



Workplace Giving FAQ's

Q. What is Community Shares of Greater Cincinnati?

A. Community Shares was founded in 1986 as a response to the local United Way implementing a new grant strategy that left many local non-profits unable to participate in their workplace giving programs. A small group of people decided they would start their own workplace giving federation for causes working on social justice, economic equity, and a healthy environment. Today we continue to offer assistance to local non-profits who do not qualify to participate in traditional workplace giving federations so they are able to raise awareness and funding for their causes.

Q. How do organizations qualify for Community Shares funding?

A. Community Shares' member organizations must comply with a number of accountability requirements. They must provide programs and services to the community and show that they have a demonstrated base of support and community involvement. Funded charities must be recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization; submit annual financial information, including the IRS 990 and, if applicable, audits; be registered and file annually with the Ohio Attorney General's Office and be governed by a volunteer board of directors.

Q. What if our employees don't like some of your charities?

A. Community Shares is a diverse community of member organizations. Not everyone is going to personally support all the causes represented by any given umbrella organization. This is why we offer and emphasize that donors can choose which organization(s) they specifically wish to support through their payroll contribution or donors can choose to support all organizations. We highly encourage employee donors to choose the causes they care about most.

Q. Won't adding a Community Shares campaign take away funding from other federations?

A. Studies show that employers who offer choices in workplace giving see an increase in:

- Employee participation
- Total dollars raised

The more your colleagues know about workplace giving, the more they will give to all nonprofits, not just to Community Shares of Greater Cincinnati's nonprofits.

Q. Why should I give through Community Shares instead of directly to the member organization?

A. We do not want to discourage you from giving to organizations directly. Paycheck contribution is another way for you to support your community. Paycheck contributions work for many people because: 1) it's an easy system that works; 2) it may allow you to give more money because it is spread over a year's time; 3) it is an automatic process. One reason our charities like workplace giving campaigns is because they are a low-cost way to educate and inform the community at-large about programs and services and to recruit donors and volunteers. You support this concept by contributing through Community Shares.

Q. What is your administrative fee?

A. The percentage of workplace donations retained by Community Shares is 15%. This amount is determined by the Community Shares Board of Trustees. We encourage you to call or visit Community Shares or any of our member charities if you have questions or concerns about administrative fees. Community Shares utilizes volunteers from our member charities to cooperatively manage and govern Community Shares and keep costs as low as possible.

Q. Are my donations tax deductible?

A. Yes, all donations through paycheck contribution are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Community Shares and all of its members MUST be tax exempt 501(c)(3) organizations. Plus there are other advantages to payroll contribution:

- You can track your annual donations using just one form.
- It's a simple way to budget your donations each year.





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Q. Can I direct my gift to a member organization? Can I choose more than one?

A. Yes! The Community Shares of Greater Cincinnati campaign is “donor driven” -- donors choose the organizations they want to support with all or part of their gifts. Employees may choose one or more of our member organizations. If they want to have their gift divided among all of our member organizations, simply check the all boxes on our paper pledge form and your gift will be spread among the members of Community Shares.

Q. How often are donations distributed to Community Shares of Greater Cincinnati member organizations?

A. Community Shares of Greater Cincinnati distributes allocations quarterly to members based on the actual money that has been sent by workplaces. The amount given to each member charity varies from year to year based on donor designations, and the frequency that workplaces send checks to Community Shares.

Q. Is there a minimum donation amount? How much can I give per paycheck?

A. The minimum donation is \$1. You can give as much as you like since your total gift is collected over a per pay basis. Below is a list of average donation levels to show how small contributions can add up to larger donations to support Community Shares’ issues or causes. Scale is based on 26 pay periods. You may need to adjust the full donation amount based upon the number of pay periods at your workplace.

Dollar per pay	X 26 pay periods
\$1	\$26
\$2	\$52
\$3	\$78
\$4	\$104
\$5	\$130
\$6	\$156
\$7	\$182
\$8	\$208
\$9	\$234
\$10	\$260
\$15	\$390
\$20	\$520
\$25	\$650
\$50	\$1,300
\$75	\$1,950
\$100	\$2,600

Q. Can employees give online?

A. Absolutely! Our iPledge platform provides an online pledging option for your company’s employee giving campaign. Donors are able to make informed giving decisions with links to nonprofit websites at their fingertips. iPledge was designed for you, the workplace partner, making it easy to use and convenient to offer your employees the option to give. Clear directions guide them the entire way and special features make sure their money goes to the member charities they want to support.

Added benefits for your employees:

- iPledge keeps track of employee giving from year-to-year.
- iPledge stores a history of donation amounts and member charities previously supported, making it easy to retrieve information during tax season or to renew a donation.

Q. How can the online platform help our Campaign Coordinators?

A. Our iPledge platform provides tools for Coordinators so they have all the information to thank donors and follow-up with those that haven’t yet pledged without the need to gather paper pledge forms.

Q. Is the online platform secure?

A. Yes! iPledge uses 256 bit SSL encryption to keep your information safe. In addition, credit card information is not stored in the system. In order to make a new donation, employees have to re-enter their credit card information. Feel safe that their information remains with us through our donor privacy policy.