

Generous donors urged to give safely to registered charities this Ramadan

As Muslims enter the month of Ramadan, the Charity Commission is encouraging donors to take simple steps to ensure their donations reach the intended cause.

Ramadan is a time of huge generosity among British Muslims, with the Muslim Charities Forum estimating that, in previous years, UK donors have given over £130m to charity during the holy month alone*.

Recently, Muslim communities around the country have been part of efforts to relieve those in need as a result of the coronavirus emergency, including providing meals to staff at local NHS hospitals and delivering food parcels to vulnerable people of all faiths in their communities.

Increased online giving is expected this Ramadan, with a reduction in cash collections, as mosques and community centres remain closed to reduce social contact.

Most fundraising is genuine, however fraudsters and criminals may sometimes take advantage of public generosity at times of increased giving, using various methods such as fake appeal websites, email appeals that falsely use the name of genuine charities, or appeals from fake charities.

The regulator is therefore pointing to simple steps people can take to make sure donations reach registered charities:

- Check the charity's name and registration number at [gov.uk/checkcharity](https://www.gov.uk/checkcharity). Most charities with an annual income of £5,000 or more must be registered.
- Make sure the charity is genuine before giving any financial information – it's ok to decide not to give on the spot. Be wary of unsolicited emails from charities you have never heard of and be careful when responding to emails or clicking on links within them.
- Exercise the same caution as with any other internet transaction, for example, to donate online, visit the charity's own website and always type the website address into the browser yourself.
- Contact or find out more online about the charity that you're seeking to donate to or work with to find out more about their spending. Ask a trusted friend or relative if you are unable to research this or need a second opinion.
- Ignore requests to donate through a money transfer company.
- If in doubt about an approach, give instead to a charity that you have an existing relationship with.

The Commission's [online register](#) also allows donors to search for charities operating within their own local authority area, or to undertake keyword searches to find charities providing specific services, such as foodbanks or

support for older people.

Helen Stephenson, CEO of the Charity Commission, said:

We know that Muslim teaching places great emphasis on supporting those in need; we've seen evidence of that charitable spirit over recent weeks as our society responds to the pandemic, and we can expect to see enormous generosity continue as Muslims pay their Zakat and other contributions during Ramadan, supporting causes close to home and around the world. By giving to a registered charity, donors can be assured that their funds will be accounted for in line with the charity law framework.

Fadi Itani, CEO of the Muslim Charities Forum, said:

Ramadan may feel very different this year, as we are unable to gather together as families and communities. However, one thing we expect to remain unchanged is the huge generosity Muslims display during the Holy Month. We encourage those who can afford to give to do so generously, but to use their head as well as their heart before parting with money. That includes checking that your donations are going to a registered charity, and thinking purposefully about what you want your donation to achieve.

Ends.

Notes to editors

1. *Figures around donations are always estimates. For more information please contact the [Muslim Charities Forum](#).
2. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator and registrar of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see the about us page on GOV.UK.
3. The National Emergencies Trust, which the Commission helped establish, has set up a [coronavirus appeal](#), which will see funds distributed to local communities around the UK affected by the pandemic.
4. The government has published [guidance on businesses and venues that should remain closed](#).