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Position statement No 2

PFRA welcomes changes to F2F fundraising code of practice around Cold Calling Control Zones

The Public Fundraising Regulatory Association is pleased to welcome the Institute of Fundraising's revised code of practice on Face-to-Face Fundraising and its associated guidance on Cold Calling Control Zones (CCCZ).

The main change to the code relates to fundraising in CCCZs and sets out a four-step process that charities conducting all types of door-to-door fundraising (including cash and lottery sales – which are not regulated by the PFRA – as well as direct debits – which PFRA does regulate) must abide by.

1. Fundraisers 'ought' to check if fundraising is permitted in a CCCZ before they visit
2. If it is not they 'should' check with local trading standards officers whether it has been set up according to the 'spirit' of Trading Standards Institute (TSI) guidance* on CCCZs
3. If a CCCZ has been set up legitimately, fundraisers 'ought' not call
4. If a CCCZ has not been set up according to TSI guidance, or fundraisers are unable to obtain sufficient information from local trading standards, fundraisers may cold call in that CCCZ but 'should' carry out a reputational risk assessment first.

The code of practice also says that charities 'should' develop an approved policy on fundraising in CCCZs.

[In the context of an IoF code of practice, 'ought' signifies something that is mandatory for IoF members, whereas 'should' signifies something that is best practice but not mandatory.]

PFRA endorses these revisions, which reflect guidance that PFRA issued to its members in February 2007. This recommended that members always ask council licensing departments whether there is a CCCZ in operation for the areas for which they are seeking a licence. In the 2007 guidance, PFRA also advised its members that, as CCCZs are not legally enforceable, fundraisers are within their legal rights to enter a CCCZ. However, we also said that if a CCCZ had been set up "correctly" – i.e. according to TSI guidance – then members should "seriously consider" observing the CCCZ for operational reasons (because a

legitimate CCCZ will be in place for reasons such as to protect the elderly or minimise distraction burglaries) or because of the “potential for reputational damage”.

The revised IoF code now strengthens our requirement that PFRA members “seriously consider” observing correctly-instigated CCCZs to a requirement that they do so. PFRA is happy to endorse that change.

However, it remains true that PFRA members are entitled to enter wrongly-constituted CCCZs provided they have conducted a risk assessment.

PFRA will now work with members to develop pro-forma policies and risk assessments on fundraising in CCCZs that members will be able to adapt to their specific requirements, and to develop a map of properly constituted CCCZs that PFRA members can access.

*** Trading Standards Institute guidance on CCCZs**

- CCCZs should only be considered when supported by a “real” local need to stop sellers/callers – such as to prevent distraction burglaries, protect the elderly from bogus callers etc
- The size of a CCCZ should be “relatively small” and “easily defined by its boundaries”, such as a cul-de-sac, small estate or neighbourhood watch area.
- The CCCZ must have the “wholehearted support” of residents. Consultation with residents is the first step.

Links

- Trading Standards Institute guidance on Cold Calling Control Zones – <http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/glos/pdf/Cold%20Calling.pdf>

ENDS

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Notes for editors

The PFRA

The Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) is the nationally recognised self-regulator for all forms of face-to-face (F2F) fundraising activity – direct debit solicitation or data-capture – conducted in public spaces by charities and good causes anywhere in the UK. Supported by the Office of the Third Sector and the Charity Commission but without drawing on public funds, PFRA seeks to guarantee the sustainability of F2F with the donating public by working in partnership with local authorities, TCMs and BIDs to provide and enforce bespoke and free-to-user durable and Charities Act 2006-compliant local voluntary management solutions within the framework of the Institute of Fundraising national Code of Practice. Our work and effectiveness is recognized by the Institute of Licensing, NALEO, and the Association of Town Centre Managers, all of whom occupy observer seats on our board of management. We were among the founder members of, and occupy a seat on the board of, the Fundraising Standards Board. We are a corporate affiliate of the Trading Standards Institute – committed to fair trading and consumer protection.