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ATTORNEY GENERAL



MICHELLE H. SEAGULL
COMMISSIONER



CT Department of Veterans Affairs

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COMMISSIONER

July 19, 2018

Re: Solicitation of Charitable Funds on Your Premises

Dear Retail Merchant:

A common sight outside many stores lately is one or more representatives collecting for various charitable organizations. We applaud businesses that allow their premises to be used for charitable fundraising purposes. This and other kinds of charitable activities are cornerstones of strong communities. We write today to advise you of a few simple steps you can take to prevent fraudsters and scam artists posing as legitimate charities from taking advantage of you and your customers.

Although many fundraising organizations are properly registered charities with authorization to solicit funds in the State of Connecticut, many, unfortunately, are not. The registration of charities that fundraise helps to promote the public's confidence in making charitable contributions in the first place. However, unregistered charities, particularly those that solicit small cash donations, fly beneath the State's radar and can more easily misuse the charitable funds they collect. There have been a number of complaints in recent years of charities collecting donations at supermarkets and other places and misrepresenting that the collected funds would benefit local veterans' organizations. These scams not only hurt the donating public, but also hinder the efforts of legitimate charities, including those doing invaluable work for our country's military veterans.

We thought it would be helpful to provide you with a quick overview of the registration requirements for the solicitation of charitable funds in Connecticut and the means to confirm the proper registration of those organizations that seek permission to solicit on your premises. Just a little effort will ensure that your customers are being solicited by organizations that have properly registered with the State.

The Connecticut Solicitation of Charitable Funds Act (the "Act") requires that organizations must register with the Department of Consumer Protection ("DCP") prior to soliciting charitable contributions in Connecticut. The Act applies to organizations that solicit funds or anything of value "for any benevolent, educational, philanthropic, humane, scientific, patriotic, social welfare or advocacy,

public health, environmental conservation, civic or eleemosynary purpose, or for the benefit of law enforcement officers, firefighters or other persons who protect the public safety." Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-190a(1). So, for example, most organizations that solicit for youth drug programs or veterans would be covered.

DCP's Public Charities Unit is responsible for the regulation of charitable organizations in Connecticut and provides information to the public about charitable organizations. To find out if an organization is registered to solicit charitable funds in Connecticut, please visit www.elicense.ct.gov. Scroll to the bottom of the page, and under "License Lookup & Download" click on "Look up a License". Once on the license look-up page, select "CHARITY" in the "License Type" box. Enter the information about the business in the appropriate space, and click "Search". All registered organizations are listed, including those that have claimed an exemption from registration. You may also ask the organization for a copy of its DCP registration confirmation. You can get more information about charities by visiting DCP's website at www.ct.gov/DCP.

If you find that a charity is not listed on DCP's website, you may contact the Public Charities Unit at DCP at (860)713-6190 or send an email to: DCP.CharitiesEnforcement@ct.gov. Charities must be registered with DCP before they may solicit funds in Connecticut.

Our offices are routinely asked about the merits of individual charities, including the percentage of funds spent on charitable purposes - a potentially important measure of a charity's effectiveness.

Unfortunately, we are not authorized by law to rate the effectiveness of charities or limit the amount of funds that may be spent on the administrative costs of fundraising activities. Private organizations, such as CharityNavigator, do compile information on charities' effectiveness and make it readily available on the internet. You may find these kinds of resources helpful in deciding which charities may use your premises for fundraising, but we cannot vouch for the accuracy of such information.

We hope this information has been helpful to you and that you will take a few moments to confirm that anyone soliciting charitable funds on your premises is properly registered. For your convenience, we have attached a Charity Request Form created by the Federal Trade Commission. While this form is not required by the state, we hope that you find it helpful when approached by a charity seeking to raise funds or solicit donations on your premises. Thank you for your cooperation and for your work in support of charitable causes.



George Jepsen
Attorney General
State of Connecticut



Michelle H. Seagull
Commissioner
Department of Consumer Protection



Thomas J. Saadi
Commissioner
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Charity Request Form
Application for Charities to Raise Funds or
Solicit Donations on the Premises

You must get approval to raise funds or seek donations in my business. Complete this form to request approval. Please attach brochures or other materials about your organization to help us make a decision. After considering your request, we will contact you.

Date of application _____

About the Organization

Name of organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone number _____

Email _____

Website _____

Federal EIN _____

Is this a 501(c)(3) organization? Yes No

How long has the organization been in operation? _____

Is the organization in compliance with all filing requirements of the Internal Revenue Service and the state regulators? Yes No

Purpose of organization: _____

About You

Your name _____

Do you reside in this state? Yes No

How can we contact you? Email _____ Phone _____

Do you have the charity's permission to solicit donations on its behalf? Yes No

Name and contact information of the person at the charity who approved this solicitation.

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

About Your Request

What date(s) would you like to raise funds on the premises? _____

What time of day? Morning Afternoon Evening

Have you previously had a fundraiser at our location? Yes No

What type of activity will you conduct? (Will you set up a table or other equipment? Will you hand out leaflets or brochures? How many people will be involved? Will you collect cash? Will you sell food or other items? If so, what will you sell?) Please provide a detailed description.

How will the cash or other donations be safeguarded?

How will you deliver donations you collect to the charity?

Thank you! We will get back to you soon.

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