How to Help with Humanitarian Efforts in Israel and Gaza

Categories : Charity/Helping Others

With the conflict in the Middle East escalating, international aid groups are warning of a worsening humanitarian crisis in the region. With many lives already lost, and others wounded and displaced, there are several relief organizations that are already on the ground providing aid to those in the midst of the conflict.

HOW TO HELP

Experts say the best way to provide help to those in need is to donate to aid organizations that already have operations on the ground. Listed below are a few organizations that are assisting currently and accepting financial donations. Please note that monetary donations are the best way for the resources to get to those in need quickly.

MAKING A FINANCIAL DONATION

- ***Doctors Without Borders***: Support lifesaving care: Gaza Crisis: MSF's response to the Israel-Gaza war | Doctors Without Borders – USA
- ***International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) and the Red Crescent:*** Relief and Aid Assistance: IFRC Homepage
- ***International Rescue Committee (IRC)***: Ensure critical, life-saving humanitarian relief: International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- ***UNICEF USA***: Supplies and Assistance for Children caught in Conflict: https://www.unicefusa.org/
- ***World Central Kitchen***: Help in supplying nourishing meals to communities impacted by the conflict in Gaza and Israel. Donate here: https://wck.org/

CONTACTING LOVED ONES

- Individuals looking for a citizen in the affected region can contact the U.S. Department of State Office of Overseas Citizens Services at 1-888-407-4747.

AVOIDING SCAMS

To help individuals avoid scams and frauds after disasters, please note the following advice from the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection (CT DCP):

- **Do your research**: Before donating, use online resources like the Better Business Bureau, Wise Giving Alliance, Guidestar, Charity Navigator, and Charity Watch, which all provide information about non-profit organizations and charities.
- **Be cautious of "look alike" websites:** Websites will sometimes try and impersonate legitimate charities. Verify the URL in your browser before giving any money online. These fraudulent websites will often ask for personal financial information and may download harmful malware onto your computer. Don't assume that charity recommendations on Facebook or other social media sites are legitimate.
- **Ask questions**: Ask how your donation will be used. and ask the solicitor to be specific. If the answer is vague be wary.
- **Know who you are talking to**: If you receive an email 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. A legitimate charity will always give you time to verify its identity and do your research.

- **Don't be pressured**: Do not donate if the solicitor uses high-pressure tactics, asks for payment in cash, or insists on sending someone to pick up your donation.
- **Avoid paying in an untraceable form of payment**: Donate by check or credit card, not by wire transfer or cash.
- **Never give out personal information**: Never give out information such as your social security number or bank account numbers over the phone or internet, or to an untrusted source.

For more information or to file a complaint, contact the Department of Consumer Protection by emailing, dcp.complaints@ct.gov or visit, www.ct.gov/DCP/complaints. In addition, visit the Better Business Bureau website to report a scam or look up a scam at, http://bbb.org/scamtracker

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SOURCES: The International Committee of the Red Cross, CT Department of Consumer Protection, Global Giving, The Red Cross and the Red Crescent, World Central Kitchen, Doctors Without Borders, UNICEF USA, U.S. Department of State
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