living on fixed incomes: food assistance providers report record demand, and rising food prices—up roughly 25% since 2020—continuing to push older adults and ALICE households to seek simultaneous housing, utility, and food assistance.

Our investment strategy is guided by 211 call data to intentionally connect resources to residents' most urgent challenges—emergency financial assistance for rent and utilities, improved food access, and housing support for individuals and families.

Healthy Community Objectives

- Increase access to timely emergency financial assistance for individuals and families contacting 211 by stabilizing housing, utilities, and basic needs during periods of crisis.
- Strengthen housing stability for individuals and families by supporting services that address emergency shelter, transitional housing, and placement into permanent housing.
- Expand access to nutritious food in underserved counties to reduce food insecurity and support aging in place.

Youth Opportunity

In Northeast Florida, workforce data point to a critical need to strengthen technical skills, credentials, and early career pathways for young adults ages 18–24 as a strategy to reduce ALICE. National and state data from Measure of America show that youth disconnection— young people neither working nor in school— remains a persistent challenge, with long-term consequences for earnings and economic stability, underscoring the importance of early attachment to education and the labor market through credentials and applied learning. The Jacksonville Metro Area had a disconnection rate of 12% (26,000 young people). At the same time, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Florida Commerce data show that Northeast Florida continues to add jobs in construction, trade and logistics, education and health services, and manufacturing— sectors that increasingly require postsecondary certificates, technical training, or industry credentials rather than four-year degrees. Yet many young adults enter the workforce underprepared due to K–12 academic gaps: in 2025, only 50% of Duval County students were proficient in reading and 53% in math, compared to much higher performance in St. Johns and Nassau counties, highlighting uneven readiness for postsecondary education and training across the region. Early skill gaps further limit students'



ability to persist in credential programs, workforce training, and apprenticeships, which are proven onramps to middle-skill careers. Expanding high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) in high school- aligned with apprenticeships, dual enrollment, and industry recognized credentials- is essential to connecting graduating seniors to careers in **construction, healthcare, logistics and transportation, and advanced manufacturing**, while building the skills needed to move young workers above the ALICE Threshold and into long-term economic stability.

Our investment strategy prioritizes academic achievement and workforce readiness by supporting K-12 students to graduate high school prepared for postsecondary education and by advancing young adults who have already graduated into technical training, industry recognized credentials, and employment placement in high-demand industries—**construction, health care, transportation and logistics, and advanced manufacturing**.

Youth Opportunity Objectives

- Improve foundational academic outcomes in math, reading that are critical to high school graduation and successful transition into postsecondary education or workforce credential programs. Investment priority geared towards organizations serving middle and high school students.
- Improve the availability and access to high-quality, industry aligned workforce programs for high school students across Northeast Florida, with a focus on preparing students for entry into technical credential pathways and employment. Priority for process is careers in **construction, healthcare, logistics and transportation, and advanced manufacturing**,
- Increase access to high-quality workforce training that leads young adults (18-24) to industry recognized credentials and employment in high-demand occupations with earnings above the ALICE threshold. Priority for process is careers in **construction, healthcare, logistics and transportation, and advanced manufacturing**,



Eligibility

- The organization serves within Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, and or northern St. Johns Counties.
- Nonprofit Organization: The organization is a nonprofit entity recognized as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, is registered with and in good standing with the State of Florida, and is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, or other governing body that provides oversight.
- Public agencies and higher education institutions- including universities, community colleges, and private and for-profit organizations.
- The agency clearly aligns with United Way's mission, strategy, goals, and the program directly addresses community needs identified under investment objectives.
- The organization presents no financial risk for investment.
- The agency can submit required financial statements and documents for the most recently completed year as part of the qualification process.

Financial statement requirements are based on the agency/organization's total revenue as follows:

- Organizations with annual revenue of **\$500,000 or more** are required to submit an independent financial audit conducted by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). The audit must be the most recently completed audit and must cover Fiscal Year 2025.
- Organizations with annual revenue **between \$250,000 to \$499,999** must submit either (1) CPA-reviewed financial statements for the 2025 fiscal year or (2) the organization's IRS Form 990 for 2025 and 2024.
- Organizations with annual revenue **below \$250,000** must submit the most recent IRS Form 990 (990, 990-EZ, or 990-N) for 2025 and internally prepared financial statements approved by the organization's governing board.

United Way Investment Process



The diagram outlines a refreshed, six-stage investment process designed to strengthen partner engagement, ensure alignment and shared understanding, set clear expectations, and achieve meaningful community impact.

Scoring

An objective scoring rubric guides the consistent review of new and current grant partners, ensuring transparency and alignment with United Way's priority outcomes. This scoring rubric is used by our staff and expert community volunteers in the review process. Serving as stewards of donor resources, United Way's volunteer Accounting Committee evaluates organizational finances and proposed budgets to ensure investments are safe, sustainable, and aligned with strong financial practices, with organizations demonstrating financial instability deemed ineligible for investment.



Scoring Category	Weight	Explanation
Program Performance & Experience	25 points	Strong predictor of execution quality and outcomes
Program Model & Implementation Strategy	20 points	Ensures interventions are evidence-informed
Alignment with United Way 2030 Strategy	20 points	Keeps investments aligned with UW's outcomes
Program Measurements	15 points	Accountability, learning, and continuous improvement
Organizational Financial Health	15 points	Protects investments from risk, ensures sustainability
Total	100 points	

Additional Details & Expectations

- Investment Cycle: **September 2026 through June 2028**
- Counties of Focus: **Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, St. Johns** (northern)
- Minimum of **2 years** track record with proposed programs
- Awards not to exceed **30%** of the overall program budget
- Minimum award request: **\$40,000**
- Emergency Financial Assistance programs (rent & utilities) required to be a direct referral partners through United Way 211
- Programs under Healthy Community are in United Way's 211 database

How to be Considered for an Investment

- Current United Way investment partners (funded in the 2024–2026 grant cycle) will participate in discussions with United Way leadership to review strategic fit and program performance in line with the investment process. Organizational assessments and scoring will be completed to determine the next steps for consideration. Discussions will begin May 2026. After initial



assessment and discussions with United Way leadership, current partners may be asked to submit an investment proposal.

- Organizations NOT funded in the 2024–2026 grant cycle must complete an Investment Partner Inquiry Form available on [United Way’s website](#). The form will open **May 26, 2026**, and organizations must submit the form by **June 16, 2026**, press interest. Based upon screening and alignment, new partners may be invited to have discussions with United Way leadership and submit a proposal.
- Funding decisions will be announced in **August 2026**, with funding beginning in **September 2026**.
- All investment partners invited to submit a proposal will need an Agency Profile in our Foundant grant system
 - Access the United Way Foundant website here:
<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=uwnefl>
 - Click on “Create a New Account” and set up your agency profile. If your agency already has a profile on Foundant, simply log in with your existing credentials and go to your agency dashboard. Please ensure the proper point of contact is listed under your agency’s profile.

If you have questions, please contact the United Way Grants Team: unitedwaygrants@uwnefl.org.