



## FSA – Keeping You Safe

### Beware of Charitable Solicitations by Phone: Give Wisely

With the holiday season coming soon, there will be an increase in opportunities to give back to those who are less fortunate. Charities commonly seen around this time, such as the Salvation Army and Toys for Tots, will gladly accept donations in person at designated locations. Credible organizations will be able to provide information regarding who it is that benefits from your donation and why they need your help. While the spirit of giving is an excellent one to have, we should approach certain charities with caution. When donations are solicited online or over the phone, research the credibility of the charity you are considering. If the charity's purpose is unclear, consider donating elsewhere. Organizations that sound unfamiliar and unauthentic may be fraudulent.

The Florida Sheriffs Association advises members to be aware of telemarketers soliciting donations by phone. Even though it is legal for organizations and associations to solicit by telephone, the Florida Sheriffs do not endorse fundraising projects or advertising sales conducted by telephone.

When receiving phone solicitations, the Florida Sheriffs Association suggests you use the following precautions:

- Don't act immediately. You are entitled to request and receive information about the charity in writing before donating.
- Verify the charitable organization is registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services by calling (800) 435-7352 or visiting [www.FloridaConsumerHelp.com](http://www.FloridaConsumerHelp.com) to obtain a copy of registration documents and a financial statement.
- File complaints about possible fraud by contacting the Florida Office of the Attorney General at (866) 966-7226 or [www.myfloridalegal.com](http://www.myfloridalegal.com).
- Reduce unwanted sales calls by registering a phone number with the National Do Not Call Registry by calling (888) 382-1222 or visiting [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov).

For more tips, please visit the Florida Sheriffs Associations Crime Prevention Tips: [flsheriffs.org/crime-prevention](http://flsheriffs.org/crime-prevention)