



In these uncertain times, There for You's work is vital

In this strange time I felt I must write on to you all on behalf of the Northwest Regional Welfare Committee, I hope you are all in good health and are staying safe. We are thinking of everyone during what will undoubtedly be a difficult few months ahead.

While many members are having to stay at home to protect themselves due to underlying medical conditions, or in self isolation to protect their families, this may create financial pressure due to additional expense or loss of earnings.

Many members who need our help struggle to provide for their family and pay for basic items. For others, the current Covid-19 situation is much worse. They are also worried about how they will pay their rent, mortgage or debts.

UNISON There for You, is your national charity, supporting members in times of need. We offer a unique confidential advice and support service just for UNISON Members and their dependants. Whether it's just a chat and a listening ear, advice or more concrete help you're seeking, we may be able to help.

*At a glance, the charity offers financial assistance, debt advice, wellbeing breaks, support and sign posting information to other partners where required. They can be contacted direct on **020 7121 5620**. The charity also runs two small grant programs, the School Uniform grant (June/July) and a Winter Fuel (December/February) programme, both grants are aimed at members with a family income of £18000 or less. Last year we awarded financial assistance and grants just short of £460,000 to support our members.*

The service is supported by a professional and dedicated team based at UNISON Centre in London. They can be contacted direct on 020 7121 5620. The Charity, Trustees and your Branch Welfare officers are working hard to support our members at this difficult time. We are trying to keep up to date with support given by central government; not a simple task as advice is changing on a daily basis.



Should you need help, your first point of contact should be your Branch Welfare Officer, who is the local volunteer for the national charity. They will be able to assist you should you need to apply for support from There for You!

There are a number of resources available to assist you on the national website

<https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/>

<https://unison.entitledto.co.uk/home/start>

Should you find yourself with mounting debts due to the current crisis, due to loss of earnings please consider speaking to our debt management partners PayPlan on **0800 389 3302**. The number should identify the caller as a unison member but please advise the agent you are with UNISON, as our members get the support free of charge

Are you able to help?

The charity is funded by Fundraising & donations from Branches, members and regional welfare committees. ***And more recently from the UNISON Lottery, please consider joining. Further information is available on the There for You pages of the UNISON Website. Due to the level of requests for support could you consider making a branch or personal donation to the charity?***

- **£104 would pay for a year's prescription charges**
- **£150 could help pay towards school uniforms for three children**
- **£150 would put food on the table for someone in need of emergency help**
- **£200 would provide travel to hospital appointments for someone who regularly visits**
- **£250 would buy essential household items, such as a washing machine, for someone who is disabled**
- **£800 would help with moving costs or essential household items after someone has lost their home or in the case of domestic abuse.**
- **£1,500 could pay towards funeral costs meaning someone isn't forced into debt to pay for the funeral of a loved one.**



there
for you

supporting UNISON members
when life gets tough

“If it hadn’t been for your calmness and patience over the phone I would not have faced my deepening financial problems. Thank you for looking after members”



Have you thought of becoming a branch Welfare Officer.

There for You relies on its network of volunteers to function, and so we would like to encourage as many as possible to become involved with our work.

The level of involvement will vary between members depending on how much time they can spare, how interested they are and their level of expertise in the kind of work we do. Some members may begin by helping in our fundraising initiatives, whilst others may volunteer for more substantial roles.

The Branch Welfare officer is a rule book position though many branches struggle to fill the role. We are the human face of the charity supporting our members at a local level with advice & support.

Check out the There for You webpage for lots of useful guides on services we provide.

Carl

Carl Phillips
Chair, Northwest Regional Welfare Committee.