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salvation army donation guide 2012

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Salvation Army Donation Guide 2012: A Complete Overview

When it comes to charitable giving, few organizations are as recognizable and trusted as The Salvation Army. In 2012, the organization released a comprehensive **Salvation Army donation guide 2012**to help donors understand how to give effectively, receive proper receipts, and maximize the impact of their contributions. Although the guide was published over a decade ago, its core principles remain relevant today. This article walks you through every element of the 2012 guide, from the types of donations accepted to the tax benefits of giving, and offers practical tips for donors who want to make the most of their generosity.

Why Choose The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army is a global humanitarian organization that provides disaster relief, food assistance, shelter, rehabilitation, and community services. Its mission is rooted in Christian values but welcomes donors of all faiths and backgrounds. Here are a few reasons why the Salvation Army remains a top choice for charitable giving:

- Transparent Use of Funds: The organization publishes audited financial reports and provides detailed breakdowns of how donations are spent.
- Wide Reach: With thousands of centers across the United States and in more than 70 countries, donors can help local communities while contributing to a global mission.
- Tax Deductibility: Contributions to The Salvation Army are typically tax-deductible in the United States, giving donors a financial incentive to give.
- Community Impact: From providing emergency housing to running thrift stores that fund programs, donations directly support vulnerable populations.

Overview of the 2012 Donation Guide

The **Salvation Army donation guide 2012**was designed to simplify the donation process for individuals, businesses, and institutions. It covers:

1. Types of donations accepted (cash, goods, services, and securities)
2. How to donate online or in person
3. Instructions for obtaining and storing receipts
4. Tax considerations and eligibility
5. Guidelines for large or corporate contributions
6. Frequently asked questions and troubleshooting tips

While the guide's layout may appear dated, the information it provides is still applicable. The Salvation Army's website and local branches have updated their donation methods, but the foundational principles—such as the importance of documentation and proper classification of gifts—remain unchanged.

Types of Donations Accepted

The 2012 guide categorizes donations into several key groups. Understanding these categories helps donors choose the most appropriate method and ensures the organization can use the gift efficiently.

Cash and Monetary Gifts

Cash is the most versatile donation type. It can be used for operational costs, emergency relief, or specific program funding. The guide recommends:

- Making checks payable to “The Salvation Army” or using the organization’s official bank account.
- Using credit or debit card payments through the official website or authorized payment processors.
- Providing a brief note indicating the intended purpose (e.g., “General Fund,” “Disaster Relief,” “Youth Programs”).

Goods and Merchandise

Non-cash donations include clothing, household items, furniture, and electronics. The 2012 guide advises donors to:

- Ensure items are clean, in good condition, and free of hazardous materials.
- Pack items in sturdy boxes or bags with clear labeling.
- Use the Salvation Army’s “Drop-Off” locations or schedule a pickup for large items.

Services and Time

Volunteer hours and professional services (e.g., legal advice, accounting, marketing) are valuable gifts. The guide encourages donors to:

- Register through the local chapter’s volunteer portal.
- Provide a brief description of the service and the time commitment.
- Coordinate with the organization’s staff to align the service with current needs.

Securities and Investments

Donors with substantial assets may consider donating stocks, bonds, or mutual funds. The 2012 guide outlines the steps:

- Contact the Salvation Army’s financial department to obtain a valuation.
- Transfer securities directly to the organization’s brokerage account.
- Receive a tax receipt that reflects the fair market value at the time of donation.

How to Donate: Step-by-Step Instructions

Whether you prefer online giving or in-person contributions, the guide provides clear, actionable steps. Below is a modernized version of the 2012 instructions, incorporating today’s digital tools while retaining the original intent.

Online Donations

1. Visit the Official Website: Navigate to salvationarmyusa.org and click on “Donate.”
2. Choose Donation Type: Select “Cash,” “Goods,” or “Services.” For cash, you can pay by credit card, PayPal, or direct bank transfer.
3. Enter Donation Details: Provide the amount, frequency (one-time or recurring), and any special instructions.
4. Submit Payment: Confirm the transaction. You will receive an electronic receipt via email.
5. Save the Receipt: Print or save the PDF for tax records.

