



Philanthropy: A Check List for The Season and Beyond

We hope that our series so far has inspired you to find and follow your own philanthropic path. We have covered a lot of topics related to philanthropy, and we thought that a simple checklist of activities might help you along the way. This list is meant to inspire- so pick one or do them all. Tackle them this weekend or spread them over the next year. Each task, small though it may be, will help your community and, we hope, bring you great joy.

1. Call your favorite organization to see whether your skills are a good match for their volunteer program.
2. Call 211 Connecting Point or visit their [Volunteer Hub](#) to find out what volunteer opportunities are available in the community and find the right match for you.
3. Write a check to your favorite organization (and mail it). Let them know why you chose to give.
4. Set up a recurring gift to your favorite organizations by contacting the organizations or arranging automatic payments through your bank's bill pay system. Even \$5 or \$10 per month from many donors can have a significant impact, and you do not have to remember to do anything each month.
5. Check the beneficiary designation on your IRA or 401(k). Assess whether a tax-advantage distribution to a nonprofit is an option for you.
6. Make an appointment with your tax advisor to assess whether your current giving takes advantage of tax benefits that might be available to you. If you are taking mandatory distributions from an IRA, consider directing a portion directly to charity to avoid income tax.
7. Donate items that no longer serve you but still have a useful life to a local nonprofit's thrift store (please do not donate damaged or valueless items- the cost of disposing of unmarketable items can be a real problem for these stores).

8. Find out if the organizations you support have a giving wish list. Many organizations need donations of specific items from pet food to warm socks. Or visit the [CNL Nonprofit Wish List](#) to see what a gift of cash could support.
9. Write a letter of thanks to the staff of an organization that has impacted your life. You might just motivate someone on a difficult day.
10. Attend a Center for Nonprofit Leadership training ([CNLSierra.org](#)) to make you an even better volunteer, board member, or donor.
11. Shop locally to keep your money in the community.
12. Share your philanthropic story- whether of giving or receiving- to motivate those around you.
13. Complete a random act of kindness to benefit a friend, neighbor, stranger, animal in need, or the environment.

We wish you a joyful experience of giving and sharing.

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