

GIVESMART!



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Generosity has carried Washington State through difficult times.



For each charitable donation to have the greatest impact on our community, we must

GIVESMART

Asking questions and researching charitable organizations will stretch every dollar and significantly change lives.

State Registration

Information is available so you can learn more about how your donation will be used, before you make a contribution.

To research an organization online, visit the web page at sos.wa.gov/charities or contact the Secretary of State's Charities Program at 1-800-332-4483 (WA only)

Registration with the Secretary of State's office should not be represented or considered as an endorsement.

Need more information or to file a complaint?

General questions about a charity? Call the Secretary of State's Charities program at 1-800-332-4483

To file a complaint about a charity or commercial fundraiser, visit the Attorney General's website at

atg.wa.gov/file-complaint
or call

1-800-551-4636

**Secretary of State
Corporations and Charities Division
PO Box 40234
Olympia, WA 98504-0234**

**Phone: 360-725-0378
Toll-Free: 1-800-332-4483 (WA only)
Web: www.sos.wa.gov/charities
Email: charities@sos.wa.gov**

Online Resources:

**Office of the Attorney General
Consumer Protection:
www.atg.wa.gov**

**Internal Revenue Service:
www.irs.gov**

**Better Business Bureau
Consumer Protection Washington:
www.go.bbb.org/cpw**

**Federal Trade Commission
National Do Not Call Registry
www.donotcall.gov**

What is a commercial fundraiser?



Commercial fundraisers are individuals or entities that solicit or collect donations on behalf of a charity — for a fee.

Charities and commercial fundraisers must register with the Secretary of State prior to fundraising in Washington State. In addition, they are required by law to disclose the following:

- The name of the person asking for the donation
- The name and location of the charitable organization
- Must provide the phone number and website of the Office of the Secretary of State, if asked

Commercial Fundraisers keep an average of 50% of donated funds

Some commercial fundraisers may keep as much as 85 percent or more of your donation!

If you don't want to pay a commercial fundraiser, contact the charity and see if you can make a donation directly to it.

By law, if you ask if the solicitor is a commercial fundraiser; he or she must tell you. You can also check the Commercial fundraiser Activity Report at www.sos.wa.gov/cfr

Tips to “give smart”

- Don't give into high-pressure solicitations that demand you make an instant commitment.
- Do your research before giving.
- Call the charity directly to make sure it has authorized the solicitor to collect donations on its behalf.



- Check to see if the charity is registered with the SOS at sos.wa.gov/charities
If the organization is registered, you can review a summary of its tax status and financial records, among other things.
If the organization is not registered, or you would like further information, contact the SOS Charities Program at 1-800-332-4483
- Check the charity's rating at the Better Business Bureau: www.give.org
More resources for donors can be found at sos.wa.gov/resourcesfordonors



Signs it's a SCAM

It's likely a scam if a solicitor:

- Demands donations using aggressive tactics or deadlines
- Only accepts cash donations or checks made out to them
- Can't explain what your donation will be used for, when it will be allocated, how it will be distributed, and what percentage of the donation benefits the cause directly.
- Claims to be a new charity providing relief after a recent natural disaster, and can't backup any claims made in solicitations.

Tired of those harassing charitable solicitation phone calls?

Ask the solicitor to place you on their internal do not call list. Even though charitable solicitors are exempt from the National Do Not Call Registry, Washington state law requires all organizations to not call you for one year if you ask.

