Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)

The mission of the CFC is to support and to promote philanthropy through a voluntary program that is employee-focused, cost-efficient and effective in providing all Federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all.

What is the CFC?
The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the only authorized solicitation of Federal employees in their workplaces on behalf of approved charitable organizations.

The CFC was created in 1961 to coordinate the fundraising efforts of various charitable organizations so that the Federal donor would only be solicited once in the workplace and have the opportunity to make charitable contributions through payroll deduction.

Federal employees continue to make the CFC the largest and most successful workplace philanthropic fundraiser in the world. Continuing a long-standing tradition of selfless giving, in 2015, Federal employees raised over $177 million dollars for charitable causes around the world.

Structure of the CFC
The CFC is made up of 125 local campaigns that organize the annual fundraising effort in Federal workplaces in the United States and abroad.

Each local campaign is managed by a Local Federal Coordinating Committee (LFCC), which serves as a “Board of Directors”. The LFCC is comprised of Federal employees and representatives of labor unions and is responsible for the oversight of the local CFC. In conformance with CFC regulations and policies, the LFCC makes admission determinations for local charities and selects a Principal Combined Fund Organization (PCFO) to administer the day-to-day operations of the campaign and to serve as its fiscal agent. LFCC and PCFO contact information can be found at www.opm.gov/cfc.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulates the CFC and provides guidance and oversight to the local campaigns (LFCCs and PCFOs).

Public Accountability
OPM is accountable for assuring Federal employees that their designations are honored and distributed to the charitable organizations of their choice. OPM achieves this in several ways:

1. OPM maintains eligibility and public accountability criteria that all participating CFC charities must meet. For details, see CFC Regulations in 5 CFR Part 950 at www.opm.gov/combined-federal-campaign/reference-materials/.

2. On an annual basis OPM makes admission decisions for all national and international charity applicants and resolves local charity admission appeals.

3. OPM sets strict requirements and provides on-going guidance for the activities and conduct of the
LFCC and the PCFO. The fiscal integrity of the campaign is verified by OPM compliance audits and the annual review of local campaign audits that PCFOs are required to have completed by an independent CPA.

The CFC Charity List
The Charity List is a paper or web-based display of national, international, and local organizations that have met CFC eligibility requirements. A sample charity listing is shown below with key elements shown in italics. Key elements include: the organization’s five-digit CFC code, the IRS Business Master File name shown in parentheses if it is “doing business as” another name, a 25-word statement of purpose (except in abbreviated listings), its administrative and fundraising expense rate (AFR), and its Service Categories (Taxonomy Codes).

Sample Charity Listing
11405 ABC Charity (Alpha-Charity) (800)555-5555 www.abccharity.org
EIN#123456789 ABC Charity attacks the causes of hunger and poverty by promoting effective and innovative community-based solutions that create self-reliance, economic justice, and food security. 15.8% P,S,K

Making Informed Giving Decisions
The EIN, AFR, and the Service Categories are included to help you identify organizations that meet your interests and performance standards.

The Employer Identification Number (EIN) is issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). It can be used for obtaining additional information about an organization from the IRS (877-829-5500). Please Note: Some organizations may be covered under an umbrella organization’s tax exemption status and EIN.

The Administrative and Fundraising Rate (AFR) represents the percentage of dollars spent on administering the charity. It is calculated as a percentage of the organization’s total support and revenue. Donors concerned about an excessive AFR should contact the organization and/or review its IRS Form 990, which is available to the public, for a complete explanation. Each situation is unique. Donors may contact the charity directly and/or industry oversight organizations in order to better understand the financial status, service delivery record, and governance policies of the charity before donating.

The Service Categories (Taxonomy Codes) categorize the types of services that most charitable organizations offer. Charities self-select up to three alphacodes (shown below) for inclusion in the CFC charity list. Charities that did not select at least one category are assigned “Z” for the “Other” category.

