

February/March 2013

## Tax Tips for Donors

### *What sort of volunteer or donation related expenses can I deduct?*

You can deduct your contributions only if you make them to a qualified organization. Most organizations, other than churches and governments, must apply to the IRS to become a qualified organization.

Deductible as charitable contributions are money or property you give to:

- Churches, synagogues, temples, mosques and other religious organizations
- Federal, state and local governments, if your contribution is solely for public purposes (for example, a gift to reduce the public debt or maintain a public park)
- Nonprofit schools and hospitals
- The Salvation Army, American Red Cross, CARE, Goodwill Industries, United Way, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, etc.
- War veterans' groups
- Expenses paid for a student living with you, sponsored by a qualified organization
- Out-of-pocket expenses when you serve a qualified organization as a volunteer

For a list of what's NOT tax deductible as charitable contributions, READ MORE weekly tax tips from Perry Webb, President of Charlotte-based accounting firm, Webtax.

[[www.foxcharlotte.com/news/top-stories/Tax-Tips-of-the-Week-February-11-2013-190670721.html](http://www.foxcharlotte.com/news/top-stories/Tax-Tips-of-the-Week-February-11-2013-190670721.html)]

## Goodwill Career Services *It's more than just a retail store*

Goodwill is the leading nonprofit provider of job training programs and career services in North America with 165 independent, community-based Goodwill agencies in the United States and Canada (as well as 14 affiliates in 13 other countries). Its goal is simple: to help people find and keep good jobs. And it does just that. Last year, Goodwill provided employment training and job placement services to more than 4.2 million people in the United States and Canada.

Here's how it works...

### **What happens when someone walks into a Goodwill looking for career services?**

Each Goodwill agency is independent and has its own specific procedures for people looking for jobs. Usually, someone on the workforce development staff or a career counselor will obtain background information, work experience, skills (such as computer or customer service skills) and job interests from the person who is seeking assistance. Based on that information, the person will be presented with the programs that fit his or her needs. Sometimes, Goodwill will have specific jobs in mind for that person.

The important thing to remember here is that Goodwill will customize a plan for these individuals, most of whom have limited employability, based on their interests, skills and education. Each individual will receive the necessary job training and support from Goodwill to be successful at his or her job, earn a paycheck, become self-sufficient and know the independence and dignity that work brings. Goodwill not only trains people for careers, but it also helps many to transition into new fields by teaching new skills.

### **In which industries does Goodwill help people find jobs?**

Goodwill provides people with job training, employment and support services in a variety of industries, including computer programming, manufacturing, construction and emerging industries, such as technology and health care.

Local Goodwill agencies build revenues and



*Last year, 79 million people donated to Goodwill and helped fund its career service programs, which yielded job placement for 4.2 million people.*

create thousands of jobs for people who otherwise might be unemployed by contracting with businesses and government to provide a wide range of commercial services. These include custodial, packaging and assembly, food service preparation, document imaging and shredding, grounds keeping, and administrative support. More evidence of the program's success: Every 38 seconds of every business day, a person served by Goodwill earns a good job.

### **How does Goodwill fund its programs?**

To pay for its programs, Goodwill sells donated clothes and other household items in more than 2,700 stores and online at [shopgoodwill.com](http://shopgoodwill.com). Goodwill uses the revenue earned from these sales to fund job training, employment placement services and other community programs. Goodwill Industries collectively reports \$4.4 billion revenues, and 82 percent of those revenues go directly toward supporting and growing critical community-based programs and services.

Source: Goodwill Industries International  
[[www.goodwill.org](http://www.goodwill.org)]

## Stay Healthy at Work

Staying healthy at work isn't always easy. With coworkers and customers sneezing and sniffing all around you, it may seem impossible! Follow these tips for this cold and flu season and try to stay healthy.

### Wash your hands—often.

Tip: Keep a bottle of hand sanitizer at your desk, for when you can't get to a sink.



### Keep your workspace clean.

Tip: Clean your phone, computer keyboard and anything else that you use frequently.

### Eat balanced meals every day.

Tip: Start each day with breakfast. People who eat breakfast are healthier and more likely to remain at a healthy weight.



### Drink 8 glasses of water a day.

Tip: Keep a water bottle with you and drink throughout the day. You will probably get what you need.

### Take frequent breaks throughout the day—but skip the cigarette break.

Tip: Stretch at your desk, walk or take the stairs, but leave the cigarettes at home. Better still, just quit smoking altogether.



## The Workplace Helpline Reviews *What to do with sick employees*

We are not aware of any reason why an employer cannot seek to send home an employee who reports to work obviously and visibly ill if management reasonably believes that the health and safety of that or other employees may be at risk. Under federal and state occupational safety and health laws, employers have a duty to ensure the work environment is safe and healthy, and this would presumably include taking measures to ensure that employees who report to work obviously ill and possibly contagious are asked to leave the premises so as not to risk infecting co-workers, and/or to not return to work without a fitness for duty certificate from their doctor (if this is consistent with company policy).

