


## **GIVING TIPS TO AVOID SCAMS**

- If making a donation, pay by check or credit card; never cash.
- Only make online donations through a secured website. There will be a little security lock icon in the address bar or a security certificate indicating that it is a secured website.
- Make sure you are donating to a legitimate charity. Some scammers may use names that sound similar to legitimate charity names.



Questions?  
Contact Us!

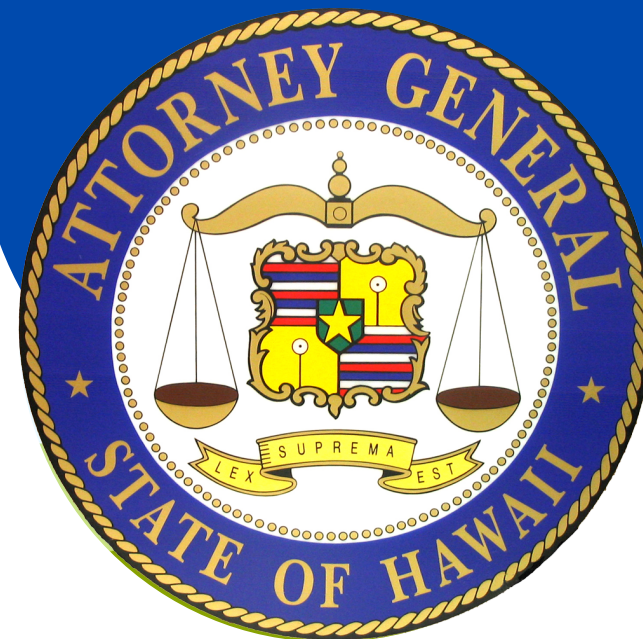
 [ATG.Charities@hawaii.gov](mailto:ATG.Charities@hawaii.gov)

 (808) 586-1480

 [www.ag.hawaii.gov/tax](http://www.ag.hawaii.gov/tax)

### **Tax & Charities Division** Department of the Attorney General State of Hawaii

*The people of Hawaii have a long tradition of giving. Our spirit of Aloha is often reflected in the charity we give to others. We hope this brochure will help you make informed giving decisions by providing ways for you to learn about the charities who ask for and receive your donations. Together, we can work to make a difference in the lives of others, make our communities stronger, and avoid charity scams by making informed and wise giving decisions.*



# **THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE DONATING TO A CHARITY**



**Department of the Attorney General**  
Tax & Charities Division

Here are ways to learn about a charity and links to information to assist you in making wise giving decisions:

## CHECK IF THE CHARITY IS REGISTERED

Every charity that solicits contributions in Hawaii'i must register with the Tax & Charities Division of the Attorney General. Search the AG registered charities database at:

[www.ag.hawaii.gov/tax](http://www.ag.hawaii.gov/tax)

To search for your charity of interest, select the "Search" menu. From there, select "Charitable Organizations."

**REGISTRY SEARCH**

Search for a registered charitable organization, charitable sales promotion, professional solicitor, and professional fundraising counsel

**SEARCH**

On that page, you can search a charity to check if it is registered with the Attorney General and review its tax information.

Registration Status:

**Search**

## RESEARCH THE CHARITY

- Via internet search, find a "charity evaluator" or "charity review" organization to research a charity's financial health, spending, and rating.
- Visit the charity's website. Look for their mission statement to ensure it aligns with your values and objectives.

## LEARN ABOUT WISE GIVING

Visit the Tax & Charities website to find articles on a variety of topics, including the following:

- Wise Giving Tips for Internet and Social Media Solicitations
- Keep Calm and Avoid Coronavirus Scams
- Understanding Crowdfunding
- Avoid Charity Scams
- Online Giving Donor and Consumer Guide

## ADDITIONAL THINGS TO CHECK

### Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

- Do a Tax Exempt Organization Search on the IRS website: [www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits](http://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits)
- Here you can search for an organization's tax-exempt status or review its tax filings.

### Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

- Learn how to Donate Wisely and Avoid Charity Scams at the FTC consumer website: [www.consumer.ftc.gov/shopping-and-donating/donating-charity](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/shopping-and-donating/donating-charity)
- Do a search for the latest charity-related actions taken against sham charities on the FTC site.

### State of Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA)

- Do a Business Name Search on the DCCA website to check if the organization is in good standing: [www.cca.hawaii.gov/breg](http://www.cca.hawaii.gov/breg)