



State of Maryland AGENCY NEWS

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Secretary of State and Maryland Attorney General Warn Donors To Beware This Giving Tuesday and Holiday Season *Giving Tuesday Is November 30*

ANNAPOLIS, MD—While Giving Tuesday is a day that marks the season of helping others, the Maryland Secretary of State's Office and the Maryland Office of the Attorney General warn that this year's holiday season comes with an increased urgency to protect against scam artists preying on generous donors.

"There are Marylanders across the state who depend on the generosity of donors for basic needs," said Maryland Secretary of State John Wobensmith. "And while we are grateful to our reputable charities, we urge our citizens to be on alert for scam artists who take advantage of unsuspecting donors."

Secretary Wobensmith warns donors to avoid common mistakes and red flags such as lack of information for unknown charities. Reputable charities should readily answer your questions. Don't fall victim to charities that promise to follow up or send information after you give a donation. Verify the charity is authentic before you give.

For those who choose to make a donation this Giving Tuesday and holiday season, Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh and Secretary Wobensmith advise consumers to be vigilant and donate wisely.

"We are committed to connecting Maryland's donors with tools and tips on how to give wisely," said Attorney General Frosh. "Maryland is home to a number of nonprofit organizations worthy of your generous donation. As we approach the holiday season, it is important to be prepared and do your research before donating."

Here are some tips on how to avoid a charity scam this Giving Tuesday and year-round:

- Do some research before giving.
- Beware of social media sites that promote charitable organizations.
- If a telemarketer calls asking for a donation by phone, ask questions first and request additional information by email or mail.
- Pay close attention to the name and logo, and make sure that the charity you are donating to is the one you intended to give to.

The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division offers tips on giving wisely that can be found [here](#).

Together with the Attorney General's Office, the Secretary of State's Office works to ensure that charitable contributions go to qualified charitable organizations and are used for their intended purpose. The Maryland Secretary of State registers and regulates charitable organizations and their professional solicitors who operate in Maryland. Current Maryland law mandates that charities are registered with the Secretary of State and reveal to the public their financial and programmatic activities. Marylanders can search the [Maryland Charities Database](#) to see if a charity is registered in the state.

If you think that you have been a victim of a charity fraud or scam, contact the Office of the Secretary of State, Charities and Legal Services Division by email at DLInvestigations_SOS@maryland.gov or by telephone at [410-974-5534](tel:410-974-5534).