

Give Wisely Through Online Fundraising Campaigns

By [Council of Better Business Bureaus](#). February 1, 2019.



For many people, it's a natural instinct to want to help financially after a tragedy or natural disaster. Whether you are giving to an established charity or through a personal appeal, you can read BBB and Give.org tips for safe giving in those circumstances [here](#).

One growing avenue to giving is online fundraising through crowdfunding. Chances are you've seen the links on social media or in your email -- a variety of opportunities to give to survivors and victims' families and related causes. Most of them are well-meaning but, unfortunately, some are not. Scammers are on crowdfunding sites, and so are people with good intentions but no experience in managing charitable donations.

The largest online fundraising platform is [GoFundMe](#), a BBB Accredited Business. In the wake of recent natural disasters and tragedies, GoFundMe reminded donors that they are monitoring campaigns and that their [GoFundMe Guarantee](#) helps protect donations to make sure funds go to the right place. If funds are misused, they will refund affected donations. Donors and beneficiaries in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Spain, France, Italy and the Netherlands can submit claims through the site.

If you have a question or want to know more about a campaign before you donate, reach out to [the GoFundMe team](#) or campaign organizer. To reach the campaign organizer, just click on the envelope next to the campaign organizer's name on the campaign page. There is also a link on each campaign page to "Report Campaign" if you do not get answers to a question or have other concerns.

GoFundMe has created centralized hubs of campaigns for recent causes. If you are responding to a major disaster or tragedy, look to see if your campaign is listed on a hub page like one of these:

<https://www.gofundme.com/cause/oklahoma-wildfires>

<https://www.gofundme.com/cause/hawaii-floods>

<https://www.gofundme.com/cause/humboldt-broncos>

BBB serving the San Francisco Bay Area and Northern Coastal California contributed to this article.