The 26 service categories are derived from the National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) classification system. This system, developed by the National Center for Charitable Statistics, is widely used in the non-profit community.

SERVICE CATEGORIES (TAXONOMY)
A Arts, Culture, and Humanities
B Education
C Environment
D Animal Related
E Health Care
F Mental Health & Crisis Intervention
G Voluntary Health Associations & Medical Disciplines
H Medical Research
I Crime & Legal Related
J Employment
K  Food, Agriculture & Nutrition  
L  Housing & Shelter  
M  Public Safety, Disaster Preparedness & Relief  
N  Recreation & Sports  
O  Youth Development  
P  Human Services  
Q  International, Foreign Affairs & National Security  
R  Civil Rights, Social Action & Advocacy  
S  Community Improvement & Capacity Building  
T  Philanthropy, Voluntarism & Grantmaking Foundations  
U  Science & Technology  
V  Social Science  
W  Public & Societal Benefit  
X  Religion-Related  
Y  Mutual & Membership Benefit  
Z  Unknown

For additional guidance on selecting charities, visit the CFC website at http://www.opm.gov/cfc/html/qfd.asp.

Can I Give To A Participating CFC Charity That Is Not Listed In My Local CFC Charity List?  
Yes. This is commonly referred to as CFC All-Around Giving. You can search through an online list of all charities available at www.opm.gov/cfc and/or your campaign’s online pledging system, where available. The CFC All-Around Giving list is available only electronically. You can make your pledge by entering the five-digit code on your local campaign region’s pledge form. Additionally, you can search for and make a pledge to any charity using electronic giving, where available.

Do I Have To Give Through The CFC?  
No. Participation in the CFC is strictly voluntary.

Coercion is forbidden. You have the right to not be improperly influenced regarding your decision to give or not to give through the CFC. Prohibited practices include, but are not limited to: supervisors soliciting the employees they supervise; setting 100% participation goals, providing and using donor lists for purposes other than the routine collection of contributions, establishing personal dollar goals and quotas, and developing and using lists to identify non-contributing employees.

If you prefer, you may donate to the CFC anonymously by placing your confidential gift in a sealed standard envelope.

Civilian employees may register complaints about coercion with the LFCC and contact their personnel offices; military or civilian personnel in the Department of Defense (DoD) should contact the LFCC or their commanding officers. If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, military personnel may also contact the DoD Washington Headquarters Services at (703) 601-0219.

Can I Specify Which Organization Will Receive My Contribution?  
Yes, the CFC is a donor-designated campaign. By designating the five-digit code of the charity of your choice, you ensure that your donation goes to meet the needs that you feel are most important. Simply designate the organization(s) of your choice where indicated on your pledge form by entering the five-digit code and the amount you wish to pledge. Additional designations may be completed on a second pledge form. Except for documented expenses for the operation of the local CFC and unfulfilled pledges, all contributions are distributed as designated.
There is no limit to the amount of contributions an organization may receive through the CFC. There is also no limit to the number of participating charities to which you may designate a contribution. To give to more organizations than can be added to the pledge form, complete additional pledge forms and staple them together. The top pledge form must contain the sum of all pledges.

You cannot designate to an organization that has not been approved for participation in the 2016 CFC. Adding organizations that do not appear in your local CFC Charity List or in the “CFC All-Around Giving Search Tool” at www.opm.gov/cfc, is prohibited by CFC regulations and donations to such organizations will be treated as undesignated funds. In addition, pledges made using anything other than the assigned five-digit codes cannot be honored and will be treated as undesignated funds. Undesignated funds are distributed to only those charities that receive donations and in the same proportion as they received designations.

What Are Federations and Independent Organizations?
A federation is a charitable organization that provides common fundraising, administrative, and management services to its member organizations. Member organizations may pay dues or fees to that federation as a service charge. Federations may deduct these dues/fees from CFC pledges prior to disbursement to member charities. Independent organizations are not members of a federation and participate in the CFC on their own.

