



CHARITY SCAMS



After a natural disaster strikes, many of us want to make donations to help our communities recover and rebuild. But you want your donations to go to those in need, not scammers taking advantage of others' misfortunes. Follow these tips to be sure you're giving to legitimate charities. Visit ncdoj.gov/charity to learn more.

SELECTING A CHARITY TO GIVE TO

- Choose charities you know and want to support. Don't give to one just because it called or emailed you. It may not be legitimate.
- Look for local charities that can help make a difference immediately. Even if a charity is large or well known, it may not be able to jump into action as quickly as one based nearby.
- Research a charity before you commit to giving them money - use the resources below.
- Ask specific questions about how much of your donation will go to people in need and how the money will be spent. Ask for proof that the charity is licensed.
- Watch out for fake charities using names that sound like real, well-known charities to confuse you into giving them money.
- If you're feeling pressured or rushed to give immediately, don't. Legitimate charities won't pressure you to give on the spot.



RESEARCHING CHARITIES BEFORE YOU GIVE

Look into a charity's ratings, prior complaints, and past records using the following resources:

North Carolina Secretary of State
www.sosnc.gov/csl

CharityWatch
www.charitywatch.org

NCDOJ Consumer Protection Division
1-877-5-NO-SCAM

GuideStar
www.guidestar.org

Better Business Bureau
www.give.org

Charity Navigator
www.charitynavigator.org



HOW TO GIVE

- Ideally, pay with a credit card through a website or telephone number you know to be legitimate. Credit cards are best for security and tax record purposes.
- If you do pay with a check, make the check out to the organization, not an individual.
- If you donate online, use a secure website. Look for a lock icon and a web address that starts with "https".
- Protect your personal information. Don't share personal or identifying information through email, social media, or text messages.



If you or someone you know has been the victim of a charity scam, file a complaint at ncdoj.gov/complaint or call us toll-free at **1-877-5-NO-SCAM**.



Attorney General

Josh Stein