



Greater Chattanooga



ENGAGEMENT RESOURCE GUIDE

Powered by



TENNESSEE
VALLEY
AUTHORITY

Dear Community Leader,

What does family mean to you?

How does your answer to this question impact you as a leader—and your organization at large? We know that family looks different for everyone. We also know that workplaces play a unique role in helping families and, ultimately, our community thrive. As we come back together for the second year of the United for Working Families Summit, we are thrilled to reflect on our progress, unite in our shared purpose, and dream about what we can achieve together.

United Way of Greater Chattanooga and Tennessee Valley Authority have been long-time partners in a mission to “make life better” for all our neighbors. Families are the engine of our community, and fostering family-friendly workplaces can help us build a more resilient community and economy.

Tennessee is currently ranked 49th in the nation for helping working families thrive and escape poverty.* If we zoom into Hamilton County alone, we find over 9,500 households with children living with the stress and impact of not being able to meet basic needs. These households represent our neighbors, our employees, our community. By championing family-friendly policies in our workplaces, we can make a direct and generational impact on our employees.

Fostering family-friendly workplaces is not just the right thing to do—it’s also good for business, proven by the many local leaders who have already joined us in this work. Together, we can ensure every child has the opportunity to succeed by making Greater Chattanooga the best place for working families.

We invite you to creatively consider how you can take part in this movement towards a more family-friendly community.

United in Purpose,

Lesley Scarce, CEO of United Way of Greater Chattanooga & Carol Eimers, Chief HR Officer of TVA



Lesley Scarce
Chief Executive Officer,
United Way of Greater
Chattanooga



Carol Eimers
Chief Human Resources
Officer, Tennessee Valley
Authority

Family-Friendly is Business Friendly.

Fostering a healthy workplace goes beyond the paycheck. Your future and current employees are looking at more than salary to determine if a workplace will support and accommodate their family-related needs. **In fact, 80% of employees would choose additional benefits over a pay raise** (Best Place for Working Parents.)

Family-friendly workplaces are proven to enhance productivity, improve recruitment, and yield higher retention rates all while strengthening families, promoting children's healthy development, and bolstering economic growth.



of millennials would leave their jobs for one with more family-friendly benefits

(Early Matters Greater Austin)

Did you know?

U.S. Companies spent nearly \$900,000,000,000 to replace employees who quit in 2023.

(Work Institute's 2024 Retention Report)



What Makes a Workplace Family-Friendly?

A family-friendly workplace allows employees to thrive, not just survive—at work and at home. It's more than just a paycheck, it's about building a holistic support system for your employees so they can be part of a more connected community for the next generation of leaders.

Policies in this toolkit fall into five categories:



Flexibility

- Flexibility offers employees greater control over their work arrangements, schedules, and responsibilities.
- 80% of employees said they would be more loyal to their employer if they offered schedule flexibility (Work Institute 2024 U.S. Retention Report).



Social Connectedness

- Social connectedness fosters belonging, community, and positive relationships among employees.
- In the U.S., stress-related absenteeism attributed to loneliness costs employers an estimated \$154 billion annually (US Surgeon General Report on Loneliness).



Childcare & Family Assistance

- Childcare and Family Assistance supports employees in balancing work and caregiving duties through financial and practical assistance.
- 62% of working parents say they would even take a cut in pay to work for a business that offered its employees high-quality childcare (KinderCare Report).



Wellness

- Wellness programs enhance employees' physical, mental, and emotional well-being, fostering an overall healthier and more productive workforce.
- Of more than 21,000 exit interviews by the Work Institute, 12.3% of people left due to health and family related issues (Work Institute 2024 US Retention Report).



Economic Stability

- Economic stability promotes financial well-being and reduces stress among employees, enhancing their overall financial health and sense of security.
- Individuals earning \$25,000 to \$50,000 were 15 points more likely to have three months of emergency savings if they scored above average in financial literacy. They were also 10 points more likely to spend less than they earn, suggesting good financial education can provide lower-income families with similar financial security as high-income households (FINRA).

ALICE HOUSEHOLDS

Family-friendly workplaces are beneficial to everyone, but they are especially important to our neighbors living below the ALICE threshold to help break the cycle of financial hardship.

- In Hamilton County alone, **there are over 9,500 households with children growing up in financial hardship.**
- ALICE Families often work two or three jobs and are forced to make impossible choices each day, and the need has never been greater.
- The **cost of living** from 2021 to 2022 **increased by over \$11,000 for a family of four with two children in childcare.**



“At Coca-Cola UNITED, we have always benchmarked our pay to ensure we remain competitive. However, after connecting with United Way and learning about the ALICE data, we realized the importance of understanding our associates’ total expenses, including housing, childcare, food, etc. ALICE has been incredibly beneficial in providing us with a holistic view and allowing us to make better decisions on what constitutes competitive wages as compared to total living expenses. We are grateful for this comprehensive perspective.”

