



**United Way
of the Midlands**

**AGENCY CERTIFICATION/
RE-CERTIFICATION**

**PROCESS, STANDARDS, and
POLICIES**

Standards Approved March 27, 2008

Updated March 26, 2009

Agency MOA updated June 3, 2010

AGENCY CERTIFICATION

1) INTRODUCTION

United Way of the Midlands (UWM) welcomes partnerships with health and human service agencies that address human needs in the community, and that meet certain organizational standards.

In 1998, the United Way of the Midlands (UWM) began distributing funds for critical human service needs to the organizations most capable of addressing those needs. This process insures that the United Way supports high quality programs because organizations wishing to compete for funds must be "certified" as meeting minimum standards for nonprofit organizations. This guide outlines the standards and the process for becoming certified.

Certified partnership does not guarantee UWM funding, but certified partner agencies are eligible to submit proposals for competitive grants solicited by UWM. There are other benefits in being a certified partner as well:

- a) Agency listing on UWM community campaign materials
- b) Agency listing in our brochures and Annual Report
- c) Agency access to the Combined Federal Campaign as part of UWM federation
- d) Agency participation in public policy issues, impact strategies, and the CEO Association

2) **APPLICATION ELIGIBILITY (Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria)**

- a) UWM may partner with 501(C) (3) health and human service organizations that have been in existence for at least one year and that meet the following criteria:
 - i) Provide direct services to clients
 - ii) Assist individuals in becoming more self-sufficient, in preventing dependency, and in strengthening family relationships
 - iii) Support personal, physical and social development
 - iv) Help ensure the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities
 - v) Provide services to individuals, groups and/or families in the Midlands (Calhoun, Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Orangeburg, and/or Richland counties)
 - vi) Address a community need
 - vii) Have a minimum of five board members
 - viii) Spend 25% or less of its revenues on Fundraising and Management
 - ix) Have Directors and Officers and general liability insurance

- b) UWM does not partner with the following types of organizations:
 - i) Organizations that exclusively serve their own members
 - ii) Organizations whose primary missions are promoting arts and culture, environmentalism, or animal rights or care
 - iii) Organizations whose primary work is advocacy and not direct services
 - iv) Organizations whose primary purpose is to raise money or fund programs that are not directly managed by the organization

