What is the local Better Business Bureau’s Charity Review Service?

Established in 2002, the Charity Review Service is the donor information program of the Better Business Bureau Consumer Education Fund, an affiliate of the Better Business Bureau which serves Louisville, Western Kentucky, and the Southern Indiana region.

The mission of the Charity Review Service (CRS) is to promote public confidence in local charities and encourage charitable giving. CRS provides the public with information on specific charities and wise giving practices and also advises charities on how to meet and maintain high ethical standards of operation.

Each year CRS reviews financial statements, tax filings, annual reports, solicitations, direct mail pieces, and special event information of local charities. Based on this information, provided by the charity or obtained from other public sources, CRS determines if a charity meets the Better Business Bureau’s Standards for Charity Accountability. CRS then produces a report with its determination and summary of the charity's mission, activities, governance and key financial information. Charity reports are generally updated every two years. Each charity is also provided with the opportunity to review and comment on draft reports and to update their report in the interim year.

CRS reports are available on the local BBB website at www.bbb.org or by calling 502-588-0033. You may also request a copy of a report by sending a written request to: Charity Review Service, Better Business Bureau, 844 S. Fourth Street, Louisville, KY  40203.

CRS reports primarily on nonprofits that solicit donations from the general public, corporations and foundations. CRS does not routinely apply its Standards for Charity Accountability to those organizations that do not receive a substantial portion of their revenues from public support.

Charities are selected for coverage at their request or as a result of consumer inquiry. If your organization would like to become part of the CRS program, please contact the Bureau by calling at 502-588-0033 or in writing at the above address.

If you are a potential donor who has not located the charity you are interested in on our website, please feel free to contact us at 502-588-0033. We are always updating reports or adding new charities to the program. If we do not have a report on the charity, we will contact the organization and consider adding it to the program. The Bureau also provides general advice to consumers on wise giving practices.

The charity review process that is implemented locally was developed by the BBB Wise Giving Alliance which is the charity review affiliate of the national Council of Better Business Bureaus. The WGA reviews and reports on charities that conduct fund raising in a number of states and that operate programs that are national in scope. You can find additional background on charity review and access national reports on the WGA website at www.give.org or by contacting them at BBB Wise Giving Alliance, 4200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 800, Arlington, VA 22203 or by telephone at 703-276-0100.