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United Way of the Desert Addresses Arrival of COVID-19 in the Coachella Valley

COACHELLA VALLEY – (March 12, 2020) – United Way of the Desert cares deeply for all residents of the Coachella Valley. The spread of the Coronavirus in our area is serious and concerning. As you may know, the Riverside County Department of Human Health has issued a State of Emergency for Riverside County and the World Health Organization is categorizing Coronavirus as a worldwide pandemic.

Events of all sizes are being canceled throughout the Valley including the California Careforce clinic (it will now be held in September), and there may be more to come. As of this writing, California public health officials are now advising mass gatherings should be postponed or canceled statewide to slow the spread of COVID-19. For information on what you can and should do to keep yourself and others safe, please continue to visit the Centers for Disease Control website for the most up-to-date information. You can access that site HERE.

While the health of our community is of paramount importance, our second worry is always the economic impact a virus like this can have on our community.

Facts:
• Millions of Americans are one missed paycheck away from poverty.
• 15.6% of Riverside County residents live in poverty.
• It takes 3 Full Time, minimum wage jobs to be economically stable in the Coachella Valley.

Local residents rely on festivals and events to pay their bills and get them through summers when their hospitality position may be temporarily cut. Many residents are not afforded sick days and not showing up at work will not only cost them money from their
paychecks, but it may cost them their job. This is why more than ever, nonprofits having enough resources to help in times of crisis is crucial.

If you need to know your rights and what you can do during this crisis if your employment is affected, please visit the Employment Development Department's website HERE.

Residents rely on us, and our partner agencies, to help them supplement their food supply, their water bill, their mental health resources, and emergency funds. Your support today means more than ever.

**Individual health is community health.** We're all in this together and we encourage all residents to take measures to ensure everyone's health as this pandemic crosses our Valley.

We will continue to send updates and keep the community informed to the best of our ability. All of the links in this release are also available on our website: UnitedWayoftheDesert.org.

**About United Way:** United Way of the Desert is an independent 501(c) 3 organization that has been serving residents for over 70 years. Our mission is to break the cycle of poverty in the Coachella Valley through mobilizing the caring power of community. Our Community Impact Fund – a focus on the areas of education, financial stability and health programs - allows us to provide over 150,000 instances of annual support to local residents who need us. Collaborative work with local programs, business partners, and community leaders is what differentiates the United Way of the Desert. We cater to critical needs, while simultaneously building positive and long-lasting community change. For more information: (760) 323-2731 or visit UnitedWayoftheDesert.org. United Way of the Desert is located at: 73710 Fred Waring Dr., Suite 104, Palm Desert, CA 92260. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram - @UWDesert

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