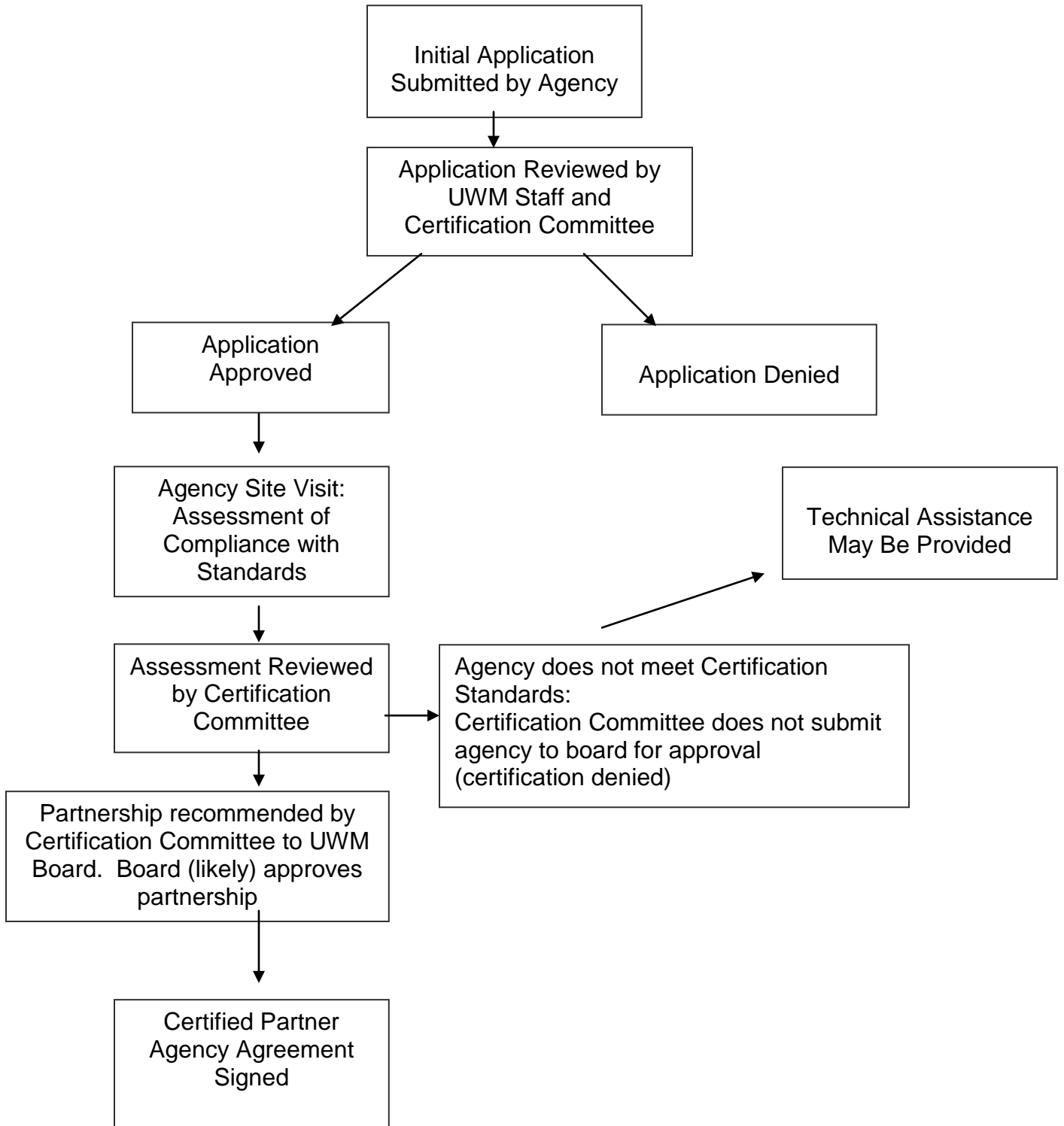
- c) Partners are certified for four years, but organizational report packages are required annually

3) **CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

- a) For Certification:
 - i) The applicant agency submits its screening application. The screening application demonstrates that the agency meets inclusion criteria. The executive director and the board chair must sign the application
 - ii) The application is distributed to Certification Committee members. If the members approve, the application process continues
 - iii) The applicant agency hosts a visit from UWM. The applicant agency presents documentation that demonstrates compliance with the certification standards. UWM staff and volunteer(s) participate in the visit
 - (1) The Executive Director as well as a board member of the applicant agency must participate in the visit
 - (2) Unless extraordinary circumstances prevent doing so, a UWM volunteer will participate in the site review and visit
 - iv) A report is produced that summarizes information learned from the visit
 - v) The report is distributed to the applicant agency and the Certification Committee
 - vi) The Certification Committee reviews the results and may choose to recommend certified partnership to the UWM Board. Only agencies that are recommended for approval are submitted to the UWM Board
 - vii) The UWM Board votes to certify or not

- b) For Re-certification
 - i) The agency certifies it meets standards. The executive director and the board chair sign the certification
 - ii) The re-certifying agency hosts a visit from UWM. UWM staff and volunteer(s) participate in the visit. The Executive Director as well as a board member of the applicant agency must participate in the visit
 - iii) A report is produced that summarizes information learned from the visit
 - iv) The report is distributed to the re-certifying agency and the Certification Committee
 - v) The report is distributed to the applicant agency and the Certification Committee
 - vi) The Certification Committee reviews the report and either chooses to recommend to the UWM Board that the agency be recertified or not.
 - vii) The UWM Board votes to recertify or not

CERTIFICATION PROCESS



4) UWM CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

The table below represents the areas or domains of certification, the standards for certification that relate to each domain, the rationale or intent for a standard, and indicators that represent meeting the identified standards.

