



The Savvy Consumer's Checklist Donating Wisely

Many charities throughout Illinois work hard to help those in need. These charities deserve our support. Unfortunately, a few fraudulent charities are concerned only with helping themselves. To make sure your money goes to a legitimate charity and is used in ways you consider appropriate, follow these important tips:

- ✓ **Ask how much of your donation will go to the charity and how much will be used to pay fund-raising costs.** Solicitors must give you this information if you ask.
- ✓ **Pay close attention to the name of the charity.** Some fraudulent charities use names that sound or look like those of legitimate organizations to mislead you.
- ✓ **Ask questions about the charity.** Donate only when your questions have been answered and you are certain your money will be used according to your wishes.
- ✓ **Do not pay in cash.** For security and tax record purposes, pay by check. Be sure to write the full official name of the charity on your check—do not abbreviate.
- ✓ **Request written information.** A legitimate charity will provide you with information outlining its mission, how your donation will be distributed, and proof that your contribution is tax deductible.
- ✓ Do not donate if the solicitor uses high-pressure tactics, asks for cash payment, or insists on sending someone to pick up your donation. These are all hallmarks of a scam.

Consumer Fraud Hotlines

Chicago	Springfield	Carbondale
1-800-386-5438	1-800-243-0618	1-800-243-0607

Individuals with hearing or speech disabilities can reach us by using the 7-1-1 relay service.

Please visit:
www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov