



## United Way Worldwide/ (BET) Partnership on COVID-19 Relief Fund External Frequently Asked Questions

### Background on BET

Black Entertainment Television (BET) is part of the ViacomCBS family of networks. It is the most prominent television network targeting African American audiences, and reaches approximately 88,255,000 American households.

### Background on partnership with UWW

BET has partnered with United Way to create the **BET COVID-19 Relief Fund** to receive financial donations from the **BET COVID-19 Saving Our Selves (S.O.S.) Relief Effort** broadcast event, taking place on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00PM ET. The fund will be disbursed to local charities that provide food and immediate cash assistance to those who need help most.

The **BET COVID-19 S.O.S. Relief Effort** broadcast special is part of BET's array of high impact initiatives to support communities of color impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. African American communities are being disproportionately harmed by the health and financial devastation wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic. BET, in partnership with the NAACP, UWW, leaders in the African American creative, civil rights and business communities and sponsors will provide critical financial, educational and community support directly to the African Americans hardest hit by this crisis.

### What is the goal of the BET COVID-19 Relief Fund in partnership with United Way Worldwide?

The goal is to help African American communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the economic disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. BET and United Way aim to support and bolster existing relief and drive long-term recovery efforts in these communities.

### Why did BET partner with United Way Worldwide to administer the BET COVID-19 Relief Fund?

BET believes that United Way is well-positioned to direct dollars to where they are needed most and trusts that we will steward the donations responsibly. United Way is the largest private funder of human services in the U.S. and has a presence in 95% of communities across the country. United Way is unparalleled in its power to convene local partners, providers and resources to address the needs of vulnerable communities on the ground. Meeting community needs during a crisis like the COVID-10 pandemic requires the scale and scope that only United Way can bring to bear.

### Why is UWW directing this fund to only benefit African American communities?



United Way is doing what it's always done – tackling persistent, underlying social problems in communities and addressing immediate needs. As a result of historical gaps in access, resources, and opportunity, African-American communities have long experienced disparate economic, educational, and health outcomes. Studies show that the economic disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is compounding these existing inequities. BET is interested in providing relief for these communities and has turned to United Way to leverage our expertise and local presence to get help where it is needed most.

### **Why is UWW creating a special fund for African American communities?**

While the COVID-19 pandemic is having a broad impact across the country, recent data and studies show that it is having a disproportionate negative impact on the African American community in particular. We serve every person in every community, and our donors rely on us to direct resources where the needs are most dire. Like funders often do, BET is turning to United Way to leverage its expertise to help a community that is relevant to its business, in this case the African American community.

Death rates from COVID19 are higher for African Americans; financial instability is being exacerbated by layoffs and closures in sectors like retail, hospitality, and healthcare, where African American workers are over-represented; and low-income African American students are disproportionately at risk of learning loss and inadequate access to nutritious food with massive school closures.

### **How will donations to the BET COVID-19 Relief Fund be used?**

Donations made to the BET COVID-19 Relief Fund will be used to support relief and recovery programs administered by local United Ways in Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New Orleans and New York. UWW will disburse funds to these local United Ways to support community-based organizations that serve the most vulnerable within these communities. These organizations must also meet mutually agreed-upon criteria to be eligible to receive funds.

### **How will BET and United Way Worldwide manage the COVID-19 Relief Fund?**

Using United Way Worldwide and selected community partners as the conduit, the BET COVID-19 Relief Fund will reach African Americans with an initial rollout in the NYC-metropolitan area, Chicago, Atlanta, New Orleans, and Detroit, focusing on food insecurity, remote learning resources for school-age children, and financial support for families. United Way Worldwide will create financial reports outlining how funds were distributed and any remaining balances (if applicable).

### **When will the BET COVID-19 Relief Fund start operating?**

The BET COVID-19 Relief Fund is live. United Way Worldwide will begin disbursing grants from the Relief Fund as soon as possible and will reassess regularly when funding is available for further distribution.

### **How will local community-based organizations be selected to receive funds?**



BET and United Way Worldwide will develop eligibility criteria that community partners must meet in order to receive funds from local United Ways in the designated areas: NYC-metropolitan area, Chicago, Atlanta, Los Angeles, New Orleans, and Detroit; as regions identified as hardest hit by COVID-19.

United Ways serving these communities have existing relationships with community partners that deliver services and programs related to food insecurity, emergency financial assistance and educational needs. Many of these organizations are already providing relief to families negatively impacted by the COVID 19 crisis. Ultimately, participating local United Ways will select organizations to receive funding based on their ability to meet the real-time needs on the ground.

### **How can individuals in need apply for financial support from the Relief Fund?**

BET and United Way will ensure that communities have information about the organizations that are receiving funding, and how families and individuals can apply for support or access to resources that are available.

### **Is the money raised from the telethon being diverted from other general funds raised for the network at large?**

No, only money raised as a part of the BET COVID-91 S.O.S. broadcast event will go to the BET COVID-91 Relief Fund and will be disbursed only to those cities identified.

### **What is BET doing to leverage its platform to drive resources to the Relief Fund?**

BET is leveraging its resources and working with creative, business and community partners to underwrite, produce and air “Saving Our Selves: A BET COVID-19 Relief Effort” which will drive awareness of and resources to the Relief Fund. “Saving Our Selves” will air on Wednesday, April 22nd at 8 pm EST.

### **How can individuals contribute to the BET COVID-19 Relief Fund?**

BET and the United Way have established a way for individuals to donate online. Those interested in donating to the relief fund can click [here](#) to make a contribution. More information on BET’s partnership with UWW and additional extensions of our relief efforts are forthcoming. For further details, please visit [BET.com](#).