Certification Domains	Standards	Rationale for Standard(s)	Indicators
Legal and Regulatory Requirements	<p>1) Organizations meet legal and regulatory standards</p> <p>2) The agency is inclusive and non-discriminatory in its policies and practices</p> <p>3) The organization is free from lawsuits or other legal/regulatory actions (that would compromise the integrity of the organization)</p>	<p>“Nonprofits, by their nature exist to serve the public good. They have a legal and ethical obligation to conduct their activities in a way that ensures accountability and is transparent, or clearly evident, to the public.” (SCANPO, Guiding Principles and Practices, 2007)</p> <p>“Fair and equitable practices, including adherence to applicable local, state, and federal employment laws, ensure the attraction and retention of qualified staff members and volunteers and support a healthy work environment .” (SCANPO, Guiding Principles and Practices, 2007)</p>	<p>1a) IRS exemption letter 1b) Secretary of State Letter 1c) By-laws (self-explanatory) 1d) 990 OR evidence the organization is exempt from completing a 990</p> <p>2) The organization meets applicable federal laws and regulations (The organization describes its practices/policies as they apply OR the organization provides other evidence like policies, meeting minutes, etc)</p> <p>3) The organization discloses any lawsuits or other legal actions (that would compromise the integrity of the organization)</p>

Certification Domains	Standards	Rationale for Standard(s)	Indicators
	4) If the organization has subsidiary or affiliate organizations (in which the applicant agency has fiduciary responsibility), the subsidiary and affiliate organizations are free from lawsuits or other legal/regulatory actions (that would compromise the integrity of the organization)		4) Identification of subsidiary organizations or affiliates, and disclosure that these organizations are free from pending lawsuits or other legal actions (that would compromise the integrity of the organization)
Governance and Management /Operations	5) The organization operates effectively 6) Board and staff work effectively	<p>“A nonprofit operates from a clearly defined mission that flows from its version of the community it seeks to build and the role it will play in achieving that vision.” (SCANPO, Guiding Principles and Practices, 2007)</p> <p>Effective operations are associated with quality services and programs.</p> <p>“CEO and volunteers leaders provide visible, active and effective leadership for the organization and hold themselves accountable for achieving organizational goals.” (adapted from United Way of America, Standards of Excellence, 2005)</p>	<p>5a) The organization’s programs and services are aligned with its mission and vision (Identify Mission and Vision, describe programs, explain connection)</p> <p>5b) Appropriate documentation (minutes, etc)</p> <p>5c) Internet access</p> <p>5d) Email address</p> <p>5e) The board evaluates its work in achieving the agency’s mission</p> <p>6a) Frequency of meetings</p> <p>6b) Percentage of board attending meetings</p> <p>6c) The board holds the executive accountable</p>