For additional information on a particular federation and any dues/fees paid by its members, either contact the federation, its members, or review the federation’s annual report.

How Do I Designate A Federation, Or Alternatively, One Of Its Members, To Receive My Contribution?
If you wish to designate all or some portion of your contribution to a federation, please record that federation’s corresponding five-digit code number on your pledge form. The federation name will be listed at the top of the list of the federation’s member organizations. Contributions designated to a federation will be shared in accordance with the federation’s policy. If you wish to designate all or some portion of your contribution to an affiliated federation member organization, please record the affiliate organization’s corresponding five-digit code number on your pledge form.

How Do I Designate An Independent Organization To Receive My Contribution?
You may wish to designate to an independent organization that is not affiliated with a federation. Simply enter that organization’s five-digit code number on your pledge form.

What If I Choose Not To Specify An Organization Or Federation To Receive My CFC Contribution?
All funds contributed to the CFC that are not designated to a specific organization or federation are considered to be undesignated funds and distributed to all organizations listed in the CFC Charity List in the same proportion as they received designations. Organizations that do not receive designated dollars cannot
receive any portion of the undesignated distribution.

What Happens if the Organization I Select Goes Out of Business Before All Funds Have Been Disbursed?
The CFC will disburse funds to designated charities until it is notified that the organization is unable to accept any further funds due to closure. The remaining designation to the organization will be disbursed as undesignated funds.

What Is The International General Designation Option?
If you wish to have your contribution distributed proportionately among all international organizations that received designated gifts, you may do so by entering the five-digit code: 11111 on your pledge form.

What Is The Payroll Deduction Option?
Payroll deduction makes it convenient for you to give by spreading your contribution across the entire year. Last year, more than 70% of all CFC funds raised were made through payroll deduction. Payments on payroll deduction pledges begin on the first pay period beginning in January and conclude with the last pay period beginning in December. There is no simpler way for you to make a difference than to contribute using payroll deduction. Payroll deduction helps you care for your community and your world.

Will I Receive A Receipt For My Contribution?
You should keep a copy of your pledge form, as well as your pay statements (if you made a payroll deduction contribution), as a receipt of your pledge. A Federal employee who makes a one-time (cash, check, or money order) contribution must maintain a bank record and a copy of the pledge form to show the name of the organizations contributed to, the date of the contribution, and the amount of the contribution. Local campaigns can be found using the Campaign Locator search feature on the CFC website at www.opm.gov/cfc/Search/Locator.asp
You should consult a tax adviser to determine if additional verification of the donation is required by the IRS.

What Are The Costs Of The Campaign?
Local campaign costs vary among the 125 CFC regions. The average amount of expenses related to pledges in the 2015 campaign period (the most recently available) was 13%. These funds are required to print materials, train volunteers, audit contributions, and other administrative duties. All local campaign costs are reviewed and approved by the LFCC governing the local campaign. On average, this cost is low compared with other fundraising campaigns; therefore, donating to a charity through the CFC ensures every dollar you pledge goes a very long way toward helping others.

What Is On-line Pledging or E-Giving?
On-line pledging and E-giving, in general terms, mean that donors have the additional pledging tools of the charity list and pledge form available to them “on-line” or on the internet or intranet. Currently, several local campaigns offer on-line charity lists and secure pledge transactions through the Employee Express (EEX) and myPay
HR Systems. Other campaigns have web-based charity lists and downloadable pledge forms. This paperless process is one way CFC is striving to “go green”, and reduce administrative costs related to the processing of pledges.

Local campaigns can be found using the Campaign Locator search feature on the CFC website at http://www.opm.gov/cfc/Search/Locator.asp

Visit the CFC Homepage
For information about the CFC, including details on the public accountability standards for participating charities, how to contact your local CFC campaign, and more, visit the CFC Home Page at www.opm.gov/cfc.