

## Giving Hearts Day 2026 Eligibility Criteria

Giving Hearts Day (GHD) has become a social movement and wellspring of generosity throughout North Dakota and northwest Minnesota by creating an annual day for charities to collect not only donations but also goods and pledges for volunteers. Having a sound set of policies and criteria is important in helping to grow Giving Hearts Day not only in terms of funds raised but also in terms of cultivating a sense of confidence and support from the community. Below are two Giving Hearts Day 2026 eligibility checklists for all participating nonprofits. We encourage you to reach out to [GHDInfo@dakmed.org](mailto:GHDInfo@dakmed.org) with any questions regarding your organization's eligibility or expectations. The team would be happy to discuss what it means to be a successful Giving Hearts Day Charity.

### Participation Checklist (required)

- Be a 501(c)(3) **IRS tax-exempt** organization in good standing
- Complete a **GHD application** by the deadline of Friday, Aug. 15, 2025
- Review and sign off on the Dakota Medical Foundation (DMF) Giving Hearts Day Policies as part of the application process
- Have an active **Giving Hearts Day Subscription** (\$825 must be fully paid by Aug. 29, 2025)

### Participation Checklist (recommended)

*Please note that meeting all eligibility criteria does not automatically guarantee acceptance, and missing any single criterion is not always an automatic disqualifier, exceptions may apply.*

- A High Impact nonprofit organization should have the following in place to ensure maximum effectiveness:
  - Annual board of directors review of your organization's strategic and/or operating plan
  - Annual executive director performance review
  - Regular review of the organization's budget and financials by the board of directors
  - Annual independent financial audit performed and available for public inspection
  - Maintenance and operation of bylaws and articles of incorporation
- Have a **significant local presence**, active programming within North Dakota and/or northwest Minnesota, local governing control, and attest that 100 percent of the money raised will be used locally\*
- Have at least **one paid staff** position
- Have an annual **operating budget of \$100,000 or more**
- Have **raised a minimum of \$3,000** on Giving Hearts Day 2025 (applicable only to returning charities)

### Important Info for Giving Hearts Day 2026

- Each year, GHD grows in size and substance. We strive to offer valuable training and technical assistance while also being able to maintain a personal relationship with all the participating nonprofits. **For us to be able to do this as effectively as possible, all applications must be received by Friday, Aug. 15, 2025.**
- Any new applications or inquiries received after Friday, Aug. 15, 2025, will be added to our contact list for Giving Hearts Day 2027.
- A Giving Hearts Day 2026 Subscription is \$825. That fee will increase to \$925 if received after Friday, August 29, 2025.
- New charities must attend GHD Orientation Training in person or virtually by August 21, 2025.
- All Giving Hearts Day 2026 participants are required to secure and report a minimum of \$3,000 in self-raised match funding from an external funding source(s) by Monday, Jan. 26, 2026.
- As with any donor, DMF reserves the right to determine how GHD awards and incentive dollars will be used.

*\*Limited exceptions may be made for organizations located in North Dakota or northwest Minnesota that have local governing control but invest their resources outside of this service area.*



## Dakota Medical Foundation Giving Hearts Day Policies

Dakota Medical Foundation (DMF) and Impact Foundation are honored to partner and co-host Giving Hearts Day (GHD). Each year, GHD grows in size and substance, including more than 600 charities that have raised \$226 million since 2008. With that growth, we have a responsibility to our partner organizations to communicate clear policies and guidelines around event participation and distribution of funds. Any questions can be directed to [GHDInfo@dakmed.org](mailto:GHDInfo@dakmed.org).

### I. Giving Hearts Day 2026 Overview

- **Deadlines:** We make every effort to communicate upcoming deadlines. With more than 600 charities expected to participate this year, we ask that you make every effort to meet these deadlines.
- **Participation:** The GHD criteria can be found at [GivingHeartsDay.org](http://GivingHeartsDay.org). Please note that meeting all eligibility criteria does not automatically guarantee acceptance, and missing any single criterion is not always an automatic disqualifier. Please review the full participation eligibility policy below in section II for more information.
- **Match:** All Giving Hearts Day 2025 participants are required to secure a minimum of \$3,000 in self-raised match from an external funding source(s). Most organizations raise more than \$3,000 in matching funds, which contributes to their overall growth and ability to deliver on their respective charters. Due to the number of charity participants DMF does not offer matching funds to all GHD participants.
- **Awards & Incentives:** DMF and all GHD sponsors and partners reserve the right to determine how its award and incentive dollars will be used. Please review the full funding eligibility policy in section II below for more information. The annual budget for each nonprofit will be verified for budget-based award winners.
- **Subscription Payment:** The subscription fee of \$825 is due Friday, August 29, 2025. Payments made after that will increase to \$925. If your organization decides not to participate prior to February 12, 2026, half of the price of the subscription payment is eligible to be refunded.

