

North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State

NEWS

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Elaine F. Marshall
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Be a Smart Giver in the Wake of Hurricane Helene

RALEIGH – As rescue and relief efforts continue in Western North Carolina, North Carolina Secretary of State Elaine F. Marshall is reminding North Carolinians to do their research and give wisely to make sure their generosity is getting to those in need.

“We’ve all seen heartbreaking scenes of devastation and loss in Western North Carolina. In the face of such immense suffering we all want to reach out and help, but please remember that while natural disasters can bring out the best in many people, they can also bring out the worst – including scam artists. So I encourage everyone to look for organizations that have resources on the ground and an established track record of helping people,” Secretary Marshall said on Monday.

A few tips for smart giving:

- Be wary of high pressure solicitations on social media or via emails or texts.
- Give to established charities with resources on the ground to help the affected regions.
- Watch out for groups mimicking the names of established, respected charities.
- If you get an unsolicited call, text or email from an organization, research that organization yourself online instead of just clicking on links the organization provides.
- Also make your donations directly on the charity’s official website rather than clicking on a link in a text or email.
- Never give your credit card or bank account information over the phone or email.
- Visit the Secretary of State’s Charitable Solicitation Licensing Division online at <http://www.sosnc.gov/CSL/> to research charities registered with the Secretary of State’s Office, and download the Secretary of State’s [Smart Donor Checklist](#) for a handy list of suggested questions you should ask any charity that solicits you for contributions.

If you believe you have been contacted by a scam charity, report it to the Secretary of State’s Office at 1-888-830-4989, or call your local authorities. For the latest on Hurricane Helene resources and to donate to the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund visit www.ncdps.gov.