

## What else can you do?

*SLOW DOWN - THINK, LOOK, LISTEN and VERIFY!*

Avoid giving on emotions. Do your research and give wisely.

Beware of charitable organizations that Sound-alike! If the organizations have similar names, check with the respective agencies.



Verify the identity of the solicitors. Ask to see their Information Card and contact the charity they claim to represent.



Protect Your Identity! Do not give your credit card or financial information over the telephone.



To remove your name from telephone and mailing lists, contact the National Do Not Call Registry, or call the organization directly (see Resources section on this pamphlet).



If money is tight, consider in-kind donations (items) or volunteer your time.



Do Not Send Cash in the mail. Instead, use a check or a credit card to make a payments payable to the nonprofit organization, not to an individual. Request a receipt.

Avoid “Instant” charity websites. When a crisis occurs, turn to established charities.

Should you feel you in danger during a charitable solicitation, contact the police if it is appropriate.

**Sources:** Federal Trade Commission; Charity Navigator; California Attorney General

## Resources

The following resources are available to assist charities and donors:

### LA Police Commission, Charitable Services Section

Email: [pccharity@lapd.online](mailto:pccharity@lapd.online)

Or visit, [lapdonline.org/police-commission/cid](http://lapdonline.org/police-commission/cid)

### Los Angeles Police Department

Community Liaison/Crime Prevention Unit

(213) 485-3134

### California Attorney General

(800) 952-5225 or (213) 897-2000

Or visit, [oag.ca.gov/charities](http://oag.ca.gov/charities)

### California Secretary of State

(213) 897-3062

Or visit, [sos.ca.gov](http://sos.ca.gov)

### California Franchise Tax Board, Entity Status Letter

(213) 897-3062

Or visit, [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov)

### Better Business Bureau

(909) 825-7280

Or visit, [bbb.org](http://bbb.org)

### GuideStar

(757) 229-4631

Or visit, [guidestar.org](http://guidestar.org)

### National Do Not Call Registry

(888) 382-1222

Or visit, [donotcall.gov](http://donotcall.gov)

### National Fraud Information Center

(800) 876-7060

Or visit, [fraud.org](http://fraud.org)

### Wise Giving Alliance

(703) 276-0100

Or visit, [give.org](http://give.org)

### AARP

(888) 687-2277

Or visit, [aarp.org](http://aarp.org)

### Commission Investigation Division Charitable Services Section

100 W 1st Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012



[pccharity@lapd.online](mailto:pccharity@lapd.online)

## GIVE WISELY



### A GUIDE TO CHARITABLE GIVING IN LOS ANGELES



### Los Angeles Police Commission Charitable Services Section

[LAPDONLINE.ORG/POLICE-COMMISSION/CID](http://LAPDONLINE.ORG/POLICE-COMMISSION/CID)

## What is a charity?

A charity is an organization established to provide help and raise money for those in need or to support causes for the public good, operating on a non-profit based on government guidelines. Such agencies must be recognized by the IRS as having a 501(c)3 tax-exempt status, registered in the State through various agencies (Secretary of State, Franchise Tax Board) and registered and in good standing with the California Attorney General.



Investigate before you donate...

### Basic Legitimacy Check

- Does the charity meet federal and state definitions for a tax-exempt nonprofit?
- Are the required documents and permits from government agencies readily accessible?

### Follow The Money

How much money goes toward the charitable cause? City issued INFORMATION CARDS often reflect these amounts.

### Quality Check

How well do the charities' efforts provide quality programs and services?

- The City also issues "Endorsed Agencies" Information Cards (based on expense ratio performance and other factors (LAMC Article 4, Sec 44.15)
- Check websites such as "[charitynavigator.org](http://charitynavigator.org)" and "[charitywatch.org](http://charitywatch.org)" to assist in your decision making

## About

The Give Wisely Campaign's goal is to assist the public in making informed decisions when donating money or personal time to non-profit organizations. The goal is to regulate charitable activity by encouraging the public to do their due diligence before donating.

Every year, hundreds of millions of dollars are donated to organizations for various causes, but a large percentage of funds are lost to deceptive individuals or organizations posing as legitimate charities.



### Methods of Solicitations

- Coin containers
- Direct mail or telephone requests
- Direct in-person requests (door-to-door)
- Fundraising events
- Internet websites and email
- Newspaper and magazine advertisement

### Sample Frequently Asked Questions

"How do I know a charity is legitimate?" or "Where does the money go once donated?"

You may conduct your own research of individual charities. Check references using the "Resources" section of this guide.

Please Give Wisely!

## Information Cards



In the City of Los Angeles, any organization or any individual soliciting for donations must possess an INFORMATION CARD. (LAMC, Article 4, Section 44.02.) The information card provides details for donors and must be displayed or presented upon request.

A copy of the card should be included in any direct mail solicitation. The card is issued by the LA Police Commission, Charitable Services Section.

### Sample Information Card

For information about this appeal, call

- THIS IS NOT AN ENDORSEMENT - FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION ONLY -

INFORMATION CARD NO. **00001**  
Issued Pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code, Chapter IV, Article 4, Philanthropy

**NAME OF ORGANIZATION**  
Address of Organization, City, State Zip Code  
Person in charge of appeal: **Name of person in charge of event**  
Telephone number: **Org contact number**

Activity: **Type of solicitation activity, e.g. annual, special event**

Solicitation Dates: **Date(s) event will be held (this can a particular date, or date range)**

Purpose: **Description of Purpose of fundraising/solicitation**

Previous: **If previously fundraised for similar activity, then YEAR activity collected a total of Show much was raised, of which Show much in expenses Was applied to expenses and Total raised or was used for charitable purposes.**

Activity: **DOOR-TO-DOOR SOLICITATION RESTRICTED TO THE HOURS OF 8 A.M. - 8 P.M. This Information Card must be displayed or presented to all prospective donors and should not be altered in any manner.**

Cardholder registered with the Los Angeles Police Commission  
Charitable Services Section, Commission Investigation Division  
Telephone: (213) 996-1280  
E-mail Address: [pccharity@lapdonline.org](mailto:pccharity@lapdonline.org)  
Web Site: [www.lapdonline.org](http://www.lapdonline.org)

Date issued: **the information was issued**  
authorizing signature  
SCOTT MOFFITT  
Commanding Officer  
Commission Investigation Division

The City also issues "Endorsed Agency" Information Cards. The organizations must meet the requirements established by Code (LAMC Section 44.15). Previous year's financial activity is included on issued Information Cards.

For information about this appeal, call

**ENDORSED AGENCY**  
INFORMATION CARD NO. **000001**

**NAME OF ORGANIZATION**  
Address of Organization

Annual Appeal for Donations from date to date year

FINANCIAL DIGEST FOR YEAR ENDED \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLIC SUPPORT & REVENUE	EXPENSES
Contributions & Grants \$ _____	Program Services \$ _____
Program Service Revenue \$ _____	Management & General \$ _____
Investment Income \$ _____	Fundraising ( ) \$ _____
Other Income \$ _____	\$ _____

\_\_\_\_\_, is in charge of this appeal.

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Web Site: [www.lapdonline.org](http://www.lapdonline.org)

Date issued: effective date of this card  
SCOTT MOFFITT  
Commanding Officer  
Commission Investigation Division