



Attorney General Doug Peterson

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 18, 2019

Attorney General Peterson Reminds Nebraskans to Donate with Care in Response to Historic Flooding & Weather Damage

(Lincoln, NE) — Attorney General Doug Peterson reminds Nebraskans to donate with care and avoid charity scams in response to recent weather damage and flooding.

“In the coming days, it is critical that we reach out and help our communities affected by the devastating floods,” said Attorney General Peterson. “One of my responsibilities is to help Nebraskans recognize and avoid disaster-related, fundraising scams.”

Following a few simple steps can help ensure that your donations reach those in need:

- **It is best to donate to organizations whose reputations you are familiar with** and those having a local presence.
- **Be cautious about fundraising efforts initiated on social media** with no known ties to an established organization or local charity.
- **Carefully evaluate the charity before making a donation.** Resources such as [Charity Navigator](#), [GuideStar](#), [IRS Select Check](#), the [National Center for Charitable Statistics](#), and the [BBB Wise Giving Alliance](#) all provide information about established charities.
- **Designate the disaster** so you can ensure your funds are going to disaster relief, rather than a general fund.
- **Don't fall for imposters.** Watch out for charities with names that sound similar to well-known organizations. Sometimes these sound-alike names are designed to confuse donors. If you receive an email, telephone call, or text message asking for a donation, confirm that the request is from the charity, and not an imposter, by contacting the charity or visiting its website *before* making the donation.
- **Avoid cash donations if possible.** Pay by credit card or write a check directly to the charity. Do not make checks payable to individuals or send money via money transfer.
- **Be especially wary of unsolicited emails** that contain attachments or links to websites, as they may download harmful malware onto your computer.
- **Be cautious when donating to a recently-formed charity.** These organizations have less experience handling donations, especially those intended to assist with a natural disaster.

- **Ask questions.** Contact the charity to ask how your donation will be used for disaster relief. If they cannot give you answers, consider donating elsewhere.
- **Use peer-to-peer fundraising platforms carefully.** Watch for hidden fees and make sure you know how your personal information may be used after you donate. When possible, make your donation payable to a charitable organization and not a specific person.
- **Get permission and all the details before raising money on behalf of a charity or individual.** Contact the charity or individual beforehand to get permission and determine how and where donations should be sent. This will also provide you with an opportunity to confirm that any representations you'll be making are truthful.

Those who suspect a charity scam should contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at <https://protectthegoodlife.nebraska.gov> or 800-727-6432.

###

Suzanne Gage
Director of Communications
Nebraska Attorney General
Office: 402.471.2656
Mobile: 402.560.3518
Suzanne.gage@nebraska.gov