Gianneta Jones

Sr. Vice President and Chief People Officer at Coca-Cola Bottling United



ALICE

Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed

Neighbors earning above the poverty level
but still living paycheck to paycheck

By 2022, 36% of families with children in Tennessee were below the ALICE Threshold. And longstanding disparities in financial hardship by household type remained: 77% of single-female-headed families and 62% of single-male-headed families were below the ALICE Threshold in 2022, compared to 20% of married-parent families.

Learn more at unitedforalice.org

FLEXIBILITY



Why this matters

70% of highly credentialed women who leave the workforce say they would have stayed if they had access to flexibility.

(Best Place for Working Parents)

Flexibility

There are several types of flexibility benefits:

Flexible Work Hours: Employees adjust their start and end times within a certain range, giving them the freedom to accommodate personal obligations or preferences.

Telecommuting or Remote Work: Employees are given the option to work from a location outside the traditional office, often using technology to connect and collaborate with colleagues.

Compressed Workweeks: Employees work their required hours in fewer days, allowing for longer weekends or extended time off during the week.

Phased Retirement: Employees gradually reduce their work hours or transition to part-time work as they approach retirement age.

Flexible Leave Policies: Providing options for unpaid leave, sabbaticals, or extended time off for personal reasons.

Parental and Caregiver Leave: Paid or unpaid time off for employees to care for newborns, adopted children, or sick family members.

Shift Flexibility: Rotating or alternating shifts to accommodate employees' preferences or personal commitments.



Kenco is dedicated to creating a flexible work environment and has implemented various benefits to support its workforce. They expanded their paid-time off for frontline employees in 2021 and introduced the "Shift Swap" program in 2022, allowing hourly warehouse staff to exchange shifts for better work-life balance. In recognition of their veterans and active military team members, Kenco declared Veterans Day a paid holiday in 2023. These initiatives have significantly reduced voluntary turnover by 27% from 2022 to 2023, highlighting Kenco's commitment to employee support and flexibility.

Example Policy Language

Four-Day Work Schedule

A. The standard workweek will be four days consisting of eight working hours and including a 30-minute lunch, totaling 32 hours per week. The office is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

B. All employees are expected to work during the core working hours of 10:00- 3:00 p.m. daily. However, they have the flexibility to adjust their work schedule within the day as needed to fulfill their job responsibilities.

1. Although the core working hours of 10:00-3:00 are a requirement, it may be required for some employees to work schedules that require them to be here until later in order to meet job responsibilities.
2. All working schedules should be approved by an employee's supervisor.

C. If an employee is working a flexible schedule that falls outside of mandatory meeting hours (e.g. 10:00-6:00 on a day with a 9:00 am meeting) they cannot skip the meeting.

D. Workdays will be Monday through Thursday for a portion of the team and Tuesday through Friday for another portion. Each employee's day off is decided between themselves, their supervisor, and the COO. A new employee's day off is assigned upon hiring based on organizational needs.

E. Employees who are unable to work during the core hours of 10:00-3:00 pm must obtain approval from their supervisor. Alternative schedules must meet the needs of the organization.





Social Connectedness

Key components of social connectedness benefits may include:

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or Affinity Groups:

These are employee-led groups based on shared identities, interests, or backgrounds.

Team Building Activities: Organizing team-building events, workshops, or retreats that encourage collaboration, communication, and relationship-building among employees.

Open Communication Channels: Creating platforms for open and transparent communication where employees can share ideas, concerns, and feedback.

Recognition and Appreciation: Implementing systems to acknowledge and appreciate employees' contributions, achievements, and milestones, creating a culture of recognition and positivity.

Workplace Social Events: Hosting social gatherings, celebrations, or themed events to provide opportunities for employees to interact and build relationships in a relaxed setting.

Inclusive Workspaces: Designing work environments that encourage interaction, collaboration, and casual conversations, such as communal break areas, comfortable seating, and open office layouts.

Employee Surveys and Feedback: Regularly seeking input from employees about their social interactions and feelings of connectedness, and using this feedback to inform improvements.



Southern Champion Tray has teamed up with United Way of Greater Chattanooga to create an exciting onboarding experience that helps new employees form strong social connections within the company and the community. New hires take part in an onsite volunteer activity that supports a local nonprofit, allowing them to meet colleagues while learning about the importance of community service. Since launching this program, Southern Champion Tray has proudly created 225 snack packs for various nonprofits, making a positive impact together!

