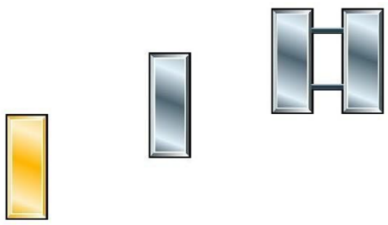
How-To Guide: Costco Charitable Giving for 501(c) Organizations

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Mission Statement: The Dept. of the Air Force Company Grade Officers' Council connects base councils globally to grow and develop leaders by leveraging Department of the Air Force resources to build a robust community of Lieutenants and Captains.

Purpose: *A practical guide to determining eligibility, preparing a request, and working with a local Costco warehouse*

Quick Start

- Confirm your organization is an IRS-recognized 501(c).
- Identify the Costco warehouse nearest to your organization or program.
- Have your IRS determination letter and EIN available.
- Costco Request Form
- Develop a specific, mission-related funding request rather than a general request for money.
- Submit the appropriate request to the local Costco warehouse and follow up according to the warehouse's process.

What You Will Need to Get Started

Local Costco warehouses may provide charitable donations in the **$50–$200 range**. This is an **estimated range, not a guaranteed Costco-wide amount**, and actual donations may vary by warehouse and request.

A local Costco warehouse: Identify the Costco location nearest the community, program, or because you are seeking to support. Warehouse donations are handled at the warehouse level.

501(c) determination letter: Have a copy of your IRS determination letter available. Costco's warehouse donation materials specifically request documentation establishing 501(c)(3) status.

EIN: Keep your organization's Employer Identification Number available for identification and documentation.

A clear organizational mission: Be prepared to explain who you serve, what your organization does, and how the requested support advances your mission.

A specific program or need: The strongest request is tied to a defined program, activity, or community need rather than a broad request for general operating funds.

Prepare Your Request

A concise request should answer five questions:

- Who are you? — Organization name, mission, 501(c) status, and EIN.
- Who do you serve? — Describe the population or community served.
- What are you doing? — Explain the specific program, event, or activity.
- What are you requesting? — State the dollar amount and intended use.
- What impact will it have? — Explain the measurable or practical benefit to the community.

Examples of How to Frame a Request

Use examples below as starting points only. The proposed use must fit Costco's current charitable guidelines, and the warehouse ultimately determines whether a request is eligible and appropriate.

Educational/recruiting outreach: Support an educational outreach or recruitment program that directly advances the organization's eligible educational mission.

Health and human services activity: Support a defined service or community program that directly benefits the population served.

Program materials: Cover mission-related materials or supplies needed to conduct an eligible program.

Important distinction: Costco's warehouse donation document lists several uses it does not fund, including parties/celebrations, raffles, athletic teams/events/sponsorships, merchandise for fundraisers or auctions, travel/transportation, capital campaigns, salaries, and certain other categories. Always check the current Costco guidance before submitting a request.

Submitting the Request

1. Complete the applicable Costco donation request form.
2. Include a concise explanation of the program and specific use of funds.
3. Print & attach the IRS determination letter.
4. Submit the request to the appropriate local Costco warehouse manager.
5. Bring documents to the customer service desk and they will be able to point to the correct POC
6. Keep a copy of everything submitted for your organization's records.

Timing & Follow-Up

Costco states that requests are accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis. For planned programs or events with specific dates, Costco recommends submitting the request at least one to two months in advance to allow time for consideration.

Costco also notes that warehouse donations are handled at the warehouse level and advises applicants to contact the warehouse where the request was submitted or where it will be submitted.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does Costco support any 501(c) organization?

Costco considers donation requests from eligible 501(c) nonprofit organizations that support children, education, health, and human services. Since the Company Grade Officer Councils mission meets the nonprofit eligibility requirement, bases should focus on demonstrating how their specific funding request benefits CGOs, military families, or the local community.

Important: Each base should verify that its proposed initiative aligns with Costco's local giving priorities. Eligibility as a nonprofit does not guarantee funding, and donation decisions may vary by warehouse location.

Can we apply more than once per year?

Costco states that it typically does not consider more than one donation request per organization per fiscal year, which runs September through August.

How far in advance should we apply?

For planned fundraising events or programs with specific dates, Costco recommends at least two months of lead time.

Does Costco provide gift cards?

Do not assume that a donation will be provided as a Costco Shop Card or gift card. Costco's current charitable-giving page describes eligible requests as monetary requests, while the warehouse handles the local donation process. Confirm the form of support directly with the warehouse.

Can we request merchandise for a fundraiser?

Costco's warehouse donation materials specifically list merchandise for fundraisers and auctions among uses it does not fund.

Can we request travel or transportation costs?

Costco's warehouse donation materials specifically list transportation and travel expenses among uses it does not fund.

How will we know if we are approved?

Costco indicates that applicants may receive a postcard, letter, phone call, or email regarding the status of a request. For warehouse donations, contact the local warehouse if you need application-specific information.

Do not frame the request simply as "money for a BBQ," "money for recruiting," or "money for a party." Instead, explain the eligible program, who benefits, what the expense supports, and the specific community impact. Costco's current guidance should always control if it conflicts with an example in this guide.

Official Costco Resources:

Costco Charitable Giving: https://www.costco.com/charitable-giving.html

Costco Charitable Giving FAQ: https://www.costco.com/charitable-giving-faq.html

Warehouse Donation Request Form (PDF):
https://www.costco.com/wcsstore/CostcoUSBCCatalogAssetStore/Attachment/Warehouse_Donation_Request_090214.pdf

Disclaimer

This guide is intended as a practical resource for nonprofit organizations and is not an official Costco publication. Costco's charitable-giving policies, eligibility requirements, forms, and local procedures may change. Organizations should review Costco's current official guidance and confirm requirements with the applicable Costco warehouse before submitting a request.