

The Donor Bill of Rights—which has been endorsed by NCH Healthcare System, Inc. (NCH) — was created 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.

Read the Donor Bill of Rights

Philanthropy is based on voluntary action for the common good. It is a tradition of giving and sharing that is primary to the quality of life. To ensure that philanthropy merits the respect and trust of the general public, and that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in the nonprofit organizations and causes they are asked to support, we declare that all donors have these rights:

1. To be informed of the organization’s mission, of the way the organization intends to use donated resources, and of its capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes.
2. To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization’s governing board, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities.
3. To have access to the organization’s most recent financial statements.
4. To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given.
5. To receive appropriate acknowledgment and recognition.
6. To be assured that information about their donation is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.
7. To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature.
8. To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organization, or hired solicitors.
9. To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share.
10. To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful, and forthright answers.

Read the E-Donor Bill of Rights

Since the creation of the Donor Bill of Rights, the philanthropic landscape has changed dramatically. One critical change has been the growing use of technology to facilitate charitable giving, primarily through the internet. While the internet holds great potential as a charitable giving tool, it also creates new challenges—both for the donor and the charity. Because the internet is such a new medium for giving, best practices are just beginning to be identified, and many donors and charities are unsure as to their online rights and responsibilities.

The E-Donor Bill of Rights is intended to complement the original Donor Bill of Rights and provide further and more detailed guidance for the world of online giving. In addition to the rights outlined in the Donor Bill of Rights, online donors should demand the following of their online solicitors:

1. To be clearly and immediately informed of the organization's name, identity, nonprofit or for-profit status, mission, and purpose when first accessing the organization's website.
2. To have easy and clear access to alternative contact information other than through the website or email.
3. To be assured that all third-party logos, trademarks, trustmarks, and other identifying, sponsoring, and/or endorsing symbols displayed on the website are accurate, justified, up-to-date, and clearly explained.
4. To be informed of whether or not a contribution entitles the donor to a tax deduction, and of all limits on such deduction based on applicable laws.
5. To be assured that all online transactions and contributions occur through a safe, private, and secure system that protects the donor's personal information.
6. To be clearly informed if a contribution goes directly to the intended charity, or if it is held by or transferred through a third party.
7. To have easy and clear access to an organization's privacy policy posted on its website and be clearly and unambiguously informed about what information an organization is gathering about the donor and how that information will be used.
8. To be clearly informed of opportunities to opt out of data lists that are sold, shared, rented, or transferred to other organizations.
9. To not receive unsolicited communications or solicitations unless the donor has "opted in" to receive such materials.

Source: The Association of Fundraising Professionals