SEE THIS PILLAR
IN ACTION:
SCAN TO WATCH.



Why this matters

A 2022 study found that when people were asked how close they felt to others emotionally, **only 39% of adults in the U.S. said that they felt very connected to others.**

(US Surgeon General Report on Loneliness)

Helpful Resource

Onsite Volunteerism

Let United Way of Greater Chattanooga handle the heavy lifting of bringing inclusive volunteering projects directly to your team. Save time, bond as a team, learn about local nonprofits, and make a meaningful difference through onsite volunteering!

How it Works

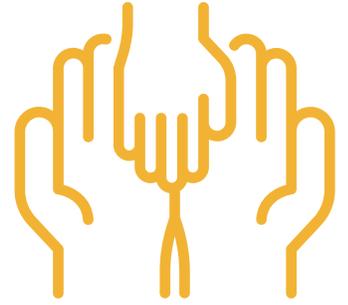
We connect with our network of over 100 nonprofits to tailor each volunteer project to your team's needs and the needs of local nonprofits. Examples include building hygiene kits, organizing school supplies, assembling snack packs, and more.

Email volunteering@uwchatt.org to get started!

What can you expect from your onsite volunteering project?

- A hands-on volunteer experience tailored to your team's needs and timeframe.
- A customized sign-up link for participants, along with a project description.
- A presentation providing an overview of the local nonprofit you're serving.
- Information on how to further engage with the community through United Way.
- Post-event photos, online brand recognition, social media shoutout and volunteer survey data.





Childcare & Family Assistance

Childcare benefits typically include:

Subsidized or Discounted Childcare: Some employers may offer financial assistance to employees for childcare expenses, either by providing on-site childcare facilities, partnering with external childcare providers, or offering subsidies or discounts for qualified childcare services.

Paid Parental Leave: Paid time off for new parents, including maternity and paternity leave, to care for their newborn or newly adopted child.

Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs): These accounts allow employees to set aside pre-tax funds to cover eligible childcare or dependent care expenses.

Emergency Backup Care: Temporary childcare services provided in case of unexpected situations, such as when regular childcare arrangements are unavailable.

Parenting Support Programs: Resources and counseling services to assist employees with parenting challenges, such as workshops, webinars, or access to parenting experts.

Adoption Assistance: Financial support or reimbursement for adoption-related expenses incurred by employees who choose to adopt a child.

Breastfeeding Support: Facilities and policies that support breastfeeding mothers, such as dedicated lactation rooms and flexible break times for pumping.

Elder Care Assistance: Similar to childcare benefits, these may include resources and support for employees who are caring for aging or elderly family members.



Children's Advocacy Center has an innovative parental leave policy that has up to three stages. This includes six fully paid weeks of bonding time, another six weeks of adjustment time when the employee comes back to the office, and another six weeks if needed for medical recovery. This time applies if the employee gives birth, their partner does, or if a child is welcomed via surrogate or adoption.

SEE THIS PILLAR
IN ACTION:
SCAN TO WATCH.



Why this matters

74% of parents have either taken a new job or would consider a new job to become more available for their child or children.

(Harris Poll and KinderCare 2023 Parent Confidence Report)

Example Policy Language

Parental Leave is for the birth (by the Employee or a surrogate) or adoption of a child(ren). The organization will provide six weeks of paid leave and six weeks of an adjusted schedule to ease back into work for all eligible employees who have completed their Introductory Period.

When going on Parental Leave, each Employee must work with their direct Supervisor to develop a Leave Plan. This includes which Staff will be providing coverage when Leave happens, when the expected date back to work will be, and a list of all passwords and accounts to the Supervisor for access.

The Leave is broken up into Bonding Time (Six Weeks), Adjustment Time (Six Weeks of adjusted schedule)

These Leave Times must be taken consecutively after the birth or adoption.

Tennessee law provides leave for up to 16 weeks unpaid. The employee would be responsible for cost if still enrolled in the organization's Health Insurance benefits during unpaid leave.

Bonding Time:

The first thirty days of Parental Leave is Bonding Time. It begins the day the child is born. This is a total compensation for the entirety of the Leave and the employee does not work during this time.

If there is a reason related to parental leave before the birth of a child that an employee or partner needs to take leave PTO will be used.

Adjustment Time:

This is six additional weeks after the Bonding Time. For the employee or partner who will work schedule to allow for transition back to work after the birth of a child.

The purpose of this Leave is to ease the employee back to work so as the weeks increase so do the days back at the office.

For the first two weeks (10 days) the employee will be in the office two days a week, the second two-week increment the employee will be in the office three days a week, and for the three two-week increments the employee will be in the office four days a week.



