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GOODWILL URGES DONORS TO GIVE TO LEGITIMATE CHARITIES

Long Beach, CA — The holiday season is one of the busiest times of the year for the donation of household items. It is also one of the busiest times of the year — period. As a result, many people look for the quickest, easiest way to donate their used goods. This can, unfortunately, have unintended consequences, such as boosting the income of a for-profit group rather than aiding a nonprofit, charitable organization.

Goodwill® urges consumers to double-check before donating goods this holiday season. First, donors should check with their state attorney general or secretary of state's office to find out if a charity is legitimate. Second, they should check with a charity-rating agency — such as [GuideStar](#) or [Charity Navigator](#) — or the [Better Business Bureau](#) to research specific charities.

“At Goodwill, we find that people want to do the right thing by donating gently used items. Sadly, in the rush of the holiday season, they sometimes drop their unwanted items at the nearest collection bin,” said Janet McCarthy, president and CEO of Goodwill Serving the people of Southern Los Angeles County (Goodwill SOLAC). “It may seem as if they are making a charitable donation, but that is not always the case.”

By checking with state authorities, individuals can quickly identify whether an organization is, in fact, registered as a legitimate charity. Rating agencies provide a wealth of information about charities, including how effective they are and whether their finances are in order.

Legitimate donation bins are clearly marked and explain the organization's mission.

On a practical level, individuals should be cautious of donation bins that don't clearly state the mission and contact information for the organization. While some bins are operated by genuine charities, many actually benefit for-profit organizations. More and more states nationwide are now requiring that unattended bins be clearly marked, but it is important for people to make informed choices about their donations.

“A good way to go is to give to charities you know and trust,” said McCarthy. “Fraudulent charities can try to trick you by using slightly changed names of established groups, so be sure to carefully read the name of the charity on the bin before giving. And avoid donating to organizations that can't immediately provide you with information about the causes they are asking you to support.”

Donations to Goodwill are sold in local stores and online. The revenues then fund job training programs and support services that enable people from all backgrounds to obtain and maintain economic independence and an increased quality of life. In 2018, 89 cents of every dollar earned at Goodwill SOLAC's stores funded job training programs, as well as job placement & retention services. By giving to Goodwill, donors are playing a vital role in helping people go to work.

Read more about Goodwill SOLAC at www.thinkgood.org.

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