



CHARITABLE GIVING

MAKING YOUR DOLLARS COUNT



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STATE OF OHIO

HOW CAN I MAKE INFORMED GIVING DECISIONS?

Too often, we are asked to give our money to charitable organizations we do not know. It is important to ask questions and to read and listen carefully to all of the information that is presented to you. Call the local charity – a reputable organization will welcome your inquiries. You can also call or write to the Attorney General's Office, or your local non-profit Better Business Bureau® to obtain information.

As a resident of Ohio, you should find out if your gifts are benefiting the charitable organizations of your choice, and ensure that these organizations are properly registered with the Attorney General's Office.

The names of Ohio contributors to charitable organizations are kept confidential by law. The law requires most organizations that solicit contributions to register with the Attorney General's Charitable Law Section. Certain charities, such as religious and educational organizations, are exempt from registration.



NON-PROFIT BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU® OFFICES IN OHIO:

Akron	(330) 253-4590
Canton	(330) 454-9401
Cincinnati	(513) 421-3015
Cleveland	(216) 241-7678
Columbus	(614) 486-6336
Dayton	(937) 222-5825
Lima	(419) 223-7010
Toledo	(419) 531-3116
Youngstown	(330) 744-3111

WHAT INFORMATION MUST BE PROVIDED TO ME WHEN ASKED TO DONATE TO A CHARITY?



When a charitable organization contacts you and asks for a donation, the **caller must provide** the

name of the charitable organization and the location of its principal place of business.

Many charities hire professional solicitors, commonly known as telemarketers, to raise money for them. Typically, charities pay their solicitors a

fixed percentage of the donations they collect. **When professional solicitors contact you and ask for donations, they must disclose the following information:**

- The name of the professional solicitor as it is filed with the Attorney General's Office;
- The name and address of the charity for which the professional solicitor is raising money.

WHAT OTHER QUESTIONS SHOULD I ASK BEFORE MAKING A DONATION?

In deciding whether or not to donate to a charity, either directly to the organization itself or through a professional solicitor, it is important to ask the following questions:

- What percentage (on average) of my donation will the charity receive?
- What is the full name of the charity?
- Where is the charity physically located? (city and state)
- Is the charity registered with the Attorney General's Office?
- What are some of the charity's specific programs and services?
- What percentage of the charity's annual income actually supports these programs and services?

- What percentage of the charity's annual income is spent on administrative expenses and fund-raising activities?
- When was the charity formed?



WHAT ARE WARNING SIGNS TO LOOK FOR WHEN DONATING TO A CHARITY?

Ohioans should exercise caution toward charitable organizations that fit in the following categories:

- The charity's name is similar to a well-known, nationally recognized charity.
- High-pressure tactics are used to convince you to make a donation and to make it immediately.
- The caller is hesitant or unable to answer your questions.
- The caller offers to pick up your donation immediately instead of waiting to receive it in the mail.
- The charity's mailing address is not a specific office or street address.
- The caller guarantees you'll win a prize if you make a donation.
- The caller requests your check be made payable to a person instead of the charity.

HOW IS THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE INVOLVED?

The Charitable Law Section of the Attorney General's Office registers charitable organizations and professional solicitors that raise money in Ohio, and also keeps files of their annual informational returns or financial reports. Registration forms and financial reports are all public records. Copies can be obtained from the Attorney General's Office.

Under the Ohio Charitable Trust Act and the Ohio Charitable Solicitation Act, the Attorney General's Office can investigate alleged charitable fraud and take legal action to end scams and stop the misuse of donations.

Call the Attorney General's Charitable Law Section if:

- You suspect charitable fraud;
- You have questions about a charity or a professional solicitor and/or;
- You want copies of a charity's registration forms or financial reports.

Visit the Attorney General's
web site at
www.ag.state.oh.us
for more information about
Charitable Law.



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