



The Most and Least Generous States

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During the season of giving, many Americans pull out their wallets or volunteer time to give back to their communities.

There are numerous ways a person can be charitable. While donating money to an organization is common, many people opt to donate their time and labor. There are also informal ways to give back, like by offering to pet sit for a neighbor.

To determine the most charitable states, Forbes Advisor compared all 50 states and the District of Columbia across seven metrics. Our charitable giving statistics for each state are based on that



Key Takeaways

Iowa is the most charitable state, and Iowans hold the sixth-highest charitable giving rate, with 58% donating \$25 or more to charity in 2021.

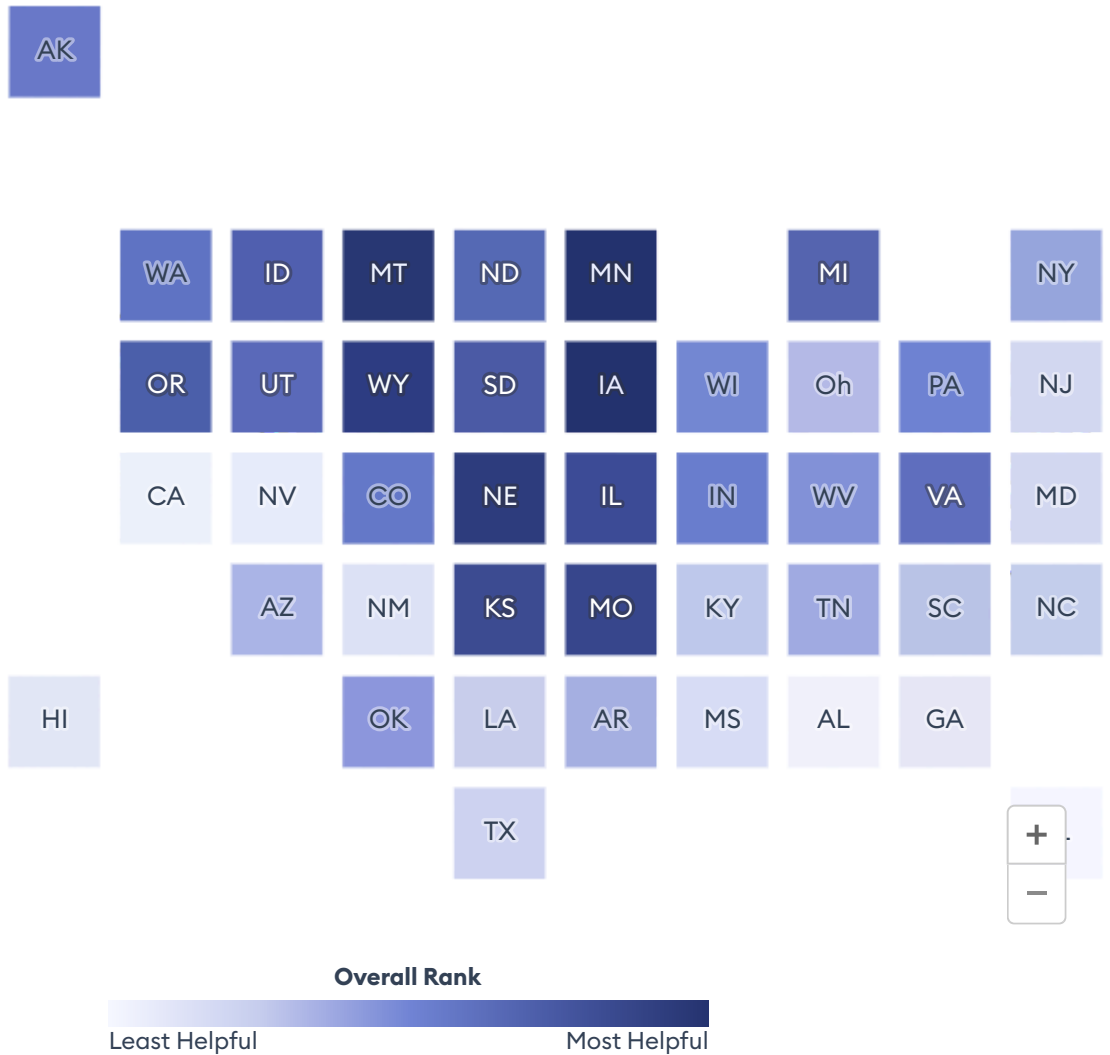
The West and Midwest dominate the top of the list, with five Midwestern states and two Western states ranking among the 10 most charitable states.