Certification Domains	Standards	Rationale for Standard(s)	Indicators
	<p>7) The agency manages and attends to Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>8) The organization has financial integrity</p>	<p>“The board has in place and enforces policies and processes to ensure the highest ethical standards are met.” (SCANPO, Guiding Principles and Practices, 2007)</p> <p>Nonprofits are knowledgeable and responsible stewards in managing their financial resources. This requires effective annual budgeting practices, compliance with legally mandated financial requirements, adherence to sound accounting principles.....effective internal controls... and clear policies and practices to monitor resources and uses of funds” (SCANPO, Guiding Principles and Practices, 2007)</p>	<p>7a) Conflict of Interest policy 7b) Nepotism policy 7c) Management of conflict when family members serve on the board</p> <p>8a) Independent Audit * 8b) Management letter and response if warranted 8c) Board reviews audit (board or committee minutes) 8d) Signature authority for checks (policy) 8e) Board approved budget (minutes) 8f) Periodic review of organization’s financials by board (minutes, documents presented to board)</p>
Financial Stability	9) The agency is sustainable	Organizations need resources to fulfill their missions. Dependable or diverse funding sources support longevity of the organization.	<p>9a) Diverse funding sources Dependable funding sources 9b) A current development plan 9c) operating reserve</p>
Program Effectiveness	<p>10) Programs are mission-centric</p> <p>11) Programs are results driven</p>	<p>“Vision, values and mission drive fundamental decisions and planning.” (SCANPO, Guiding Principles and Practices, 2007)</p> <p>Program results are a foundation of organizational accountability. Programs that “do the right things in the right way,</p>	<p>10) Programs and services align with mission and vision</p> <p>11a) Program theory or logic models reflect experience/evidence based activities 11b) Staff qualifications to provide service 11c) Results are measurable</p>

Certification Domains	Standards	Rationale for Standard(s)	Indicators
	12) The organization uses performance improvement processes	<p>by the right people” are more likely to achieve measurable benefits/results for the clients served.</p> <p>Organizations evaluate their effectiveness they may continuously improve. What is learned informs changes or adjustments in programs or activities. (adapted from United Way of America, Standards of Excellence, 2005)</p>	12) The organization demonstrates learning from its results
Certified Partner Agreement	13) The agency meets responsibilities outlined in the Certified Partner Agency Agreement	There are roles and responsibilities between UWM and its certified partners. UWM holds itself and its partners accountable for meeting these responsibilities as outlined in the Certified Partners Agency Agreement	13a) Funding guidelines 13b) Change in status notification 13c) Annual reporting 13d) Identification as a UWM certified partner

5) * **AUDITS**

All agencies submitting an application **for certification** must submit an independent, certified audit.

- a) Agencies that have an annual operating budget **over \$250,000** must
 - i) Complete an ***annual audit*** by a certified public accountant who is independent of the organization
 - ii) The audited statements are prepared on an accrual basis
 - iii) The audit contains all of the required statements (financial position, activities, and cash flow)
 - iv) ***Include the management letter with the audit***
- b) Agencies with budgets **less than \$250,000** may submit all certification materials EXCEPT the audit for preliminary review. A successful preliminary review will result in certification of the agency CONTINGENT on a satisfactory audit conducted within **SIX** months following the close of the agency's most recent fiscal year.
- c) Agencies that have an annual operating budget **less than \$250,000 AND receive more than \$25,000** from United Way of the Midlands, must submit a full certified audit for recertification (**every four years**), and an **audit review from an independent accounting firm during the three years a certified audit is not submitted.**

6) **MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

If the agency is approved as a UWM certified partner, then it will enter a Certified Partner Agreement with UWM. The agreement outlines the responsibilities of both UWM and the partner agency.

If the partner agency fails to comply with UWM certification standards or the agreement, then UWM may place an agency on conditional status or terminate the partnership.

7) **CONDITIONAL STATUS**

Agencies that do not comply with UWM standards may be placed on conditional status. Agencies placed on conditional status are not eligible to apply for Community Impact funding

- a) Agencies that are placed on conditional status during the re-certification process have from January through March to resolve issues relating to compliance with standards
- b) Failure to resolve conditional status by April may result in the Certification Committee recommending to the UWM Board of Directors that UWM terminate the partnership

8) SUSPENSION OF THE PARTNERSHIP

If an organization does not/cannot deliver services for six months, then its certification is automatically suspended. The organization may re-apply for certification when services are restored.

