

Verify A Charity

Periodically we get calls from charities asking for donations. When there is a crisis (e.g., hurricane, flood, tornado, war, etc.), these calls seem to increase. Scammers will take advantage of a crisis to get you to donate money to help during a time of crisis. Well, how do you know if the charity is really a valid charitable organization? There are two ways to verify a charity.

1. IRS website - <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/taxexemptorganization-search> Click on the “Tax Exempt Organization Search Tool”, then click on “Search for Tax Exempt Organizations” box. You can then input the charity’s employer identification number and click on search. Click on the charity’s name that comes up and you will get information on their nonprofit status with the IRS.
2. Charity Navigator website – <https://www.charitynavigator.org> and type in the charity’s EIN (Employer Identification Number) in the Charity Search section at the top of the page. Information about the charity will come up including what nonprofit section of the IRS the charity is registered (e.g., 501(c)(3))

It is best to search by Employer Identification Number (EIN) as sometimes the name of the organization is a little different with the IRS. For example, R.O.S.E. Resources/Outreach to Safeguard the Elderly is listed as Rose Resources Outreach to Safeguard the Elderly.

Keep in mind that it takes the IRS some time to get the charity’s information uploaded into their system. Charity Navigator gets their information from the IRS. If you are dealing with a newer charity, ask the charity to see their IRS Tax Determination Letter.

In the end, you will need to decide if you want to donate to the charity.

Source: IRS

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/people-should-donate-carefully-after-a-disaster-to-avoid-scams>