Face-to-Face Fundraising Guidelines
Canada

Overview

Face-to-face fundraising is a commonly used term for the personal solicitation of committed gifts on the street, as well as house to house.

These guidelines provided by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) are intended to represent best practices.

The guidelines represent voluntary principles that apply to charitable organizations, non-governmental organizations, paid fundraisers and relevant third parties who utilize face-to-face fundraising as part of their fundraising activities.

These guidelines do not replace or override any laws or regulations. Charitable organizations, non-governmental organizations, paid fundraisers and relevant third parties should comply with all applicable local, state, municipal, provincial and federal civil and criminal laws. Where relevant, Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance should be met.

In the guidelines below, use of the word “ought” indicates a requirement that is mandatory for members and affiliated organizations of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and “should” connotes a best practice.

Organizations engaged in face-to-face fundraising should adhere to the AFP Code of Ethical Principles and Standards and the Imagine Canada Ethical Code.

Professional Conduct

*Appropriate behavior*

- Face-to-face fundraising ought:
  - Not to engage in activities that harm the members’ organizations, clients or professions.
  - Not to engage in activities that conflict with their fiduciary, ethical and legal obligations to their organizations, clients or profession.
  - To comply with all applicable local, state, provincial and federal civil and criminal laws.
  - To present products and/or services honestly and without misrepresentation.

- Face-to-face fundraising should:
  - Be undertaken in such a manner that appropriate training and procedures have been provided and are followed
o Be undertaken in a manner that will not bring the charitable organization or non-governmental organization into disrepute
o Conclude approaches politely and immediately upon request
o Not actively or knowingly solicit or accept donations from persons under the age of 18 who have not received guardian consent.
o Provide clear written, or verbal, information to the public about possible follow-up communications
o Never deliberately confuse, mislead or obstruct the public.

Information and site work
• Face-to-face fundraising should:
  o Be carried out by fundraisers who are displaying clear identification so that any potential donor can verify their identity, who they work for and on whose behalf they are fundraising
  o Provide potential donors with clear information about the cause and charitable organization or non-governmental organization that they are being asked to support, the need for funds and the importance of the long term nature of support
  o Not extend beyond or vary the content agreed to by the charitable organization or non-governmental organization
  o Only take place within the time and location agreed to by the charitable organization, non-governmental organization and/or project manager
  o Take account of any site requirements to ensure that public nuisance and congestion do not occur
  o Respect other commercial entities located at or near the site.

Communications
• Charitable organizations and non-governmental organizations ought to ensure that all solicitation and communication materials are accurate and correctly reflect their organizations’ mission and use of solicited funds.
• Fundraisers should reveal their form(s) of compensation if that information is requested by the public.

Financial stewardship
• Charitable organizations, non-governmental organizations, paid fundraisers and relevant third parties should:
  o Take care to ensure proper stewardship of all revenue sources, including timely reports on the use and management of such funds
  o Use accurate and consistent accounting methods that conform to the appropriate statutory and regulatory accounting requirements.
  o Institute zero tolerance for intentional misinformation and misrepresentations.
  o Ensure that charitable organizations and non-governmental organizations retain the right to audit fundraisers and relevant third parties.
Complaints

- If a charitable organization, non-governmental organization, paid fundraiser or relevant third party receives a complaint, they should ensure that a record of the name, address and telephone number of the complainant is taken and the complaint referred immediately to the project manager or the appropriate contact at the charitable organization or non-governmental organization with action initiated within two (2) business days.

