

Donate to Help Hurricane Harvey Victims, But Pick Your Charity Carefully: How to Do Both

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It's heartbreaking to see people lose their lives, homes, and businesses to the ongoing flooding in Texas. But it's despicable when scammers exploit [such tragedies](#) to appeal to your sense of generosity.

— *This article by Colleen Tressler is [a post](#) on the Federal Trade Commission blog.*

If you're looking for a way to give, the FTC urges you to be cautious of potential [charity scams](#). Do some research to ensure that your donation will go to a reputable organization that will use the money as promised.

Consider these tips when asked to give:

- **Donate to charities you know and trust** with a proven track record with dealing with disasters.
- **Be alert for charities that seem to have sprung up overnight in connection with current events.** Check out the charity with the [Better Business Bureau's \(BBB\) Wise Giving Alliance](#), [Charity](#)

[Navigator](#), [Charity Watch](#), or [GuideStar](#).

- **Designate the disaster** so you can ensure your funds are going to disaster relief, rather than a general fund.
- **Never click on links or open attachments in e-mails unless you know who sent it.** You could unknowingly install [malware](#) on your computer.
- **Don't assume that charity messages posted on social media are legitimate.** Research the organization yourself.
- **When texting to donate, confirm the number with the source before you donate.** The charge will show up on your mobile phone bill, but donations are not immediate.
- **Find out if the charity or fundraiser must be registered in your state** by contacting the [National Association of State Charity Officials](#). If they should be registered, but they're not, consider donating through another charity.

To learn more, go to [Charity Scams](#). For tips to help you prepare for, deal with, and recover from a severe weather event, visit [Dealing with Weather Emergencies](#).

Some Organizations to Consider

The New York Times [published this list](#) of national and local (to Houston) charities, and also urged caution when picking a charity to give to:

National Organizations

The [American Red Cross](#) accepts donations [on its website](#). Also, you can text HARVEY to 90999 to donate \$10.

[AmeriCares](#) (an international charity based in Stamford) carries medicine and supplies to survivors.

[Catholic Charities](#) provides food, clothing, shelter and support services to those from all religious backgrounds.

Donations to the [Salvation Army](#) can be made [online](#), or by calling 1-800-SAL-ARMY (1-800-725-2769) or texting STORM to 51555.

[AABB](#), which coordinates a task force to manage blood collection efforts during disasters, [put out a call on Sunday](#) for blood donations in the aftermath of Harvey. ***Most in demand: those with type O-positive blood.***

Those interested in donating blood may contact these organizations:

- [AABB](#): 301-907-6977
- [America's Blood Centers](#)
- [American Red Cross](#): 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)

- [Armed Services Blood Program](#): 703-681-5979

Houston Organizations

The [Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund](#) of Houston's mayor, Sylvester Turner, which is administered by the Greater Houston Community Foundation.

[Houston Food Bank](#) and the [Food Bank of Corpus Christi](#) are asking for donations.

[Carter BloodCare](#) covers hospitals in north, central and east Texas. To donate, call 877-571-1000 or text DONATE4LIFE to 444-999.

To help animals suffering from the disaster: the [Houston Humane Society](#) or the [San Antonio Humane Society](#).

The [Texas Diaper Bank](#) in San Antonio is asking for diapers and wipes, which can be mailed to 5415 Bandera Road, Suite 504, San Antonio, TX 78238.

Also

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends checking with the [National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster](#) for a list of trusted disaster-relief organizations in Texas.

See also:

— [Helping Out After Hurricane Harvey: Where, What & How To Donate](#) (Forbes, Aug. 28)

— [People are urging donations for Harvey relief efforts — just not to the Red Cross](#) (Washington Post, Aug. 28)

— [Hurricane Harvey: Where you can donate to help with disaster relief and recovery](#) (Vox, Aug. 28)

— [Here's How You Can Help the Victims of Hurricane Harvey](#) (CNN, Aug. 28)

— [People Making Donations to Hurricane Harvey Relief Should Vet Charity](#) (Denver Post, Aug. 28)