

Dept. of Financial Institutions: Giving Tuesday tips from DATCP and DFI

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MADISON, Wis. – High demand and increased need for charitable services across Wisconsin means that organizations are relying on the generosity of donors during this philanthropic season. This Giving Tuesday, the [Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection \(DATCP\)](#) and the [Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions \(DFI\)](#) are offering tips to help you ensure that your donations will reach the charitable organization of your choice.

“Scammers use phony websites and high-pressure pitches to solicit funds for fake charities in an effort to steal your money and personal information,” said Lara Sutherlin, Administrator of DATCP’s Division of Trade and Consumer Protection. “There are many simple ways you can protect yourself from scammers and make sure you are donating to a legitimate charity.”

“With a little research and a few precautions, you can help ensure your donations will be used as intended and go to organizations that are genuinely serving others,” said Patti Epstein, Administrator of DFI’s Division of Corporate and Consumer Services.

If you receive a phone call, email, or text from someone asking for a donation:

- Do not make a payment over the phone. Hang up and do additional research first.
- Do not click on links or attachments in emails, text messages, or social media posts, and do not share information with senders you do not know.
- Do not donate cash, through cash apps, by cryptocurrency, or by wiring money to people or organizations you do not know. It is impossible to reverse these transactions.

- Watch for imposter website links or social media profiles. Check the spelling of the charity's name on the account and website as misspelled names may signify imposter organizations.
- If you don't recognize the name or phone number, ask who is making the request.
- Ask for the name, address, and phone number of the organization asking for the donation.
- Ask how your donation will be used and what percentage of your donation will be used for program services (also referred to as the organization's charitable purpose) rather than for administrative, management, or fundraising costs.
- Ask a caller to send written material about the organization.

Before donating to a charitable organization:

- Review DFI's webpage on charitable organizations, which includes tips for donors and a database of state-registered charitable organizations: <https://www.wdfi.org/CharitableOrganizations/default.htm>.
- Visit DATCP's website for more information on protecting yourself from charitable donation scams: <https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Publications/CharityRequests120.aspx>.
- Research the charity at <https://www.charitynavigator.org/> or <https://give.org>.

For additional information and consumer protection resources, visit DATCP's Consumer Protection Bureau at datcp.wi.gov. For information on charitable organizations, fundraising counsels, and professional fundraisers, visit DFI's charitable and professional organizations webpage at [wdfi.org](https://www.wdfi.org).