Florida ranks as the least charitable state. Residents of the Sunshine State have the lowest charitable giving rate (37%) and lowest formal volunteer rate (16%) of all 50 states and Washington, D.C.

The South commands the bottom of our list, accounting for five of the 10 least charitable states.



An analysis by Forbes Advisor found that Iowa is the most charitable state. Hover over a state to see its overall ranking and two of the metrics considered.



Source: Forbes Advisor Analysis • [Embed](#)

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Top 10 Most Generous States

1. Iowa

Score: 100 out of 100

With 100 out of 100 points, Iowa holds the honorific of the most charitable state in the U.S. While the Green Mountain State doesn't have the top rank in any one specific metric, it performed well in a combination of categories.



the state has the fifth-highest number of charities per capita.

The state also ranked ninth-highest for informal helping rate in 2021 (60%) and 11th-highest for formal volunteer rate (30%).

2. Minnesota

Score: 99.84 out of 100

Iowa's neighbor to the north shares its generous spirit. Minnesota ranks second for most charitable giving by state, at 62%. It also has the third-highest formal volunteer rate, at 36%.

The Gopher State is also very neighborly. Residents of Minnesota have the sixth-highest informal helping rate (62%). Informal acts of generosity may be more convenient than formal service because the state ranked lower (No. 17) for charities per capita.

3. Montana

Score: 99.22 out of 100

Montana is the third most charitable state on our list and ranked highest for informal helping. An impressive 69% of state residents give back by doing favors for their neighbors.

The Treasure State also ranks fourth-highest for the number of charities per 1,000 residents (12.83) and ninth-highest for both its charitable giving rate (57%) and formal volunteer rate (31%).

4. Washington, D.C.

Score: 95.91 out of 100

The nation's capital ranks highest for the number of charities per 1,000 residents (roughly 33). In addition to having a glut of charitable organizations, D.C. residents have the third-highest rate of charitable giving (61%) and the fifth-highest formal volunteer rate (34%).

5. Nebraska

Score: 94.59 out of 100

The Cornhusker State ranks second-highest for informal helping, with 66% of residents reporting they help by doing favors for neighbors. The state also ranks seventh-highest for formal volunteering, with 34% volunteering through an organization.



6. Wyoming

Score: 93.24 out of 100

When it comes to formal volunteering, Wyomingites rank second-highest, with 39% of residents reporting that they volunteer for charitable organizations. The Equality State also ranks third-highest for the number of charities per 1,000 residents (approximately 13).

Wyoming isn't one of the most generous states when it comes to offering informal help, but it's still ahead of the pack. Nebraskans rank 13th-highest in this metric, at 59%.

7. Maine

Score: 92.82 out of 100

Maine residents prefer to show generosity by offering up their time. The Pine Tree State ranks third-highest for informal helping, at a rate of 65%, and fourth-highest for formal volunteering, at 35%. Maine also ranks eighth-highest for the number of charities per 1,000 residents (roughly 10).

8. Connecticut

Score: 80.16 out of 100

There's a noteworthy gap (12.66 points) between the seventh- and eighth-ranked states on our list, but Connecticut still shines when it comes to giving. The Constitution State ranks second-highest for charitable giving, with an impressive 62% of residents donating \$25 or more to charity in 2021.

The state is above average by other metrics too. Connecticuters rank 14th-highest for formal volunteering, at 29%, and have the 23rd-highest number of charities per capita.

9. Missouri

Score: 77.93 out of 100

Nearly one-third (31%) of Missourians do formal volunteer work, earning the Show Me State the 10th-highest rank in that category. Missourians also rank 15th-highest for charitable giving (55%) and for the number of charities per 1,000 residents (nearly 9).

Missourians fall in the middle of the pack (No. 25) for informal helping, with 54% saying they did favors for their neighbors in 2021.



Score: 75.00 out of 100

Kansas rounds out our list of the top 10 states with the most charitable residents. Like their neighbors to the east, nearly a third of Kansans (32%) perform formal volunteer work, earning the state the eighth-highest rank for that metric.

The Sunflower State also does well by other measures of generosity. Kansas ranks 16th-highest for informal helping rate (58%) and 18th-highest for both charitable giving rate (54%) and number of charities per 1,000 residents (8.68).

Top 10 Least Generous States

1. Florida

Score: 0.00 out of 100

Florida ranks as the least charitable state in the nation and is the only state on our list to earn zero out of 100 points. The Sunshine State also has the distinction of ranking lowest in two individual metrics:

- Overall charitable giving (37%)

- Formal volunteer rate (16%)

Floridians aren't much better when it comes to lending a helping hand to neighbors. The state ranks fourth-lowest for informal helping rate, at just 45%, and sixth-lowest for the number of charities per 1,000 residents (nearly 7).

