



Community Urgent Relief Fund and Disaster Relief Fund Fact Sheet

Community Urgent Relief Fund

The Community Urgent Relief Fund (CURF) is a fund at Kalamazoo Community Foundation (KZCF) that supports emergency relief, recovery and restoration efforts in the wake of sudden and unanticipated natural, economic and man-made crises in Kalamazoo County.

Disaster Relief Fund

The Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) at United Way of South Central Michigan (UWSCMI) supports response and recovery in instances of natural disaster and community crises that affect individuals and families below the Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed (ALICE) threshold in the region.

While the CURF and DRF are distinct funds, KZCF and UWSCMI have committed to a unified response in times of disaster or community crises in Kalamazoo County — we call this our **Lifeline Alliance**.

Individuals, companies, local governments and foundations are able to donate money to these funds at any time, and the pool of resources is then managed and strategically granted by KZCF and/or UWSCMI.

Tax-exempt donations can be made to each fund at any time by visiting KZCF's [website](#) (CURF) or UWSCMI's [website](#) (DRF).

When are funds available?

KZCF and UWSCMI consider certain criteria when considering whether to activate – begin raising and distributing dollars – in response to a disruptive event in the Kalamazoo County region that overwhelms the capacity of survivors, local officials and local nonprofits, and requires additional assistance.

These criteria include, but are not limited to:

- The disaster specifically impacting Black, Indigenous and People of Color and/or those living below the ALICE threshold.
- Significant loss of life, injury or displacement, impact on a community's livelihoods and capacity to respond, and/or impact on vulnerable populations.
- Basic need support is expected or verified as needed in response to the particular crisis.
- There have been calls for assistance from the impacted community.

Efforts are made to maintain an available balance of funds so resources can be deployed quickly. When funds are activated, extensive communication between KZCF, UWSCMI and the community resilience program manager will take place, informing potential donors and organizations of how to donate or apply for funds.

Note: A formal state of emergency is not required to dispense CURF or DRF funding. Additionally, a declaration of a state of emergency by any governing or emergency relief entity does not automatically activate these funds.

Who do we fund?

The CURF and DRF are able to fund 501(c)(3) nonprofit entities, public entities (such as school districts or municipal departments) and faith-based organizations. At this time, individuals and families are not able to directly request or receive money from the CURF or DRF.

Once the funds are activated, these organizations may submit a brief online application that allows them to apply for both CURF and DRF funding simultaneously. The application will be reviewed promptly, generally in seven days or less, and the applicant will be notified of their funding outcome.

What do we fund?

Funding assistance from the CURF and DRF is intended to address critical life and safety needs resulting from natural disasters and community crises, with a focus on supporting those living at or below the ALICE threshold.

In the past, this has included:

- Emergency financial assistance (e.g., gift cards, cash stipends, etc.).
- Housing stability, re-housing, temporary housing and eviction prevention efforts.
- Critical home repairs.
- Food items and meals.
- Clothing and hygiene resources.
- Access to health services.
- Legal advocacy services.
- Educational interventions and supports.

Generally, standard cleanup efforts and cosmetic repairs are not considered eligible.

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What is our relationship with fema and local government response agencies?

The CURF and DRF are local, philanthropic resources intended to complement, rather than supplant, local, state and federal emergency response resources.

In past activations, flexible CURF and DRF dollars have been deployed within 12 to 72 hours of a given crisis and have sometimes – but not always – been added to later via governmental resources or reimbursements. The community resilience program manager serves as the formal connection point between governmental and nonprofit response, including providing input as to where CURF and DRF dollars may be most helpful.

Understanding our History and Roles

In partnership with the City of Kalamazoo, Stryker and KZCF, UWSCMI launched a community resilience program manager role in January 2020.

This staff person, employed by Gryphon Place/2-1-1, is fully dedicated to assisting nonprofits with their planning and readiness capacity, ensuring optimal response coordination between themselves and governmental agencies in times of crisis. This position helps establish a strong foundation for all involved parties as KZCF and UWSCMI work to address crises. Furthermore, this role helps boost community investment into the CURF and DRF and helps to ensure funding is utilized effectively.

The Kalamazoo County Response Consortium (KCRC) is a collaboration of nonprofits, government agencies and local businesses that work to ensure efficient and effective response to the greater Kalamazoo community in times of emergency, crisis or disaster. The KCRC was created after a flooding emergency in February 2018 and is chaired by the community resilience program manager. The consortium meets regularly to discuss lessons learned and improve individual and collective capabilities and capacities.

KZCF and UWSCMI work in partnership with the KCRC to assess the local impact of events and determine whether the funds will be activated to support recovery and response efforts.

How to Connect With Us

Follow the links below to learn more about the CURF, DRF and KCRC.

Community Urgent Relief Fund

Kalamazoo Community Foundation

kzcf.org/funds-in-motion/community-urgent-relief-fund/

Disaster Relief Fund

United Way of South Central Michigan

unitedforscmi.org/disaster-relief-fund/

Kalamazoo County Response Consortium

<https://www.gryphon.org/disaster-response>