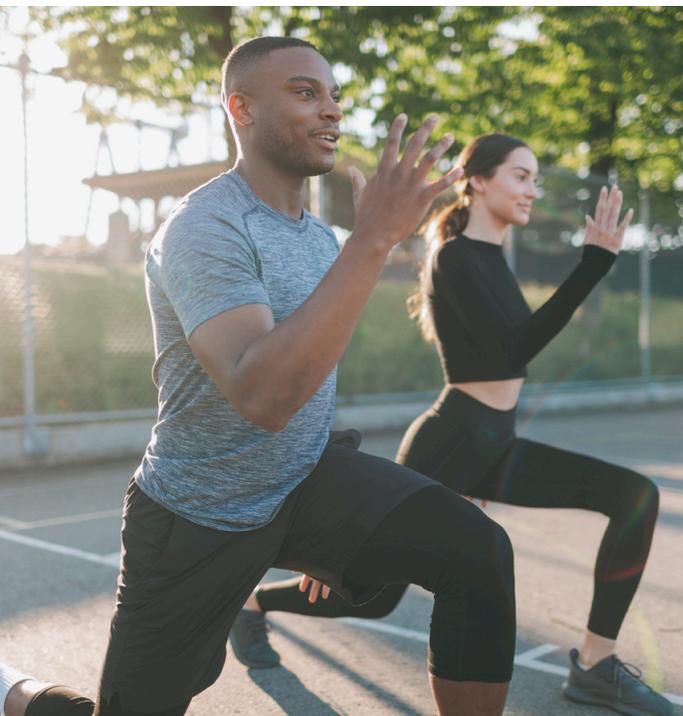
Helpful Resource

Eligible Tennessee families can qualify for up to 100 diapers a month at no cost for children under the age of two through the **TennCare Diaper Benefit Program.**

Learn more at tn.gov/tenncare



WELLNESS



Wellness

Wellness benefits can encompass a variety of activities and services, including:

Healthcare Coverage: Providing access to medical, dental, and vision insurance plans to help employees maintain their physical health and receive necessary medical care.

Mental Health Support: Offering resources such as counseling services, employee assistance programs (EAPs), and mental health awareness initiatives to address the psychological well-being of employees.

Wellness Programs: Implementing activities such as fitness classes, yoga sessions, meditation workshops, and weight management programs to encourage physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices.

Work-Life Balance: Promoting flexible work arrangements, paid time off, parental leave, and other policies that allow employees to manage their work and personal lives effectively.

Preventive Care: Encouraging regular health check-ups, vaccinations, and screenings to identify and address potential health issues early on.



Blood Assurance enhanced their healthcare offerings to better support working families by introducing TextCare, an innovative telehealth platform providing healthcare right at your finger tips. This initiative addresses the need for more accessible and cost-effective health benefits for employees.

SEE THIS PILLAR
IN ACTION:
SCAN TO WATCH.



Why this matters

80% of employees would choose additional benefits over a pay raise.

(Best Place for Working Parents)



Helpful Resource

The YMCA offers corporate memberships, alleviating the financial burden of wellness of employees and provides equal access to health centers for both on-site and off-site employees through a nationwide membership service.

Learn more at
ymcachattanooga.org/corporate-memberships

Example Policy Language

Paid Leave for Reasonable & Necessary Absences (RANA)

In addition to rest, vacation, leisure time, and pursuing personal interests, staff may need to be away from work due to illness or another unforeseen circumstance. Both full-time exempt employees and part-time hourly employees will be free to take paid leave for reasonable and necessary absences when they require it. Although there is no annual limit, this leave time will be requested and tracked similarly to PTO.

Expectations

Under this policy, employees are expected to:

- Communicate with team members in advance when scheduling an absence.
- Notify the appropriate team member before the start of the workday when an unscheduled absence occurs.
- Understand that due to staffing needs, sometimes, not all leave requests can be honored. Advance requests are still subject to the appropriate approval.
- Meet all established goals despite the absences.
- If an eligible employee is unable to meet the expectations outlined above, the organization reserves the right to temporarily revoke unlimited leave. Further, if gross abuse of this leave is observed, disciplinary action may be taken, which may include termination of employment.

Limitations

If an employee requires more than 10 consecutive workdays of paid leave for a reasonable and necessary absence, the employee must then request personal leave, outlined in the next section of this handbook.

This policy does not apply to eligible employees requesting unpaid, personal, or parental leave. For more information about unpaid, personal, parental, jury duty, or military leave, please see the corresponding policies located in your handbook.

Verification

Supervisors and team members will be in communication about their absences to ensure that the employee is still meeting the expectations of their position. As a part of these discussions, a supervisor may ask the team member to provide further information or documentation related to their necessary absences.