9) CERTIFICATION AND RE-CERTIFICATION TIMELINES

- a) Certification
 - i) Agencies may apply for certification at any time
 - (1) The process of review will take at least two months, but may take longer
 - (2) Agencies recommended for approval by the Certification Committee are presented at quarterly meetings of the UWM Board of Directors
- b) Re-certification
 - i) Re-certification visits are scheduled July through November of the year preceding the re-certification date (i.e. agencies scheduled for re-certification in 2010 are visited in 2009)
 - ii) Certification Committee recommendations are presented to the UWM Board of Directors at its December or January meeting.
 - iii) Agencies are re-certified by the Board and sign new agreements by March

10) ATTACHMENTS

- a) Screening Application
- b) Certification/Recertification Standards Checklist
- c) Certified Partner Agreement
- d) Annual Certification Statements
- e) Recertification Statements



United Way
of the Midlands

Application for Agencies Seeking Partnerships United Way of the Midlands

Name of Organization:

Contact Person:

Title

Mailing Address

City

Zip

Phone

Fax

Email

Location of Office(s)

Our organization is

Incorporated as an independent 501 c (3) Year incorporated _____

Incorporated by a host or parent organization's 501 c (3)

Incorporated, but not as a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization

Our organization has bylaws/governing regulations Yes No

Our organization is overseen by:

Our own board of directors (focused solely on our organization)

Number of directors

Host/parent organization's board of directors

Number of directors

Our organization has Directors and Officers and liability insurance

Yes No

Date of most recent 990:

Amount Reported on Line 12

Amount Reported on Line 14

Amount Reported on Line 15

Agency Mission

Briefly, list and describe all agency programs and initiatives. For each program, include approximations about numbers or percentages of people served in Calhoun, Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Orangeburg, and/or Richland County, as well as clients served outside the Midlands.

United Way of the Midlands
Standards for Certification/Recertification
INDICATORS CHECKLIST

Certification Domains	Standards	Indicators	Site Visit Notes
Legal and Regulatory Requirements	<p>1) Organization meets legal and regulatory standards</p> <p>2) The agency is inclusive and non-discriminatory in its policies and practices</p> <p>3) The organization is free from lawsuits or other legal/regulatory actions (that would compromise the integrity of the organization)</p> <p>4) If the organization has subsidiary or affiliate organizations (in which the applicant agency has fiduciary responsibility), the subsidiary and affiliate organizations are free from lawsuits or other legal/regulatory actions (that would compromise the integrity of the organization)</p>	<p>1a) IRS exemption letter 1b) Secretary of State Letter 1c) By-laws 1d) 990 OR evidence the organization is exempt from completing a 990</p> <p>2a) The organization meets applicable federal laws and regulations</p> <p>3a) The organization discloses any lawsuits or other legal actions (that would compromise the integrity of the organization)</p> <p>4a) Identification of subsidiary organizations or affiliates, and disclosure that these organizations are free from pending lawsuits or other legal actions (that would compromise the integrity of the organization)</p>	<p>Collect Copy at site visit Collect Copy at site visit Collect Copy at site visit</p> <p>Collect Certification at site visit</p>
Governance and Management /Operations	<p>5) The organization operates effectively</p>	<p>5a) The organization's programs and services are aligned with its mission and vision 5b) Appropriate documentation 5c) Internet access 5d) email address 5e) The board evaluates its work in achieving the agency's mission</p>	

Certification Domains	Standards	Indicators	Site Visit Notes
	<p>6) Board and staff work effectively</p> <p>7) The agency manages and attends to Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>87) The organization has financial integrity*</p>	<p>6a) Frequency of meetings 6b) Percentage of board attending meetings 6c) The board holds the executive accountable</p> <p>7a) Conflict of Interest policy 7b) Nepotism policy 7c) Management of conflict when family members serve on the board</p> <p>8a) Independent audit * 7b) Management letter and response if warranted 8c) Board reviews audit 8d) Signature authority for checks 8e) Board approved budget 8f) Periodic review of organization's financials by board</p>	<p>Collect Copy at site visit Collect Copy at site visit</p>
Financial Stability	9) The agency is sustainable	<p>9 a) Diverse funding sources Dependable funding sources 9b) A current development plan 9c) operating reserve</p>	
Program Effectiveness	<p>10) Programs are mission-centric</p> <p>11) Programs are results driven</p> <p>12) The organization uses performance improvement processes</p>	<p>10) Programs and services align with mission and vision</p> <p>11a) Program theory or logic models reflect experience/evidence based activities 11b) Staff qualifications to provide service 11c) Results are measurable</p> <p>12) The organization demonstrates learning from its results</p>	

