[How to give safely to charities](#)

Giving to charity is a longstanding and important tradition and we welcome the public's generosity in their support for charities.

We want to ensure that generous donations do not end up in the wrong hands. We want to make sure that charity continues to thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

As regulator, we want everyone to make important checks before they give, so that they feel empowered and more confident at spotting and avoiding scams.

Charity scams are small in number compared to how much is given safely, but the charity sector generates an annual income of over £76 billion making it an attractive target for criminals.

We have some simple advice for donors, such as [checking the charity register](#), so that people can feel reassured that their donations go to their intended charitable cause.

Key advice for safer giving

- [check the charity's name and registration number](#). 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
- be careful when responding to emails or clicking on links within them
- check whether street collectors are wearing a proper ID badge and that any collection tin is sealed and undamaged
- ask the collector for more information if in doubt
- contact the charity that you're seeking to donate to or work with to find out more about their spending
- carefully review collection bags for clothing and household goods to check whether they are from a genuine charity
- check whether fundraising materials are genuine. They should feature the charity's name, registered number and a landline contact number [check their contact details on the register](#)
- never feel under pressure by a fundraiser into making a donation immediately
- use the same level of caution every time you support or donate to a charity

Reporting suspicious activity

After making these checks, if you think that a collection or appeal is not legitimate, report it to the police. You can also [complain about a charity to us and the Fundraising Regulator](#).

If you think a collector does not have a licence – report it to the relevant Local Authority Licensing Team or the Metropolitan Police (if in Greater London). Also let the charity know if you can.