

Tips for Taxpayers Who Travel for Charity Work

Do you plan to travel while doing charity work this year? Some travel expenses may help lower your taxes if you itemize deductions when you file your tax returns next year. Here are a couple tips to consider about travel while serving a charity:

- You must volunteer to work for a qualified organization. Ask the charity about its tax-exempt status. You can also visit <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Exempt-Organizations-Select-Check> and use the Select Check tool to see if the group is qualified.
- You may be able to deduct reimbursed travel expenses you pay while serving as a volunteer. You can't deduct the value of your time or services.
- The deduction qualifies only if your work is real and substantial throughout the trip. You can't deduct expenses if you only have nominal duties or do not have any duties for significant parts of the trip.
- Deductible travel expense may include:
 - Air, rail, and bus transportation
 - Car expenses
 - Lodging costs
 - The cost of meals
 - Taxi fares or other transportation costs between the airport or station and your hotel

Remember, as with all charitable contributions, no deduction is allowed for a contribution of \$250 or more unless you substantiate with a written acknowledgement from the charitable organization.

For more information or if you have any question, please contact our office.