Additional Notes

Staff and Volunteer Recommendation



United Way
of the Midlands

Certified Partner Agreement

This agreement outlines the basic understanding and working relationship between United Way of the Midlands (“UWM”) and

(Herein referred to as the “Agency” or the “Certified Partner Agency”)

A. Agreement Period

This agreement shall take effect on April 1, 2009 and shall continue in effect until March 31, 2013 or until amended, suspended, or terminated in accordance with the terms of this agreement.

Continuation of this arrangement beyond the term of this agreement will be subject to successful completion of the re-certification process described in the Agency Certification/Re-Certification Process, Standards and Policies, approved by UWM March 27, 2008.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

1) UWM agrees to:

- 1) Conduct an effective community fundraising campaign
- 2) Educate and advocate the value of community organizations
- 3) Promote the understanding and value of the Agency’s programs
- 4) Provide technical assistance to the Agency as appropriate
- 5) Utilize information provided by the Agency in an appropriate manner
- 6) Provide opportunities for the Agency to compete for UWM funds
- 7) Provide the opportunity for UWM donors to designate funds to the Agency
- 8) Provide the opportunity for the Agency to participate in the Combined Federal Campaign, if eligible
- 9) Inform the Agency of any UWM plans or developments that may affect certification or the Agency’s operations.

2) The Certified Partner Agency agrees to:

- a) Abide by the following fund raising guidelines
 - i) The Agency’s staff and volunteers shall not solicit donor designations to the Agency through the UWM campaign in verbal

presentations, media coverage, advertising, print, mail or any other way at any time during the year (Solicitation of Charitable Funds Act, Section 35-56-120 (C)).

- b) The Agency shall not organize or participate in payroll deduction campaigns from July 1 to December 31 with any business, employer or other organization where UWM has a similar payroll deduction campaign, excepting campaigns organized within the Agency itself.
- c) Conduct a workplace campaign that provides opportunities for staff to contribute to UWM
- d) Provide by June 1 information required by the SC Secretary of State so the Agency may participate in workplace United Way campaigns for state agencies
- e) Inform UWM of plans or developments, including any changes in IRS status, which may affect certification or the Agency's operations
- f) Participate in community assessment and planning activities
- g) Support UWM fundraising and marketing activities, and participate in related UWM public meetings and specials events
- h) Identify itself as a UWM Certified Partner Agency at service locations.
- i) If the Agency receives Community Impact funding from UWM, promote the Agency's association with UWM in media and public relations material related to programs and projects supported by awards from UWM
- j) Submit Agency information to UWM as requested

D. Compliance with Standards

- 1) The Agency shall abide by all certification standards during the term of this agreement.
- 2) If the Agency cannot or does not meet certain standard(s) through the agreement period, then it must provide an explanation for not meeting the standard(s) and a plan to bring the Agency into compliance.
- 3) Failure to comply with UWM certification standards may place the Agency on conditional status or result in termination of this agreement, as described in Section F hereof.
- 4) If the Agency violates the fundraising policies described in Section B(2)(a) above, the Agency may lose its certification status and its eligibility to receive funding. If UWM de-certified the agency, the agency may apply for recertification after one year.

E. Suspension of the Arrangement

If the Agency does not or cannot deliver direct services to its clients in a satisfactory manner, as determined by UWM, for six months then its certification is automatically suspended. The Agency may re-apply for certification when services are restored.

