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**Hawaii Attorney General, FTC and Partners Announce Kick-off of
Second Annual International Charity Fraud Awareness Week**

HONOLULU – Attorney General Clare E. Connors joins state charities regulators across the country, the National Association of State Charities Officials (NASCO) and the Federal Trade Commission to announce the second annual International Charity Fraud Awareness Week ([ICFAW](#)) from October 21 to 25, 2019. [ICFAW](#) is a coordinated international campaign to help charities and consumers avoid charity fraud and promote wise giving.

Attorney General Connors and other U.S. partners are joining the Charities Commission for England & Wales, which for many years has hosted its own Charity Fraud Awareness Week. In addition, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, the New Zealand Charities Service, and the Office of the Scottish Regulator are also joining in the international outreach effort. Key non-governmental participants include Chartered Accountants Worldwide, the UK's Fraud Advisory Panel, and international charities Oxfam, British Council and Amnesty International.

“Our agency is pleased to partner with this international effort,” said Attorney General Connors. “The goal is to provide information to the people of our state so they can make thoughtful choices about the charities they choose to support with donations. We hope this campaign helps keep their hard-earned money from ending up in the wrong hands.”

[#CharityFraudOut2019](#)

Charity Fraud Awareness Week features a social media campaign that promotes wise giving tips for consumers. This year the campaign also features cybersecurity and data security guidance for nonprofits. Tune into the weeklong discussion at [#CharityFraudOut2019](#) and follow Hawaii Attorney General on Twitter <https://twitter.com/Atghlgov> for daily tips.

Resources for Consumers

When you donate, you want your money to go to a charity that really helps make a difference. Many reputable charities are deserving of support. The State of Hawaii provides useful tips at http://ag.hawaii.gov/tax/files/2013/01/540427_11.pdf and you may also utilize the information on www.ftc.gov/charity to help individuals and businesses find reputable organizations and give wisely. Watch the FTC's video "[Make Your Donations Count](#)" and remember to:

Do your research:

- Search the charity's name online with words like "complaint" and "scam."
- Search for the charity on Hawaii's registration site at <https://ag.ehawaii.gov/charity/search.html>
- Check out the charity's ratings with groups like the [BBB Wise Giving Alliance](#), [Charity Navigator](#), [Charity Watch](#), and [Guidestar](#).
- Use the IRS's [Tax Exempt Organization Search](#) to see if your donation is tax-deductible.

How to donate wisely and avoid scams

- ★ ★ ★ ☆ **Look up a charity's report & ratings:**
 - give.org • charitywatch.org
 - guidestar.org • charitynavigator.org
- ★ **Never pay by gift card or wire transfer. Credit card and check are safer.**
- ★ **Watch out for names that only look like well-known charities.**
- ★ **Search the charity name online. Do people say it's a scam?**
- ★ **Ask how much of your donation goes to the program you want to support.**
- ★ **Donating online? Be sure where that money is going.**

Federal Trade Commission • ftc.gov/charity

What about donation requests through social media and crowdfunding sites?

Many requests for donations through social media and crowdfunding sites are legitimate, but some are scams. For example, there are people who misuse real pictures and stories to get you to donate, but the money goes into their own pockets. Some fraudsters have even hijacked links to legitimate charities on social media and pocketed donations made via those links. Crowdfunding sites often have little control over who uses them and how donations are spent. Research before you give. Also, if tax deductions are important to you, remember that donations to individuals are not tax-deductible.

The safest way to give on social media or through crowdfunding is to donate to people you actually know who contact you about a specific project. Don't assume that solicitations on social media or crowdfunding sites are legitimate – even when they are shared or liked by your friends. If you want to donate to a charity promoted in social media or on a crowdfunding site, don't forget that you can always go directly to the charity's website and donate that way. Do your own research. Call or contact your friends offline and ask them about the post they shared. More information may be found

at <https://www.consumerreports.org/crowdfunding/be-careful-about-donating-through-crowdfunding/>

Advice for Non-Profit Organizations

This year, [ICFAW](#) is also emphasizing the importance of non-profit and charitable organizations adopting good cybersecurity practices to protect donor and client information.

The FTC has created [a guide for small businesses and non-profits](#) about the basics of cybersecurity, and also has [a blog post with more information specifically for non-profits](#).

Here are some of the most basic tips non-profits should follow:

- Update your software – set it to update automatically. Breaches often happen when vulnerabilities exist because companies did not install the latest update or patch.
- Secure your files – make a back-up offline so that if there's a ransomware attack, your company can stay up and running
- Require passwords for all devices
- Use multi-factor authentication (like a PIN or key). That way if a laptop is lost or stolen, it's harder for a thief to get into them.
- Encrypt devices – for another layer of protection of sensitive information

Follow This Year's [ICFAW](#) Themes:

Monday, Oct. 21: Launch day. Theme – All.Together.Now.

Tuesday, Oct. 22: Fundraising Scams

Wednesday, Oct. 23: Cybersecurity

Thursday, Oct. 24: Internal Fraud

Friday, Oct. 25: Keeping Data Safe

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