**How does SECC (State Employees Charitable Campaign) work?**

Each fall, state employees have the opportunity to learn about the charities in the SECC, choose which ones they want to help, and then fill out a pledge form to indicate how much they wish to donate to which groups. This can be through a one-time gift by cash or check or via payroll deduct.

The campaign runs from September through October and deductions begin in January.

**What charities are involved?**

The charities that participate in the campaign range from small local organizations to large and well-known national and international groups.

Those charities that wish to participate must meet stringent legal requirements and must submit annual applications. These, and then be scrutinized by teams of state employees to ensure:

* They are recognized by the IRS as 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and registered with the Secretary of State.
* They are audited (or reviewed) annually by an accountant in accordance with generally-accepted auditing standards.
* They provide direct or indirect health and human services.
* They spend no more than 25 percent of funds raised on administration and fund raising unless they qualify for an exception due to special circumstances.

**Local Federation**

A local charitable organization is defined as a charitable organization that:

* provides direct or indirect health and human services and is accessible to state employees in the local campaign area by maintaining: (i) a publicly identified office with a professional or volunteer staff within the local campaign area that is open at least 20 hours a week during normal working hours; and (ii)  a locally listed telephone number.

Local independent charities and local organizations as part of a federation may apply directly to their respective [local campaign manager](http://www.secctexas.org/contact/local_campaign_managers).

**Why isn't a favorite charity listed in the directory of charities?**

Federations and charities listed in the brochure meet high standards in order to be listed. These standards are intended to protect the donor.

The Texas Legislature created eligibility criteria by which charities and federations can be listed in the SECC brochure. In some instances, when a charity applies to either the Local Employee Committee or the State Policy Committee, the eligibility criteria are not met. An eligibility appeals process exists to resolve discrepancies.

There are two reasons why a charity might not be listed in the directory of charities:

* The charity may not have applied for eligibility to your area's Local Employee Committee or may not have applied as part of an eligible Statewide Federation in that group's eligibility application to the State Policy Committee.
* The charity did apply for eligibility but the application was not approved by either the Local Employee Committee and/or the State Policy Committee.

**Who governs the SECC?**

Committees of state employees govern the SECC at two levels — statewide and locally. They ensure the campaign is conducted fairly and equitably under a strict set of guidelines that give donors confidence in both the charities that benefit and the methods used to solicit.

At the state level, a committee of state employees called the State Policy Committee provides governance and oversight. Four members are appointed by the Governor and three each by the Lieutenant Governor and the Comptroller of Public Accounts. They are responsible for a campaign plan, a budget and ensuring the eligibility of statewide organizations. The SPC also hires a State Campaign Manager to administer the campaign.

At the local level, Local Employee Committees (LECs) provide similar oversight. The SPC appoints the LEC chair, which then recruits a local committee of up to 10 members. They hire a local campaign manager to administer the campaign locally.

**How are funds distributed?**

Contributions made by state agency employees are distributed by the State Comptroller to participating federations, who then send the funds along to their members. At the local level, the Local Campaign Managers distribute the funds the same way. Undesignated pledges are shared with all participating charities using the same percentage.