

FACT SHEET: DONATIONS DOS AND DON'TS

A Word To The Wise

Not all thrift stores are charities. Some thrift stores are operated by for-profit companies, yet they solicit donations under the name of a charity. In these cases, potential donors usually are not informed of the arrangement between the charity and the for-profit company. As little as five percent of the money generated from these donations may actually go to the charity. The for-profit entity may control the entire operation, from solicitation to the resale of goods.

Making an Informed Choice

You can make sure your donations are benefiting the people who need them most by asking a few key questions:

- Will your donation be used to support a cause you believe in?
- What percentage of the revenues generated by your donation will directly support the mission of the organization?
- Does the charity actually operate the thrift store in which your donation will be sold? Or is the store run by a for-profit operation?
- If the store is run by a for-profit, how will your donation help people in need?

When you donate to a GCF Donation Center and Store®, operated by Goodwill Industries of Eastern North Carolina, you can be sure that 93 percent of the money generated from the sale of your goods goes to support our programs. We provide jobs and job training in our GCF Donation Centers and Stores® throughout Eastern North Carolina and provide job training to high school students with disabilities. We also offer free computer skills training through GCF Global Learning®, available to anyone with access to the Internet. You can log on to GCF Global Learning® at www.GCFLearnFree.org in English and www.GCFAprendaGratis.org in Spanish.

What You Should Do

- Give to charities you know and trust. Note that fraudulent charities often modify the names of established groups so be sure to carefully read the name of the charity before giving.
- Familiarize yourself with the organization soliciting your support. Avoid giving to organizations that do not make their IRS Form 990 available, send unsolicited e-mails or to solicitors who ask for your credit card number over the telephone or request payment in cash.
- Avoid donating to organizations that can't immediately provide you with information about their mission, history and the causes they are asking you to support.
- Find out how your donation will be used and how much the organization intends to raise.
- Realize that the opportunity to give extends beyond an organization's immediate need.

Information about Goodwill Industries of Eastern North Carolina and the Goodwill Community Foundation is always available online at www.goodwillenc.org. Featured on the site is a list of our GCF Donation Centers and Stores®, a downloadable version of our quarterly newsletter, a link to GCF Global Learning®, pertinent news about our organization, our IRS Form 990 and contact information for anyone having questions not answered on our website.

Donation Dos

- Wash or dry-clean clothing.
- Test electrical equipment and battery-operated items.
- Include all pieces and parts to children's games and toys.

Donation Don'ts

- Leave items unattended outside a GCF Donation Center and Store®. Donate during business hours.
- Donate broken or soiled items.
- Give items that have been recalled, banned, or do not meet current safety standards. For more information, visit the [Consumer Product Safety Commission](http://www.ConsumerProductSafetyCommission.gov).