

Common questions

How do I leave a gift for an organization that's important to me? By leaving a gift to a not-for-profit organization in your will or estate plan, you ensure your assets continue to help others into the future. *Without a will, your property and finances are settled according to federal and provincial laws, which may not coincide with your wishes.*

I thought only people at a certain income level could leave a charitable bequest or gift through their estate. You don't necessarily have to be "wealthy" to plan a gift. Anyone can arrange to leave a charitable gift from their estate, regardless of its size. It can mean a great deal to a cause that's important to you.

Who can help me arrange for a gift to an organization? Your financial planner, lawyer, accountant, or life insurance expert can help you leave a gift. These professionals can tell you about tax benefits of planned gifts. You can also contact the specific not-for-profit organization for help.

How do I leave a gift in memory of a person or for a specific purpose? A charitable gift is a meaningful way to recognize someone who has made a difference in your life. You may also want to give to a specific cause like research or a new building. These kinds of memorial gifts can be arranged in your will – you need to specify that the gift be given in memory of a particular person or for a specific use.

Do I have to include my wish to leave a gift to a specific organization in my will? A charitable bequest will not take effect unless you state your intention in your will. Without a will, you lose control over your property after death. Your property and finances are settled according to federal and provincial laws, whether or not they coincide with your wishes or those of your family.

Do I tell the charitable organization I'm leaving a gift? That's up to you. Not-for-profit organizations often like to know in advance so they can recognize your generosity. They can also tell you about opportunities for giving for a specific purpose. If you wish your gift to remain anonymous, your request will be honoured.

For more information on the LEAVE A LEGACY™ program, contact:

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LEAVE A LEGACY™

A program of the Canadian Association of Gift Planners

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The best reasons to plan a gift

The majority of Canadians contribute to charitable organizations throughout their lives in some way or another. Few individuals or families, however, do it in a planned, well-thought-out manner.

A legacy gift is a living, active reminder of individuals and families who care about their communities and support causes that were important to them. Through a bequest in a will or other planned giving methods, donors can invest in organizations that make a difference in their lives and communities.

Surprisingly, a gift can also be a very practical addition to a financial or estate plan when tax issues are taken into consideration – even for those who think they may not have tax issues.

What is LEAVE A LEGACY™?

LEAVE A LEGACY™ is a national public awareness program that encourages Canadians from all walks of life to make gifts through a will, life insurance or other gift-planning instrument to the charitable organization of their choice.

A program of the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP-ACPDPT™), LEAVE A LEGACY™ is a collaborative effort of donors, charities, not-for-profits and professional advisors. The LEAVE A LEGACY™ program's goal is to raise awareness of the importance of thoughtful, well-planned, tax-preferred gifts and their impact on the quality of life for everyone in our communities. A legacy gift can benefit all not-for-profit groups large or small.

Any individual can plan a legacy gift, regardless of current assets or income. It provides the opportunity for individuals and families to support the causes they believe in, often in ways they might not be able to accomplish during their lives.

How to get started

Think about the charitable organization or cause you would most like to help. Maybe you or someone you know has benefited from the service of a particular organization. Maybe you're an active volunteer or believe in the mission and values of a specific group. You might want to leave a gift in memory of a loved one for a certain use.

Do your homework. Talk to the officers of the organization or group of your choice. They can tell you more about what they do, what opportunities are available for giving, and how your gift can allow them to continue their work.

Consult the appropriate professional advisors. Get the right expertise and advice to ensure the type and timing of your gift maximizes the advantages to you and the organization.

Talk to your family members. Make them aware of your intentions so they can support the achievement of your charitable goals.

PLANNED CHARITABLE GIVING
can help your own financial picture,
while helping others you care about.
If done properly, charitable giving
can benefit both the charitable
organization and you, the donor.



Planned giving options

In addition to the satisfaction that comes from contributing to the future of your favourite charitable organization, you can often achieve significant tax and estate planning benefits.

There are a number of options available. Your professional advisors can help you decide which option(s) will work best for you and your family.

Ways to leave your legacy

- Bequest
- Cash or securities
- Life insurance
- RRSPs or RRIFs (often a great tax advantage)
- Annuities
- Charitable remainder trusts
- Residual interest
- A gift in memory of a loved one
- Real estate
- A gift to honour someone
- Special occasion giving: to mark a wedding, Christmas, anniversary or birthday