

Need Help?



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Phoney Charities

Before you file a formal complaint with the Ministry of Government Services, please take the following steps:

1. Make a specific complaint to the organization you donated to. Contact the organization and explain your complaint in detail.
2. Put it in writing and keep proof of delivery of your complaint and any other communication with the organization.
3. If you feel you have been a victim of fraud, contact PhoneBusters at 1-888-495-8501.
4. To find out if a charity is registered for tax purposes, call the Canada Revenue Agency, Charities Directorate at 1-800-267-2384.
5. If you feel there may have been a misuse of charitable property call the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee, Charitable Property Program at 1-800-366-0335.
6. If you are still not satisfied, file a formal complaint by visiting our website at www.mgs.gov.on.ca.

Additional consumer protection advice is available at www.mgs.gov.on.ca:

- Your Consumer Rights
 - Buying Merchandise
 - At Home
- Memberships and Services
 - Motor Vehicles
- Personal Finances
 - Travel
 - Scams
- Identity Theft
- File a Complaint

For consumer information and advice, call **(416) 326-8800** or toll-free **1-800-889-9768**.

For general ministry information, visit www.mgs.gov.on.ca or call **(416) 326-8555** or toll-free **1-800-268-1142** (in Ontario).
TTY/Teletypewriter users only: **(416) 325-3408** or toll-free **1-800-268-7095**.

Please send your comments, feedback and inquiries to: infomgs@mgs.gov.on.ca.

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What You Need to Know About Charitable Donations



Smart consumers are good for business

Ontario is a leader in consumer protection and has set out clear rules for consumers and business. Know your rights – shop smart and protect yourself in the marketplace.

Get The Facts Before You Give

Donations are a critical source of funding for many worthwhile causes. Unfortunately, there are con artists who pretend to be raising money for charity, but keep donations for their personal gain. They may contact you by mail, e-mail, telephone or in person. Once you make a donation, there is usually nothing you can do to get it back. Be careful before making a donation!

Quick tips:

- Never give in to pressure. Real charities don't use high-pressure tactics.
- Ask before you give:
 - Can I get a tax receipt?
 - What's your charitable registration number?
 - How much of my donation goes directly to helping others?
 - How much goes to administration and fundraising costs?
 - Can you mail me more information before I donate?

- Beware of:
 - High-pressure callers who want you to contribute immediately
 - Someone who calls you and thanks you for a pledge you don't remember
 - Names that sound like well-known charities. Con artists use copycat names
 - A mailbox address instead of a street address
 - Temporary tables in public places where you are asked for spare change.

- *Protect yourself:*

- Never give cash – make cheques payable to the charity's full name
- Never give out personal information
- Ask for a tax receipt
- Check facts. Reject vague answers.

- Plan your giving:

- Decide how much you can afford to give. Set a charity budget and stick to it
- Spread your giving out over the year
- Consider those charities that mean the most to you: a favourite cause, a charity that has helped you or your loved ones or whatever reflects your values.

Your rights:

- You have the right to think about your decision and ask for more information. Legitimate charities respect that right and are happy to answer questions.
- If you suspect that a charity request may in fact be bogus, report the matter to PhoneBusters, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Call Centre at **1-888-495-8501**.