F. Notice of Termination

- 1) UWM reserves the right to terminate, suspend or apply conditions to this agreement at any time, if in its sole discretion, UWM determines that the Agency has not made adequate attempts to comply with UWM certification standards or to fulfill the terms of this agreement.
- 2) This agreement may be terminated by either party upon thirty days written notice to the other party.

G. Amendment

No amendment of this agreement shall be valid unless it is in writing and signed by both parties.

H. Independent Contractors

Nothing herein shall create any association, partnership, joint venture, or the relation of principal and agent between the parties hereto, it being understood that each of the UWM and the Agency are providing services to one another as independent contractors, and neither party shall have the authority to bind the other or the other's representatives in any way or incur any debts or make any commitments for the other party except to the extent expressly provided in this agreement.

I. No Waiver

Failure by UWM to insist upon strict compliance with any term of this agreement in one or more instances will not be deemed to be a waiver of its rights to insist upon such strict compliance with respect to any subsequent failure.

J. Further Assurances

The parties agree to execute, acknowledge and deliver such further documents or instruments and all such other incidental acts as may be reasonably necessary or appropriate to carry out the purpose and intent of this agreement and the arrangement contemplated hereby.

K. Governing Law

This agreement shall be governed by and construed under the laws of the State of South Carolina, excluding its conflict of law provisions.

For UWM:

For the Agency:

President/CEO **Date**

Chief Executive Officer **Date**

Board Chairperson **Date**

Board Chairperson **Date**



United Way
of the Midlands

ANNUAL CERTIFICATION STATEMENTS

For United Way of the Midlands Certified Partner Agencies

_____ (Name of the Agency) certifies that

1. The by-laws of the agency were not amended within the last 12 months.

 OR
 The by-laws were amended, and a copy of the amended by-laws are attached
2. The agency is free from any lawsuits or legal/regulatory actions that would compromise the integrity of the organization

 OR
 The agency is engaged in a lawsuit or legal regulatory action that may compromise the organization. An explanation is attached.
- 2a. If the agency has a subsidiary or affiliate organization in which the partner agency has a fiduciary responsibility, the subsidiary or affiliate is free from any lawsuits or legal/regulatory actions that would compromise the integrity of the organization

 OR
 The subsidiary or affiliate is engaged in a lawsuit or legal regulatory action that may compromise the organization. An explanation is attached.
3. The agency's board of directors reviewed the agency's last audit.
4. The agency's board of directors is aware of the agency's financial status. The board of directors periodically reviews agency financial reports.

5. The agency meets responsibilities outlined in the Certified Partner Agency Agreement.

CERTIFYING OFFICIALS

By our signatures, we certify that all certifications checked in this document are true and accurate.

Board Chair

Date

Executive Director

Date



United Way
of the Midlands

RECERTIFICATION STATEMENTS

For United Way of the Midlands Certified Partner Agencies

_____ (Name of the Agency) certifies that

1. The by-laws of the agency were not amended within the last 12 months.

OR
The by-laws were amended, and a copy of the amended by-laws are attached
2. The agency meets all applicable laws and regulations applicable to nonprofit organizations and organizations of its size.
3. The agency is free from any lawsuits or legal/regulatory actions that would compromise the integrity of the organization

OR
The agency is engaged in a lawsuit or legal regulatory action that may compromise the organization. An explanation is attached.
- 3a. If the agency has a subsidiary or affiliate organization in which the partner agency has a fiduciary responsibility, the subsidiary or affiliate is free from any lawsuits or legal/regulatory actions that would compromise the integrity of the organization

OR
The subsidiary or affiliate is engaged in a lawsuit or legal regulatory action that may compromise the organization. An explanation is attached.

4. The agency has and complies with policies that describe check writing authority.
5. The agency meets responsibilities outlined in the Certified Partner Agency Agreement.

CERTIFYING OFFICIALS

By our signatures, we certify that all certifications checked in this document are true and accurate.

Board Chair

Date

Executive Director

Date