Training

- Fundraisers should be at least 18 years of age (guardian’s notification is required for those under the age of 18).
- Police background checks should be conducted when hiring potential fundraisers.
- All fundraisers should be appropriately trained before engaging in any personal solicitation approaches.
- The charitable organization, the non-governmental organization or the designated project manager in charge of the fundraising activity should be responsible for the recruitment, training and adequate supervision of all fundraisers.
- Training should include, but is not limited to:
  - Explanation of the mission of the charitable organization or non-governmental organization and any support materials provided by that organization
  - Contact details of the charitable organization or non-governmental organization
  - Assurance that the fundraiser will not disclose any information relating to the charitable organization or non-governmental organization other than that previously agreed with the charitable organization or non-governmental organization
  - Emphasis on the respectful nature of all approaches
  - Procedures to avoid obstruction, congestion and nuisance to the public as subject to applicable laws
  - Immediate agreement to cease an approach in a polite manner at any stage during the course of the approach, when asked to do so
  - Immediate agreement to cease an approach if a “no solicitation” sign is present on the premises
  - Knowledge of the complaints procedure associated with the fundraising activity
  - Emphasis on the importance of visible identification badges
  - Knowledge and understanding of compliance regarding applicable laws
  - Explanation that pledges from a fundraiser’s family and friends will not be credited to a fundraiser
Site Allocation

- Fundraising activity should not be carried out unless the project manager is satisfied that access for the approaches has been agreed to by the relevant access authority(ies) (e.g., local authority, town centre manager, police, owners or owners’ representatives of private property, etc.).
- Charitable organizations, non-governmental organizations, paid fundraisers, relevant third parties, project managers and other relevant supervisors should take steps to ensure the safety of the fundraisers on site. (*Please see addendum regarding health and safety guidance). Charitable organizations, non-governmental organizations, paid fundraisers and relevant third parties should maintain the proper paperwork and permits for their chosen site.
- Wherever possible, site location should be identified by reference to a map, which should be maintained by the project manager either in the field or in the office and provided to the relevant access authority.
- Project managers should ensure:
  - The named identity, title and authority of a key contact within the appropriate access authority, and where possible, to have written notification from them
  - They have provided the access authority with a written request to undertake the fundraising activity which specifies:
    - The precise location of sites used for the fundraising activity
    - Dates and times when approaches will be made
    - That subsequent approaches to the donor may be ongoing
    - The name and contact details of the charitable organization or non-governmental organization undertaking the activity
    - The name and contact details of the project manager within the organization.
- When multiple groups utilize face-to-face fundraising at or near the same site, those charitable organizations, non-governmental organizations, paid fundraisers and relevant third parties should agree to cooperate to allocate sites fairly.

Data Protection

- Charitable organizations, non-governmental organizations, paid fundraisers and relevant third parties should protect the confidentiality of all privileged information relating to the provider/client relationships. Members should not disclose privileged or confidential information to unauthorized parties.
Charitable organizations, non-governmental organizations, paid fundraisers and relevant third parties should adhere to the principle that all donor and prospect information created by, or on behalf of, an organization or a client is the property of that organization or client and should not be transferred or utilized except on behalf of that organization or client.

Fundraisers and relevant third parties should not deal in, exploit or use in any manner whatsoever the donor and prospect information. Fundraisers and relevant third parties, on request from the charitable organization or non-governmental organization, will return or destroy this information to the charitable organization or non-governmental organization upon completion of the contract.

Contracts

Charitable organizations, non-governmental organizations, paid fundraisers and relevant third parties should:

- Establish the nature and purpose of any contractual relationship at the outset
- Comply with all fair and reasonable obligations created by the contract.
- Ensure that charitable organizations and non-governmental organizations retain the right to audit fundraisers and relevant third parties.

Compensation

Charitable organizations, non-governmental organizations, paid fundraisers and relevant third parties:

- Ought not to accept finder’s fees or contingent fees, commissions or percentage compensation and should not enter into a contract that is based on such forms of compensation.
- May accept performance-based compensation, such as bonuses, provided such bonuses are in accord with prevailing practices within their own organizations and are not based on a percentage of contributions.
- Ought not to pay finder’s fees, commissions or percentage compensation based on contributions.
- Should make financial statements concerning compensation available for audits.