Admittedly, there may be variances in the application of a policy to send home sick employees if each manager or supervisor has discretion to determine whether an employee is too ill to be at work or otherwise a risk to the health or safety of others. In this regard, managers and supervisors should be given basic instructions and parameters regarding application of the policy to ensure it is applied as

consistently as possible throughout the organization.

Note when an employee is reasonably sent home from work, then if the employer has a PTO or sick leave policy that provides payment to employees who are out sick, we are not aware of any reason why it could not require use of the policy in this situation (unless there is a governing contract, regulation or policy to the contrary). Also we are not aware of any law which prohibits sending an employee home as explained above even if the employee has no PTO or sick time. There is no duty to pay a non-exempt employee for time away from work if he or she has no accrued paid time off benefits (including sick leave) to utilize. Exempt employees must be paid in full for any partial day worked, even if there are no sick leave or other paid time off benefits, and this would include any day he or she is sent home early.

Source: CPS HR Risk Management HELPLINE, [www.hrhelpline.com/cps](http://www.hrhelpline.com/cps), February 2013 © 2013 Gordon & Rees, All Rights Reserved



## Watch Out! Slips, Trips and Falls are the #1 cause of employee injury!

Most of these injuries are preventable...Review your loss reports and identify the causes of Slips, Trips and Falls



Help Prevent Slip, Trip and Fall injuries:

- Proper Housekeeping in work and walking areas
- Keeping these areas free of obstacles
- Regular inspection of working and walking areas
- Identify environmental and equipment hazards



CareProviders  
Insurance Services

Priscilla Archer: 800-761-7072 x 1313  
Or email [PArcher@nsminc.com](mailto:PArcher@nsminc.com)

## Walking Surfaces Pose Greatest Slip, Trip and Fall Risk *An STF primer from Arch Insurance Group*

Three factors contribute to slips, trips and falls (STFs): The walking surface, the individual's shoe, and the physical condition of the individual. While footwear can often create slip and fall hazards due to sole and heel material, design or condition, it is usually the walking surface that is viewed as having the greatest slip hazard. Let's take a closer look at this STF risk factor.

When assessing STF risk, ask yourself:

1. What is the coefficient of friction\* of the walking surface? In other words, what is the slip resistance of the walking surface vs. the individual's shoe sole/heel?
2. Are foreign substances, such as water, trash, food or ice, present on the surface?
3. What is the condition or state of repair of the walking surface? (e.g., Are sections missing or damaged? Does the elevation change?)

If a hazard is identified or reported, warnings should be posted until the hazard is eliminated. Areas to post warning signs or safety cones include those where

- leaks, spills, and liquid or foreign matter accumulations are known to routinely occur.
- walking surfaces are wet or are being mopped/waxed/cleaned.
- walking surfaces and entryways become dangerous during inclement weather.
- the elevation changes, including curbs and car stops.
- large potholes and cracks in parking lots pose risk.

### When accidents happen

In the event that an STF occurs on your premises:

- Show concern and empathy. Many situations can be diffused through the practice of good customer relations.
- Do not accept or reject liability.
- Make and record observations related to the incident. *When and where did the STF occur? Is s/he a visitor, customer, employee or tenant. Is s/he familiar with the premises? Could weather conditions or lighting have contributed to the STF? Are any warnings in place? Who maintains the area? Are inspections documented?*
- Do not draw conclusions or make judgments. Stick to factual observations.



*\*For more on coefficient of friction ratios or to review the full report Liability Loss Control Management: Slips and Falls on Walking Surfaces, from Arch Insurance Group, click here. [URL TO COME]*

## Reduce Exposure to Slips, Trips and Falls

According to the U. S. Department of Labor, slips, trips and falls (STFs) constitute the majority of general industry mishaps. This particular category of mishaps causes 15 percent of all accidental deaths and is second only to motor vehicles as a cause of fatalities. Likewise in covered state agencies, STFs are among the most frequent type of reported injuries and have so far averaged approximately 25 percent of reported claims in any given fiscal year. Based on in-depth investigations and detailed analysis of reported claims, many of them could have been prevented.

Ice, wet spots, grease, polished floors, loose flooring or carpeting, uneven walking surfaces, clutter, electrical cords, and even open desk drawers and filing cabinets can cause STFs. Be proactive and take action to reduce these hazards by keeping walkways and stairs clear of scrap and debris; coiling up extension cords, lines and hoses when not in use; keeping electrical and other wires out of the way; wearing lug soles in icy weather; clearing parking lots, stairs and walkways in snowy weather; and using salt/sand as needed.

Sources: State Office of Risk Management [[www.sorm.state.tx.us/training2/SlipsTripsFalls/intro.htm](http://www.sorm.state.tx.us/training2/SlipsTripsFalls/intro.htm)] and Occupational Safety and Health Administration [[www.osha.gov/SLTC/walkingworkingsurfaces/index.html](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/walkingworkingsurfaces/index.html)]