

Montana State Employee Charitable Giving Campaign – FAQs

1. What is the Giving Campaign all about?

The State Employee Charitable Giving Campaign (SECGC or Campaign) is the annual opportunity for all state employees to make donations to their favorite nonprofit organizations. The convenience offered through either payroll deduction or one-time contribution is its hallmark. Its purpose is to provide an easy way for state employees to give and support the nonprofits of their choosing.

2. How can I give?

Employees can give via payroll deduction, credit/debit, or e-check online at <https://charitablegiving.mt.gov> during the campaign. Employees may also use a paper pledge form that can also be found on the link above and turn it in to their Department Coordinator.

Each nonprofit organization in the campaign has a four-digit SECGC ID number associated with it. These IDs can be found in the click-and-give system when donating online as well as in the Giving Guide included on <https://charitablegiving.mt.gov>. You may designate your contribution to as many organizations as you choose. If designating to more than one nonprofit, please specify how much you would like to give to each organization. You may also leave your gift undesignated. In the case of an undesignated gift, the donation is allocated in the same proportion as all designated contributions. For example, if a nonprofit receives 1.2% of the designated gifts in the campaign, it will receive 1.2% of the undesignated dollars as well.

3. Do I have to participate?

Your participation in this campaign is completely voluntary. If you feel that you have been unduly pressured or coerced to participate in this campaign, please contact the SECGC Coordinator.

4. Are my gifts tax deductible—and when?

Donations made in the fall by cash, check, and credit or debit card are deductible when you do your taxes in the spring immediately following (example: a cash donation made in the fall 2024 is deductible with 2024 taxes filed in the spring of 2025).

Payroll deduction donations are deductible for the following calendar year (example: a payroll deduction pledge made in the fall of 2024 is deducted from your paychecks during calendar year 2025 and are deductible on your 2025 taxes filed in the spring of 2026).

The IRS requires that you keep your payroll stubs or electronic equivalent showing totals for IRS tax deductions.

5. How does payroll deduction work?

Payroll deductions will begin from the first paycheck in January following your pledge and end from the last paycheck in December of that calendar year. The minimum gift for payroll deduction is \$1 per pay period, and deductions will come out of 24 paychecks.

Deductions will not be taken during the 2 “free” pay periods that state employees have each year.

6. Can I change my donation?

If you have already pledged, but the same campaign is still open, you may change your donation in any way by contacting the SECGC Coordinator. After the close of the campaign, donation amounts or designated organizations cannot be changed. However, you may cancel your payroll deduction donation at any time by contacting your payroll department.

7. What happens if the organization I chose to give to shuts down during or immediately following the campaign?

Your gift will be distributed among the rest of the participating organizations in the same fashion that undesignated funds are distributed.

8. How much of my donation actually goes to the nonprofit?

The Advisory Council is deeply committed to keeping the costs of managing the Campaign as low as possible. Thanks to all the volunteers involved and generous assistance from the Department of Administration, our management costs

are typically 9 percent. We have one of the lowest state Campaign administrative costs in the country—and we strive to make them even lower!

9. What is informed giving?

SECGC promotes informed giving and charitable integrity. State employees are entitled to accurate information about the charitable organizations that seek their support. Charitable organizations approved to participate in the SECGC campaigns are pre-screened, high-quality nonprofit organizations.

10. How is the SECGC administered?

The operation of the SECGC is overseen by an Advisory Council with state employees from various agencies and nonprofit representatives. You can find the list of Advisory Council members linked on the SECGC home page at <https://charitablegiving.mt.gov>. You may contact them with your suggestions or questions.

The Fiscal Agent is responsible for all accounting functions, such as tracking and reporting expenses and revenue and distributing campaign proceeds. The Program Coordinator is responsible for developing communication materials, coordinating training programs, planning campaign events, collecting and distributing prizes, overseeing Department Coordinators, and supporting the effort of hundreds of volunteers throughout the state who make this drive possible.

11. Who decides which nonprofits are included in the Campaign?

Each year the nonprofits must apply to participate in the Campaign. The application period typically begins in mid-March and ends May 31. The Advisory Council and contractors carefully review all applications and ensures each nonprofit:

- Is located in Montana;
- is officially registered to conduct business in Montana with the Secretary of State's Office;
- is currently authorized by the IRS to receive tax-deductible donations; and
- spends the funds received through the SECGC in Montana.

We welcome as many Montana nonprofits to participate in the campaign as possible. If one of your favorites is not currently participating, let them know about the SECGC. Each spring we contact past participants as well as potential new participants who have shown interest in the campaign to let them know applications are available.

12. Why are prizes available, and how do I win one?

Prizes are donated by wonderful and generous sponsors of the SECGC. You can see a complete list of prizes and sponsors on the SECGC website (<https://charitablegiving.mt.gov>). These prizes are meant to keep the Campaign fun and exciting and to acknowledge the generosity of state employees! All donors giving any amount are eligible for ANY of the prizes.

Weekly prizes are given away every week starting the Monday following campaign kickoff and continuing for all weeks of the campaign. All donors who have submitted their electronic gift by 5 p.m. the previous Friday and paper pledge forms by 12 noon the previous Friday will be eligible for the weekly drawing.

Note: If you are eligible for the week 1 prize drawing, you will be entered into each of the following week's drawings as well until you win a prize. Those donating during week 2 are eligible for weeks 2-4, and so on. *Therefore, the earlier you donate, the more chances you have to win!*

13. May I provide prizes to the Campaign to demonstrate my support?

You bet! Ideas include gift certificates from family businesses, logo items, etc. Contact the Program Coordinator to do so. Thanks in advance for considering this donation!

14. Still have questions?

Contact your Department Coordinator or anyone on the Advisory Council (directory found at <https://charitablegiving.mt.gov>).