In-Person Donations

1. Locate a Local Branch: Use the “Find a Center” tool on the website to find the nearest location.
2. Ask About Donation Options: Inquire whether they accept cash, goods, or volunteer time.
3. Provide Documentation: For cash or check donations, fill out a donation form. For goods, bring items to the drop-off area.

4. Receive a Receipt: Ask for a stamped receipt that lists the donation type, amount, and date.
5. Keep Records: Store the receipt in a safe place for tax purposes.

Donation Boxes and Thrift Stores

Many Salvation Army centers maintain donation boxes or thrift stores. The 2012 guide highlights the benefits of using these channels:

- Convenience: Drop items at any time during business hours.
- Transparency: Items sold in thrift stores directly fund programs.
- Community Engagement: Volunteering at a thrift store can complement a monetary donation.

Obtaining and Storing Receipts

Receipts are essential for tax deduction claims. The 2012 guide explains the process in detail:

For Cash and Checks

After a donation, the organization issues a receipt that includes:

- Donor's name and address
- Donation amount
- Date and location of donation
- Salvation Army's tax identification number
- Signature of authorized representative

For Goods and Merchandise

When donating items, the receipt will note:

- Description of items (e.g., "50 shirts, 30 jackets")
- Estimated fair market value (if provided)
- Condition of items
- Limitations on deductibility (e.g., only the value above $500 is deductible)

For Securities

The receipt will reflect the fair market value at the time of transfer. It is crucial to keep the original brokerage statement as well.

Tax Benefits and Considerations

One of the primary motivations for donating to The Salvation Army is the tax advantage. The 2012 guide outlines the key points:

- Deductibility: Donations of cash, goods, and securities are generally deductible on federal income tax returns.
- Limits: The total deduction for charitable contributions cannot exceed 50% of your adjusted gross income (AGI) for cash donations; 30% for property donations. Exceeding the limit requires a carryover to future tax years.
- Itemization: To claim a deduction, you must itemize deductions on Schedule A of your tax return.
- Documentation: Keep receipts, bank statements, and any correspondence for at least three years.
- Professional Advice: For large or complex donations, consult a tax professional to ensure compliance.

Tracking Your Donation's Impact

Transparency is a cornerstone of The Salvation Army's mission. The 2012 guide encourages donors to stay

informed about how their gifts are used. Here are several ways to track your donation's impact:

1. Monthly Newsletters: Subscribe to the local chapter's newsletter for updates on programs and success stories.
2. Annual Reports: Review the organization's annual financial report, available on the website.
3. Community Events: Attend events such as "Thank You" dinners or volunteer days to meet beneficiaries.
4. Online Dashboards: Some chapters offer online dashboards that display real-time data on program outcomes.

Donation Etiquette and Best Practices

Donors often wonder how to maximize the value of their contributions. The 2012 guide provides several etiquette tips:

- Ask Before Donating: Contact the local center to confirm they need the item or service.
- Check Conditions: Ensure items are clean, functional, and safe for resale or use.
- Be Mindful of Space: For large donations, schedule a pickup rather than dropping off.
- Respect Policies: Adhere to the organization's guidelines on donation types and values.
- Volunteer: Complement monetary donations with time to strengthen community ties.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I donate anonymously?

Yes. When making a cash donation, you can request a receipt without your name. For goods, you may provide a generic receipt. However, anonymity may limit the ability to claim tax deductions, as you will need to provide your name on the receipt.

What is the best way to donate large items like furniture?

The guide recommends scheduling a pickup or arranging a drop-off at a designated location. Many centers also partner with local moving services to facilitate large donations.

How do I claim a donation of securities?

Transfer the securities directly to the Salvation Army's brokerage account. Request a valuation letter from the organization. Keep the brokerage confirmation and valuation letter for tax purposes.

Is there a minimum donation amount?

No. The Salvation Army accepts donations of any size, whether it's a few dollars or thousands.

Conclusion

The Salvation Army donation

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