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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **COVID-19 Hit as Record Number of ALICE Families Were Priced Out of Survival**

***ALICE Report: A crisis in the making with a 35% increase in Pennsylvania's ALICE households over 10 years, fueled by high-priced basics and stagnant wages***

**York, Pennsylvania** — When COVID-19 hit, almost 1.4 million Pennsylvania households were already one emergency away from financial ruin — a 10-year record high — setting the stage for the unprecedented economic impact of the crisis, according to [the state's latest ALICE Report](#), released today by United Way of Pennsylvania, in partnership United Way of York County, United For ALICE, and regional partners.

Pennsylvania's low-income families — considered [ALICE \(Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed\)](#) — earn more than the federal poverty level but still not are unable to afford the basics for survival, essentials such as housing, food, transportation and child care.

“We've known that our economy was increasingly reliant on these families we call ALICE, who are financially vulnerable to one emergency,” said United Way of York County President Anne Druck. “COVID-19 became that one universal emergency. ALICE families are facing the greatest health and financial risks today, as they are the workers who have bare minimum insurance coverage, have no paid sick days, and whose children rely on daily meals at school.”

In York County, 32% of households live below the ALICE threshold, with no savings, no safety net, and no way to plan for or invest in their futures. Many ALICE jobs are considered essential: An office worker, a child care worker, a personal care aide or nursing assistant, an elementary school teacher, a retail associate or a custodian.

“ALICE families are working hard, but the gap between their wages and the cost of household basics just kept widening,” said Druck. “These already vulnerable ALICE households are now grappling with the incredible economic disruption caused by COVID-19.”

United Way of York County committed to helping our ALICE neighbors by supporting immediate and increased needs for eviction prevention and emergency food supports through the York County COVID-19 Response Fund, established in March 2020 in partnership with the York County Community Foundation. To date, the Fund has granted more than \$660,000 to support York Countians struggling because of the impacts of the pandemic.

United Way of York County helps bridge the gap for financially struggling families with short-term support and helps build a path to self-sufficiency for the future. Impactful long-term solutions through the United Way of York County Community Fund and our Partner Agencies focus on affordable and accessible high-quality child care, basic needs supports, and the statewide PA 211 health and human services helpline to connect people in need with resources that can help.

The ALICE Report calls for stakeholders across all sectors to use its findings to remove obstacles to financial stability, identify gaps in community resources and build data-driven solutions to help ALICE families achieve economic stability, bolstering the state's economy overall.

Data for York County — including breakdowns by municipality, ethnicity/race, age, and household composition — and links to the full report, an interactive map, the ALICE Experience, and more are available at [www.unitedway-york.org/alice](http://www.unitedway-york.org/alice).

To read a copy of the report and find county-by-county and town-level data on the size and demographics of ALICE as well as the community conditions and costs faced by ALICE households, visit [www.UnitedForALICE.org/Pennsylvania](http://www.UnitedForALICE.org/Pennsylvania).

### **About United Way of York County**

For 100 years, United Way of York County has worked in the York County community to improve people's lives. It began as The York Welfare Federation, an organization that raised funds on behalf of 17 member agencies. Today, as the United Way of York County, the mission of raising community funds remains the same, but the strategies have broadened in order to meet the growing and changing needs of people living in York County.

United Way has adapted over the years and now collaborates with other public and private organizations to engage the community in addressing the complex issues facing York County. By developing initiatives that get at the root causes of these issues, United Way and its partners find solutions and fund programs that improve the lives of one in four people in York County. Through gifts to the Community Fund, United Way is able to invest those dollars into 66 programs supported by 35 Partner Agencies. These programs address human services needs across three Focus Areas: Education, Health, and Financial Stability. This enables United Way to tackle the immediate and continuing needs of York County families and individuals and to create real, lasting change that matters to you and our community.

### **About United Way of Pennsylvania**

United Way of Pennsylvania is a 501(c)(3) membership organization whose purpose is to assist and champion the efforts of local United Ways in advancing the common good. Other charitable organizations known as United Funds or Community Chests can also be members of UWP. UWP engages and connects local United Ways with resources that will help them support the health, education and financial stability of every person in their community. UWP serves as the voice for member local United Ways on state public policy issues that relate to community impact work in education, income and health. UWP is the hub for the Pennsylvania ALICE project, and is also a significant supporter of PA 211, a resource that connects people of Pennsylvania to health and human services information at no cost to them.

### **About United For ALICE**

United For ALICE is a driver of innovation, shining a light on the challenges ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households face and finding collaborative solutions. Through a standardized methodology that assesses the cost of living in every county, this project provides a comprehensive measure of financial hardship across the U.S. Equipped with this data, ALICE partners convene, advocate, and innovate in their local communities to highlight the issues faced

by ALICE households and to generate solutions that promote financial stability. The grassroots movement represents United Ways, corporations, nonprofits and foundations in Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Hawai'i, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin; we are United For ALICE. For more information, visit: [UnitedForALICE.org](http://UnitedForALICE.org).

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