

Telephone Campaigns FAQs

The Fire Fighters Charity offers specialist lifelong support for members of the UK fire services community, empowering individuals to achieve mental, physical, and social wellbeing throughout their lives.

Our vision is to make a positive difference by supporting people in the fire and rescue community when they are in need.

1. Why does The Fire Fighters Charity carry out telephone fundraising?

We offer mental, physical, and social wellbeing support to serving and retired members of the fire and rescue community. Ensuring they have access to the right support, provided in the right way, and at the right time is the cornerstone on which our support philosophy. We know that everybody is different, that no two injuries are the same and that no two people may be affected in the same way by incidents they experience. So we treat every one of our beneficiaries as individuals, taking time to fully understand their mental, physical and social needs.

It costs £10m every year to meet the needs of our beneficiaries, and with no regular government funding, we are completely reliant upon donations from the general public and the fire and rescue community. In order for us to improve our services year on year, it is vital for us to have a reliable source of income that we can depend on.

Telephone fundraising is a cost-effective way for us to engage with our supporters. It enables us to ask for support by direct debit, which helps us to ensure long-term funding for our Charity. We have been successfully talking to existing and potential supporters by telephone since 2005 and the long-term security of these donations gives us the ability to plan ahead and use our money as effectively as possible. We don't do any cold calling and all of the people we call will have had an interaction with The Fire Fighters Charity at some point.

2. Who are you calling?

We contact people who have stopped their monthly regular donation. We have found that many of the people we talk to are happy to support us again with a regular donation. We also regularly contact beneficiaries who have accessed our services or have visited us on a rental break, but do not currently give a regular donation. We find that many beneficiaries who have visited a centre and see what we do are happy to start supporting us with a monthly direct debit.

We also contact our regular donors to ask them if they would consider increasing their donation which ensures the long-term funding of the Charity and allow us to plan for growth. Having this predictable regular income allows us to plan ahead and continue to make improvements to the support that we provide.

3. Why donate to the Fire Fighters Charity?

Any amount you can afford helps us to provide practical assistance and solutions to make a real difference to the lives of members of the fire service community. Here are just a few examples of the benefits your donation can provide....

- £8** a month via our Regular Giving scheme allows us to take advantage of the Government's Gift Aid policy, so we can claim an extra 25% (£2.00) at no cost to you or to the charity
- £10** will help to deliver a one to one hydrotherapy session for one beneficiary
- £30** provides a one to one physiotherapy session
- £50** helps to provide overnight accommodation for family visiting relatives in hospital
- £100** can pay for a piece of specialist rehabilitation equipment at one of our centres

4. Do you do this through a telemarketing agency?

Yes, we work with an experienced and established telephone fundraising agency called Ethicall, who employ fully trained and supervised fundraisers. Ethicall work on our campaigns throughout the year raising funds on our behalf. Using an agency allows us to contact hundreds of our supporters every year at a low cost, which makes this a very cost-efficient way of fundraising.

We take great care to make sure all our fundraisers are trained to be as knowledgeable as possible and understand the work that we do. They receive regular training sessions from us to update them on our work. We are looking at including volunteers (Service Co-ordinators) in this training process and as part of the feedback process in the future to ensure that the fire service community is truly understood by the fundraisers. As well as training, they receive our newsletters throughout the year. We take pride in the quality, experience and enthusiasm of our telephone fundraisers and go to great lengths to ensure they are well-trained ambassadors for The Fire Fighters Charity.

5. Are your fundraisers paid?

Yes, our professional fundraisers are paid a wage to fundraise on our behalf. They are always paid a set hourly rate and are not working on a commission model. We do this to try to ensure that our fundraisers are motivated by our cause and not by the monetary incentive of working for commission. We are very careful to make people feel reassured – our fundraisers are not given personal financial targets. We also follow strict codes of practice set out by the Fundraising Regulator.

We only use paid fundraisers where we are sure we will receive a profitable return on our investment. This means that the cost of paying the fundraiser is outweighed by the number of donations we receive, ensuring this is an effective way to raise funds.

6. Some people do not like this type of fundraising. How can I be sure it is being done properly and people are not being pestered into making a donation?

As mentioned in point 4, we use an experienced telephone fundraising agency who adheres to strict quality control criteria. We operate a rigorous complaints procedure to ensure any instances of over-zealous callers are fully investigated. Many telephone calls are recorded, and we have gone further than the industry norm and stop calling at 8pm in the evening rather than 9pm. One of the advantages of using the telephone is that we can have conversations with our supporters, find out more information from them and sign post them to other ways of supporting the Charity or accessing our services.

7. Who can I contact about your fundraisers?

Fundraising via the telephone is a fantastic and cost-effective way for us to speak to our supporters, and we are grateful to everyone who takes the time to speak to us. But we do understand that not everybody likes to be called at home, and if you do not wish to be contacted in this way just let us know by contacting our Customer Care team on: 01256 366566 or by email: on customercare@firefighterscharity.org.uk.