### II. Participation Eligibility and Funding Eligibility

#### Participation Eligibility

While any regional nonprofit is welcome to apply for participation, we reserve the right to decline a charity's application if their participation could become a distraction to Giving Hearts Day's ultimate goal, which is to unite the community in a single day of hope and generosity.

While not comprehensive, the following is a list of examples of what we would consider to be potential distractions:

- Charity has a track record of not completing the GHD pathway (missed deadlines, unresponsive to communications, failed to raise minimum match, etc.)
- Misreporting of match, early gifts, and day-of giving fundraising totals
- Failure to report check entries for verification
- Charity's participation could become a divisive political statement

### **Funding Eligibility**

If a participating nonprofit provides services that conflict with the DMF charter's mission as a hospital, it is ineligible for Giving Hearts Day award money, both performance-based and otherwise.

### **III. Community Fund and Place-of-Worship Guidelines and Fiscal Sponsor Programs**

DMF and Impact Foundation's aim is to support all nonprofit partners and the communities they serve. We recognize that, at times, our community fund and place-of-worship partners support our nonprofit partners and their programs to be successful. Generally, intermediaries are not accepted for GHD participation, although limited exceptions are made for programs of community funds and places of worship that provide a specific service that improves health and quality of life in the region.

These organizations are required to select a specific program of focus for funds raised during GHD participation.

Here are a few examples of specific programs:

- A school or childcare center
- A food pantry
- Programming for mental health or addiction

What does not constitute a specific program:

- General operations and programming

After approval, the selected program will be promoted on GivingHeartsDay.org (in the organization's profile) and may be promoted in Giving Hearts Day marketing materials.

Fiscal sponsor programs are generally not eligible to participate in GHD. Each organization must carry its own 501(c)(3) status.

### **IV. Permissible Funds That Count Toward Your Official Giving Hearts Day Total**

#### **Eligible Donations**

The following donations qualify for awards, incentives, and prizes on GHD:

1. Checks from individuals and businesses intended to be a Giving Hearts Day gift.
  - a. **Match Gifts** – Should be received by your organization between October 1, 2025 – January 26, 2026.
  - b. **Early Giving & Day-Of Checks** - These checks must be dated January 1 – February 12, 2026.
2. Donations received online through the GivingHeartsDay.org site as an early gift or on the day

3. Grants received and distributed by DMF
4. Incentives and door prizes granted by DMF
5. Grants received with the intent of the funder being used for the organization's operations and to be counted as a GHD donation
6. Cryptocurrency is eligible but must be liquidated to cash and in the possession of the member organization on GHD

### **Ineligible Donations**

The following donations do not qualify participating organizations for awards, incentives, and prizes on Giving Hearts Day:

1. Funding received with the clear purpose of being redistributed to other organizations
2. Gifts received from a subsidiary of your nonprofit
3. Gifts received after GHD

### **V. Processing of Funds and Award Payments on Giving Hearts Day**

All participating organizations receive online donations through our payment processing system, Stripe. DMF does not store or save any credit card information.

Generally, checks are written to and received by the individual charity participants. In the instance that DMF receives checks at our facility, they are processed by staff and volunteers on your behalf.

All donations come in the form of incentives, business donations, and individual check entries. All monies designated toward a nonprofit and passed through DMF or Impact Foundation will be distributed during our auditing process within 90 days following Giving Hearts Day, February 12, 2026.

Incentives and awards will only be distributed to nonprofits upon the receipt of proper verification of check and match entries.

In the unfortunate event that a donation entry error is made that results in a larger donation than the donor intended, DMF and Impact Foundation will not be held financially responsible for said clerical error.