

# Fundraising Ethics Guide for the Small Nonprofit

In engaging with donors to fulfill our organization's mission, we will:

1. Be committed to donor satisfaction and responsible environmental, community and financial stewardship.
2. Clearly, honestly, and accurately represent our mission. Be transparent in providing donors information on the use of funds and our leadership team.
3. Communicate in a respectful and courteous manner. Acknowledge a donor's contributions appropriately and in a timely manner while respecting a donor's right to privacy.<sup>1</sup>
4. Be accessible via multiple channels (mail, email, phone and possibly others) and respond to inquiries and complaints in a constructive, timely way.
5. Maintain appropriate security policies and practices to safeguard donor information.<sup>2</sup>
6. Provide information on our policies about the sharing of personally identifiable information to third-parties for marketing purposes, and always honor requests not to have information shared.
7. Honor donors' rights to choose which channels we communicate to them in (direct mail, email, telemarketing and others), and the frequency of communication.
8. When partnering with businesses, disclose the percentage or dollar amount of a sale which is a charitable contribution.
9. Make a best effort not to solicit to children and abide by parents' requests to have children's names excluded from solicitations.<sup>3</sup>
10. Follow the spirit and letter of the law as well as DMA's *Guidelines for Ethical Business Practice*.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Read more at:  
[irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1771.pdf](https://irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1771.pdf) or  
[irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p526.pdf](https://irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p526.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>An overview of PCI Security Standards Council definition of PCI compliance:  
[pcisecuritystandards.org/security\\_standards/index.php](https://pcisecuritystandards.org/security_standards/index.php)

<sup>3</sup>Guidelines for soliciting/marketing to children as outlined by the Children's Advertising Review Unit:  
[caru.org/guidelines/guidelines.pdf](https://caru.org/guidelines/guidelines.pdf)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Better Business Bureau Standards for Charitable Accountability:  
[bbb.org/us/standards-for-charity-accountability/](https://bbb.org/us/standards-for-charity-accountability/)

Independent Sector Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice (account required to access):  
[independentsector.org/principles\\_guide\\_summary?s=Principles%2Guide](https://independentsector.org/principles_guide_summary?s=Principles%2Guide)

Donor Bill of Rights, as agreed upon by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP), the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Giving Institute:  
[nonprofitfederation.org/sites/default/files/webDonorBillofRights.pdf](https://nonprofitfederation.org/sites/default/files/webDonorBillofRights.pdf)

Standards for Excellence: An Ethics and Accountability Code for the Nonprofit Sector. Available through this site and others:  
[wvhub.org/standards-excellence-ethics-and-accountability-code-nonprofit-sector](https://wvhub.org/standards-excellence-ethics-and-accountability-code-nonprofit-sector)

DMA Nonprofit Federation: Ethical Guidelines for Fundraising & Other Nonprofit Communications:  
[nonprofitfederation.org/sites/default/files/DMANF%20Guidelines%20Annot\\_Cleaned\\_Feb%202012.pdf](https://nonprofitfederation.org/sites/default/files/DMANF%20Guidelines%20Annot_Cleaned_Feb%202012.pdf)