

Catholic Charities Unification: Frequently Asked Questions

A Guide for Board Members & Community Ambassadors

During this period of unification, members of the community may turn to you with questions. This FAQ sheet provides clear, consistent, and reassuring talking points to help you navigate these conversations with confidence.

Q: Why is Catholic Charities unifying its agencies and operations right now?

A: We are unifying to expand our regional impact and direct more resources where they matter most: serving individuals and families in need. By combining administrative functions, operational systems, and regional expertise, we eliminate duplicative costs, modernize our support systems, and create a stronger, more resilient organization equipped to address growing community needs.

Q: Does unification mean Catholic Charities is experiencing financial distress?

A: No. This unification is a proactive step taken from a position of strength and thoughtful stewardship. It allows us to optimize donor dollars, improve operational efficiencies, and secure long-term financial sustainability for our essential social ministries across the entire region. All the Catholic Charities agencies are operating “in the black” at this time with no pending or anticipated financial concerns.

Q: Is this a full merger into a single entity, or just a shared services agreement?

A: This unification is a full legal merger of the Catholic Charities agencies into the Diocese of Youngstown Catholic Charities Corporation (which will be renamed “Catholic Charities, Diocese of Youngstown”). The merger integrates our governance, administrative leadership, and core support operations into a unified structure while maintaining strong local program delivery, community relationships, and regional advisory presence.

Q: When is this unification taking place?

A: Catholic Charities, Diocese of Youngstown will begin operating under one corporate structure on January 1, 2027.

Q: Will local programs or service sites close?

A: No. Local service delivery remains our highest priority. Unification is designed to strengthen—not reduce—our front-line ministries. With unification, the services Catholic Charities provides in all six counties of the Diocese of Youngstown will continue to operate directly within the communities that rely on them.

Q: Will there still be a diocesan department of Catholic Charities?

A: No. All administrative functions for Catholic Charities that were previously executed at the diocesan offices have been relocated to a new Catholic Charities Administrative Office, 232 Seneca Avenue NE, Warren, OH 44481 (the former rectory at St. Mary's Church, Warren).

Q: How will this change affect the clients and families we serve?

A: For clients, service access remains seamless and uninterrupted. Over time, clients will benefit from streamlined intake processes, broader access to regional programs, and expanded wrap-around services made possible by our unified network.

Q: Will decisions about our local community be made by people who don't know our needs?

A: No. Local needs will continue to drive local programming. We are maintaining strong local advisory leadership, community-based staff, and county managers in each of the six counties to ensure our services remain deeply responsive to the specific needs of each neighborhood and parish.

Q: If I make a donation to Catholic Charities and designate it for my local Catholic Charities service site, will the money stay in my local community?

A: Yes. Donor intent is sacred. Designated gifts, local campaign donations, and restricted funds will continue to support the specific programs, locations, or counties specified by the donor. Unification actually ensures that a larger percentage of every gift goes directly to program delivery rather than redundant administrative overhead.

Q: What happens to existing endowments or legacy gifts?

A: All existing legal agreements, restricted endowments, and named gifts remain strictly honored and protected in full compliance with donor stipulations and legal standards.

Q: What does unification mean for local staff members and volunteers?

A: Our staff and volunteers are the heart of Catholic Charities. While administrative structures are being streamlined, front-line staff and volunteers will continue serving on the front lines of our mission. Unification offers staff expanded opportunities for professional growth, shared training, and cross-agency collaboration. Current agency executive directors will take on new leadership roles for the benefit of the entire six-county Catholic Charities system, enabling them to share their gifts and talents more broadly for the good of the organization.

Q: Has Catholic Charities added new positions to the organization?

A: Yes. Catholic Charities has prudently added a few new positions that are necessary for a faith-based nonprofit organization of our size and structure to operate successfully. We have added a Development Director, Human Resources Specialist, and Events Coordinator—all very essential and needed positions. All of these new staff members are working from the Catholic Charities Administrative Office in Warren.

Additionally, we have promoted individuals from within our organization to serve as county managers, believing in the importance of rewarding and cultivating professional competence and commitment to our mission.