Economic Stability

Key components of economic stability benefits may include:

Competitive Compensation: Offering competitive salaries and wages that align with industry standards and reflect the value of employees' skills and contributions.

Retirement Plans: Offering retirement savings options, such as 401(k) plans, pension plans, or other retirement accounts, to help employees save for their future and achieve long-term financial security.

Financial Education and Counseling: Providing resources, workshops, seminars, or one-on-one counseling to help employees better understand personal finance topics, such as budgeting, saving, investing, debt management, and retirement planning.

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs): Offering confidential support services that address various personal and financial challenges, including counseling, legal advice, and financial planning assistance.

Student Loan Assistance: Providing support or resources to help employees manage and repay their student loans more effectively.

Emergency Funds or Financial Hardship Support: Establishing programs that provide financial assistance or short-term loans to employees facing unexpected financial difficulties.

Tuition Reimbursement: Assisting employees in pursuing further education or skill development by reimbursing a portion of tuition expenses.

Why This Matters

There are two budgets in which ALICE households can operate: Survival or Stability. A survival budget only covers the minimum to pay bills, but a stability budget accounts for critical savings to empower long-term stability, breaking the cycle of financial hardship.

HAMILTON COUNTY FAMILY SURVIVAL VS STABILITY BUDGET

\$30,276

ANNUAL SURVIVAL BUDGET
1 adult

\$50,520

ANNUAL STABILITY BUDGET

\$43,860

ANNUAL SURVIVAL BUDGET
2 adults

\$72,864

ANNUAL STABILITY BUDGET

\$66,984

ANNUAL SURVIVAL BUDGET
2 adults and 2 children

\$113,400

ANNUAL STABILITY BUDGET

\$75,720

ANNUAL SURVIVAL BUDGET
2 adults and 2 in childcare

\$124,596

ANNUAL STABILITY BUDGET

ECONOMIC STABILITY



United Way of Greater Chattanooga is dedicated to investing in its employees' futures with a top-tier retirement plan. All employees are automatically enrolled on the first of the month following their hire date. The plan is designed to reward long-term commitment: after two years of service, employees are 50% vested, and after three years, they are fully vested. To further boost savings, the nonprofit makes a discretionary contribution of 6% and an additional matching contribution of 2%. This contribution not only strengthens recruitment and retention efforts but also supports the financial well-being of team members.

