



How to Avoid Common Veteran Charity Scams



Icons Relate to the Following:

-  **Veteran Alert**
-  **Scam Warning**
-  **Unsolicited Contact**
-  **Donation Pressure**
-  **Fake Invoice**
-  **Research First**
-  **Charity Rating Check**
-  **Safe Payment**
-  **Receipt Check**
-  **Report a Scam**

Key Points

-  Scammers target donors by **exploiting patriotism** and sympathy for veterans
-  Fraudsters **mimic well-known veterans'** charities through mail, phone, email, and text
-  They use emotional stories and **patriotic imagery** to pressure quick giving
-  Scammers may claim **you donated before** to lower your guard
-  Fake invoices or **“thank-you”** notes for donations you never made are common red flags
-  Veterans-related giving is a **large sector**, making it attractive to scammers
-  Shady operators **divert funds** away from legitimate veteran-support organizations
-  High-pressure tactics and **urgent requests** for **immediate donations** signal danger
-  Legitimate charities welcome donations **anytime** and do not pressure you on the spot
-  Monitoring groups like **CharityWatch, BBB Wise Giving Alliance, and Charity Navigator** help verify legitimacy

How to Protect Yourself

-  **Research the charity** before giving — never donate on the spot
-  Tell solicitors **you’ll review the organization independently** before donating
-  Check charity ratings through **CharityWatch, BBB Wise Giving Alliance, or Charity Navigator**
-  Ask how the organization **specifically supports veterans** (advocacy vs. direct aid)
-  **Verify** that any fundraiser claiming to represent a known charity is **authorized**



How to Avoid Common Veteran Charity Scams



- Use credit cards — **avoid cash, wire transfers, payment apps, cryptocurrency, or gift cards**
- **Always** request a **receipt** and **compare** it to your **credit card statement**
- Be cautious of **emotional appeals** designed to **rush** your decision
- **Ignore unsolicited messages** that pressure you to “renew” a donation you never made
- Look for **transparency**: real programs, real leadership, and clear financial reporting

If You Think You Were Scammed

- **Report the incident** to your state attorney general’s consumer protection office
- **File a complaint** with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)
- **Submit a report** to the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)
- **Call the AARP** Fraud Watch Network Helpline (877-908-3360) for free guidance
- **Use the AARP** Scam Tracking Map to document what happened
- **Contact your credit card company** immediately if you donated through a card
- **Monitor your statements** for unauthorized charges
- **Save all emails, texts, receipts, or screenshots** as evidence
- **Stop all communication** with the suspected scammer
- **Explore AARP resources for veterans** who have been targeted or harmed

If you like this scam aid... go to www.MARC4U.org for additional copies.

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