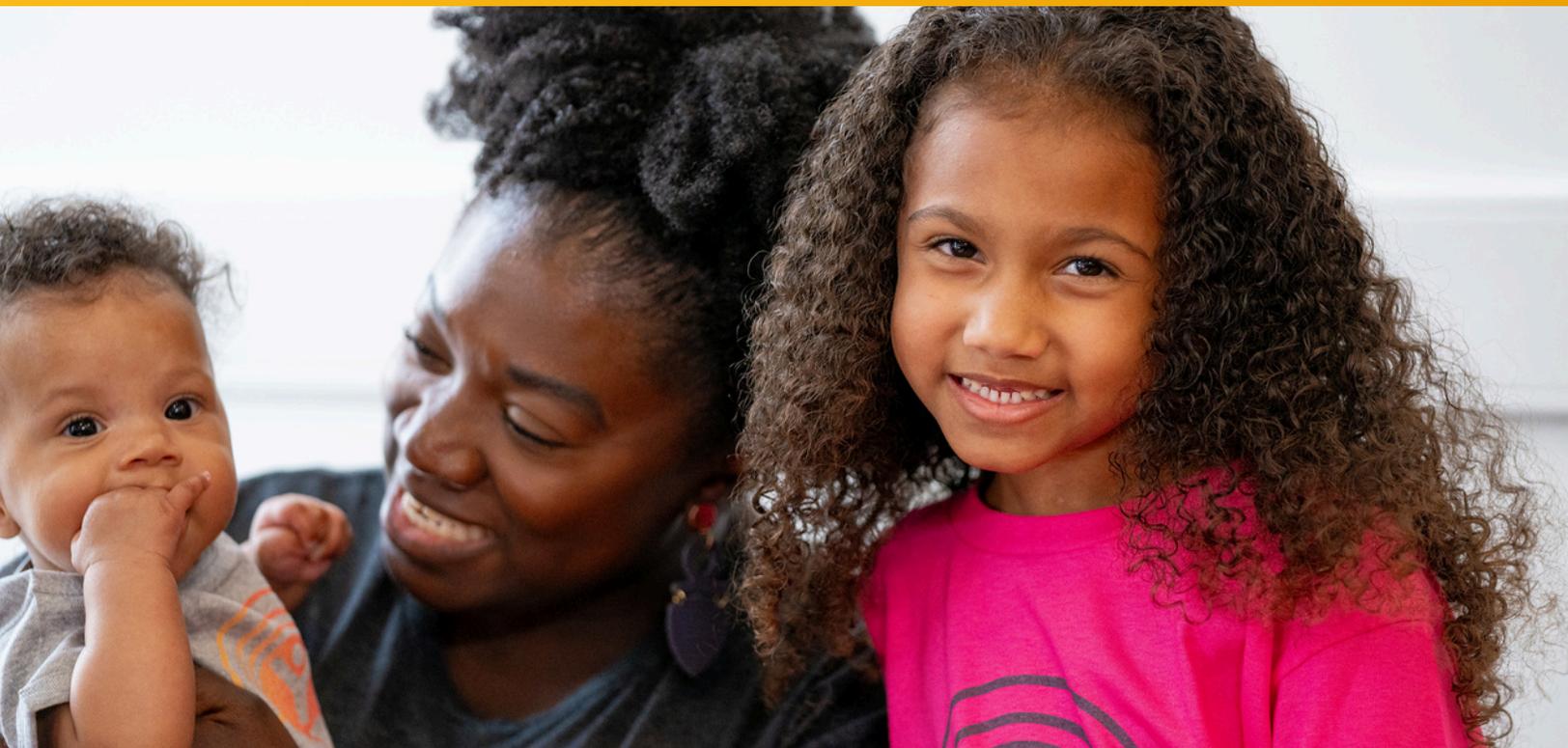
Helpful Resource

BetterFi is a local nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring economic stability for our community through providing affordable installment loans and complementary financial programming as a pathway out of debt traps like payday, title and flex loans and toward financial fitness.

Learn more at betterfi.co.

The BetterFi logo, which consists of the word "betterfi" in a lowercase, white, sans-serif font. The logo is set against a solid orange square background.

betterfi



Corporate Philanthropy

Offering employees convenient and meaningful ways to be philanthropic at work increases engagement, retention, and overall job satisfaction. Choosing a community partnership is a crucial decision that can impact employee engagement. When you choose United Way, we can ensure that your dollars are creating the most impact. Plus, you'll get help and resources along the way!



Increases passion for the work



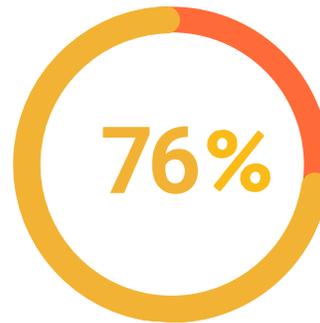
Creates brand and mission alignment



Increase participation rates and engagement



Drives Community Change



76% of Millennials consider a company's social commitments when deciding where to work.

POWER OF CORPORATE CAMPAIGNS



THREE WAYS TO GIVE:



GIVE, ADVOCATE, VOLUNTEER

Every year, we're invited into nearly 300 local workplaces to craft unique engagement plans with the community on how to give back in meaningful ways. You have an opportunity to give with United Way year-round with your time and resources.

Hear from **Our Partners**

Jay Dale

Market President, First Horizon Bank



“As Chattanooga continues to grow and evolve, the role of corporate philanthropy has never been greater. I’m humbled to see the work United Way of Greater Chattanooga is doing in our community every day and to know that our partnership with them is making a real impact on our neighbors.”

Marie Webb

Sr. Vice President of Human Resources,
Chief Talent & Inclusion Officer, EPB



“At EPB, we’re always asking ourselves how we can support a stronger community, not just today but for future generations. That’s why our partnership with United Way is so important. As a long-time supporter, I’m proud to work alongside this team to ensure every child and family has the opportunity to thrive.”

Wade Hinton

CEO and Founder, Hinton & Company



HINTON & COMPANY



“The United Way is one of our community’s great pillars. My hope is that everyone in the community can find an opportunity to get involved. Together, we can forge a future where we live united, not divided.”



Volunteer to Make a Difference

"By fostering employee productivity, improving employee engagement, and deepening a company's ties to the communities that they serve, corporate volunteering can unlock substantial intangible value for companies."

-Harvard Business Review



Promotes health and well-being



Connects teams



Creates more positive work attitudes



Retains employees



Creates leadership opportunities



Improves corporate reputation
and social commitment

ihelp

ihelpchattanooga.org

Visit our volunteer projects platform to stay connected to the latest volunteer opportunities available from our nonprofit partners.

1,000+ views per month
operates year-round



VOLUNTEER



DAY OF CARING

SIGN UP TODAY



Day of Caring is our largest city-wide volunteering event of the year. Local businesses can sign employee teams up for a volunteer project with one of our nonprofit partners to support collective community impact.



COMMUNITY RESOURCE

2.1.1

Get Connected. Get Help.™

Connecting people in need with local resources is a critical part of our mission at United Way. Our 211 helpline connects neighbors to critical resources like food, rent and utility assistance, employment opportunities, health services, and more. Real-time local insights can be found at [uwcha.211counts.org](https://www.uwcha.211counts.org).

Highlights:

- We answer more than 73,000 211 requests across phone calls, texts, and emails every year
- We provide more than \$800,000 in direct emergency assistance every year
- We support needs across our top-requested areas:
 - Food - 48%
 - Utilities - 22%
 - Housing/shelter - 18%

Learn more at unitedwaycha.org/211

CONTACT 211

CALL 211 OR (423)265-8000
EMAIL 211STAFF@UWCHATT.ORG
TEXT YOUR ZIP CODE TO 898-211



FOOD SERVICES



RENT & HOUSING
ASSISTANCE



UTILITIES
ASSISTANCE



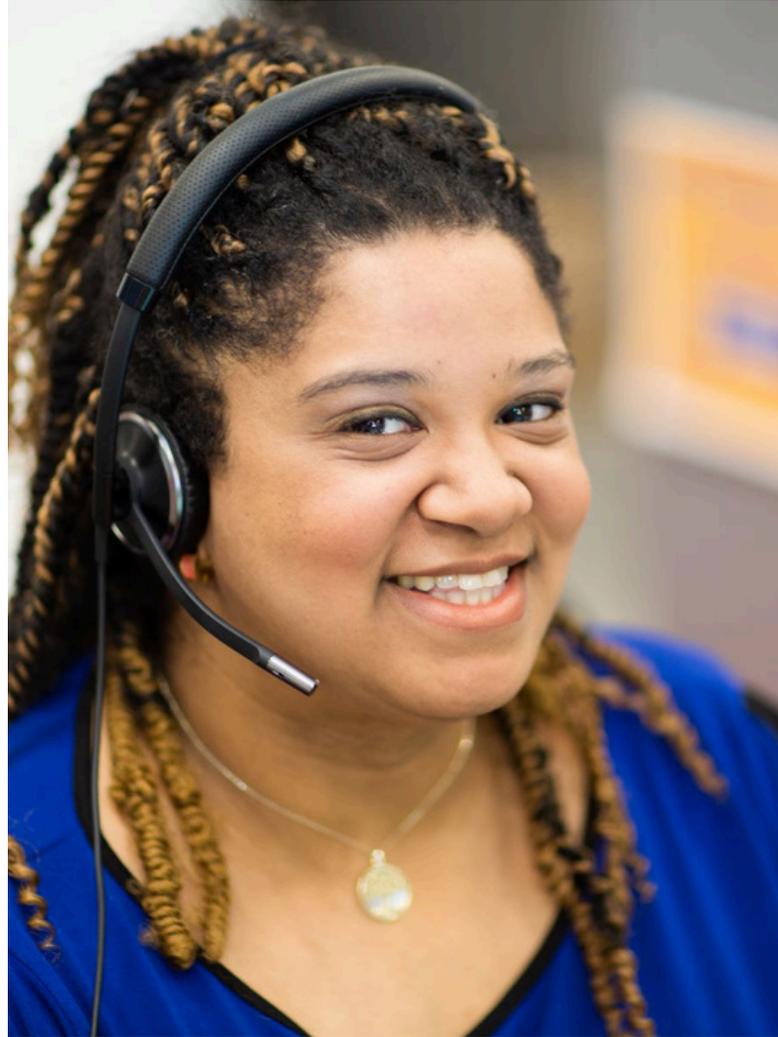
EDUCATION &
EMPLOYMENT



VETERANS SERVICES



FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE



GET STARTED

Where do I start?

EVALUATE YOUR CURRENT POLICIES.

- Take the assessment at [bestplace4workingparents.com](https://www.bestplace4workingparents.com)
- Conduct surveys or focus groups: Gather insights from employees about their needs, challenges, and suggestions for family-friendly policies.

JOIN A UNITED WAY INSIGHT SESSION OR ALICE@WORK COHORT.

- Insight Sessions are free and open to anyone who wants to learn more about a specific topic like flexibility, childcare, and more. Sign up at [unitedwaycha.org/workingfamilies](https://www.unitedwaycha.org/workingfamilies)
- Join an upcoming cohort for ALICE@Work by reaching out to workingfamilies@uwchatt.org

COMMIT TO ONGOING POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS.

- Invite others from your organization into the conversation to creatively meet the needs of your employees and continue to refine and re-evaluate.
- Join our newsletter to stay up to date on the latest insights and trends at [unitedwaycha.org/workingfamilies](https://www.unitedwaycha.org/workingfamilies)



“Simply put, the core of TVA’s mission is to make life better for the people of our region. Through that lens, United Way is a perfect partner. Working together alongside other like-minded community organizations, we can support and impact families in difference-making ways – powering a brighter future.”

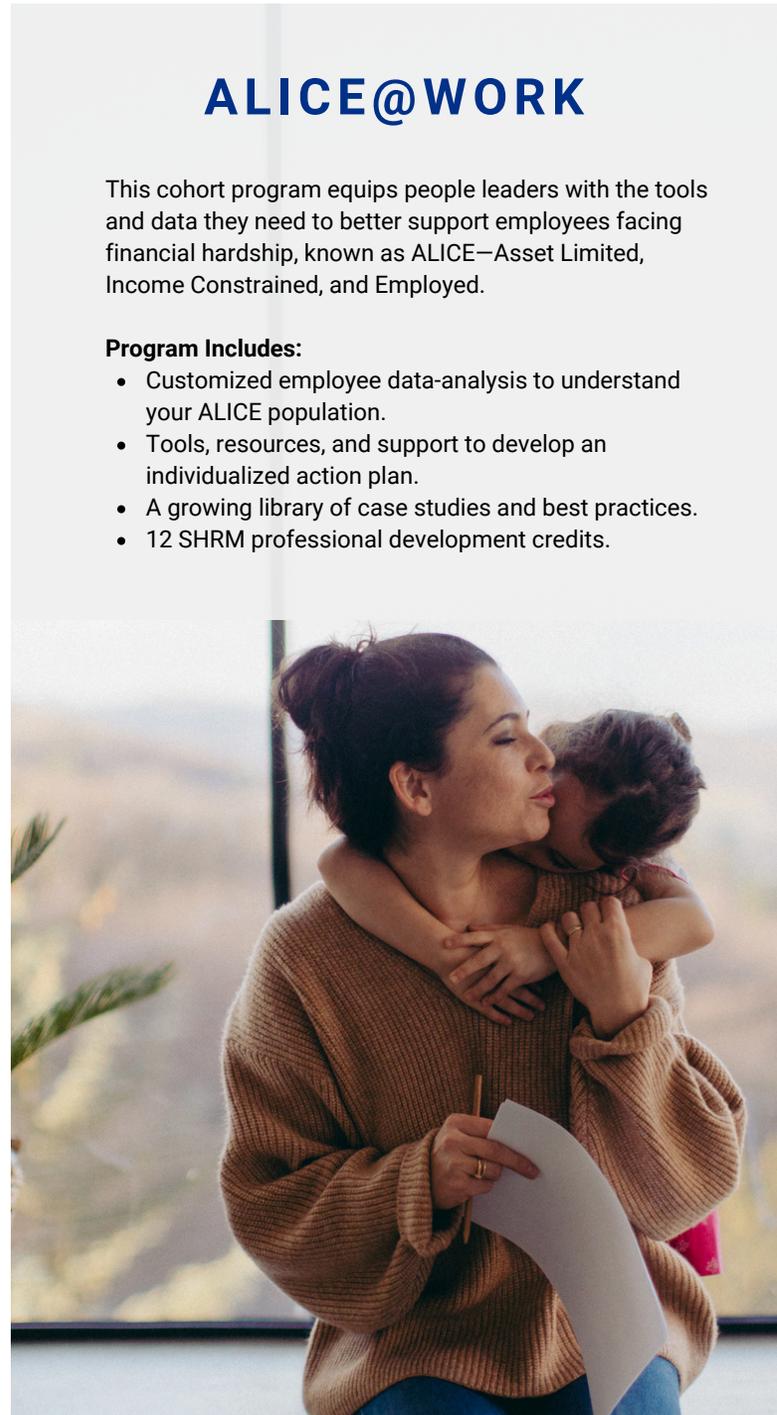
Bert Robinson,
TVA East Region Executive

ALICE@WORK

This cohort program equips people leaders with the tools and data they need to better support employees facing financial hardship, known as ALICE—Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed.

Program Includes:

- Customized employee data-analysis to understand your ALICE population.
- Tools, resources, and support to develop an individualized action plan.
- A growing library of case studies and best practices.
- 12 SHRM professional development credits.



EMAIL WORKINGFAMILIES@UWCHATT.ORG



JOIN US

Connect with us on social media and sign up to receive email updates to stay informed and learn how you can get involved.

UNITEDWAYCHA.ORG/WORKINGFAMILIES



@unitedwaycha

UnitedWayCha.org
630 Market Street Chattanooga, TN 37402
423.752.0300