2. Alabama

Score: 4.35 out of 100

Florida's northern neighbor doesn't fare much better when it comes to charitable activities. Alabama is the second least charitable state in the U.S., with low rankings across several metrics.

Alabamans rank third-lowest for charitable giving (40%). This tight budget did win Alabamans the title of [most financially disciplined state](#), but residents of this state aren't just conservative with their wallets. They also have the fourth-lowest rate of formal volunteering (20%) and the eighth-lowest rate of informal helping (46%). Additionally, Alabama ranks ninth-lowest for the number of charities per capita.

3. California



The Golden State has the third least charitable residents in the U.S. To be fair, it is one of the top five states where it's most difficult to save money. Only 39% of Californians donated \$25 or more to charity in 2021, making the West Coast state the second-worst for charitable giving.

Californians aren't particularly generous by other measures either. Residents of this state rank third-lowest for formal volunteering, at 18%, and sixth-lowest for informal helping, at just 46%. California also has the 11th-lowest number of charities per capita.

4. Nevada

Score: 9.04 out of 100

Compared to all 50 states and D.C., Nevada ranks the lowest for informal helping, at 37%.

California's neighbor to the east also ranks second-lowest on two separate measures of support for charitable organizations: formal volunteering (17%) and charitable giving (39%). The Silver State ranks 11th-lowest for the number of charities per 1,000 residents (roughly 7).

5. Georgia

Score: 11.35 out of 100

Not only is Georgia one of the [worst states for healthcare](#), but it's also one of the worst states for neighborly generosity. This state ranks second-lowest for informal helping rate, at 41%.

Georgia performs slightly better when it comes to other charitable acts, coming in sixth-lowest for formal volunteer rate (20%) and 11th-lowest for charitable giving (46%). The Peach State also has the 14th-lowest number of charities per 1,000 residents (7.53).

6. Hawaii

Score: 15.57 out of 100

Hawaii is the worst state to live in for saving money, and the financial strain likely has an impact on giving.

Hawaiians rank poorly across several metrics for generosity, coming in at third-lowest for informal helping and fifth-lowest for formal volunteering. The Aloha state also has the ninth-lowest rate of charitable giving, at 45%.

7. New Mexico



Unfortunately, the Land of Enchantment isn't the land of generosity. New Mexico residents rank fifth-lowest, tied with Hawaii, for formal volunteering (20%) and seventh-lowest for informal helping (46%). New Mexicans are also seventh-lowest for charitable giving, at a rate of 44%.

Finally, New Mexico ranks 19th-lowest for the number of charities per 1,000 residents (nearly 8).

8. Mississippi

Score: 24.33 out of 100

It should come as no surprise that charitable giving is unpopular in the [state with the lowest average salary](#). Mississippi ranks fourth-lowest for charitable giving, at 41%, and 13th-lowest for the number of charities per capita.

Residents of the Magnolia State may also be short on time. Mississippi ranks 11th-lowest for both informal helping (48%) and formal volunteering (21%).

9. Maryland

Score: 24.33 out of 100

Despite being low on our list, Maryland ranks 11th-highest for the number of charities per 1,000 residents (roughly 9). But support for those charities may come up short in the Old Line State.

Marylanders rank 22nd-lowest for formal volunteer rate (24%) and 16th-lowest for charitable giving (47%). The state also ranks 14th-lowest for informal helping, at 49%.

10. New Jersey

Score: 27.98 out of 100

New Jerseyans fall near the middle of the pack for charitable giving rates (51%), coming in at the 23rd-lowest rank. But they aren't quite as generous in other ways.

The Garden State ranks sixth-lowest for formal volunteering (tied with Georgia), at a rate of 20%, and 10th-lowest for informal helping, at 47%. The state also ranks 15th-lowest for the number of charities per 1,000 residents (nearly 8).



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Rank	State	Charitable Giving Rate ¹	Charities per Capita ²	Formal Volunteer Rate ³	Informal Helping Rate ⁴	Total Score
1	Iowa	58.20%	11.76	29.90%	60.30%	100.00
2	Minnesota	61.80%	8.86	35.50%	61.90%	99.84
3	Montana	56.70%	12.83	31.10%	68.80%	99.22
4	District of Columbia	61.40%	33.20	34.20%	52.70%	95.91
5	Nebraska	61.10%	9.28	33.90%	66.40%	94.59
6	Wyoming	52.20%	13.24	39.20%	58.50%	93.24
7	Maine	53.00%	10.41	34.90%	65.00%	92.82
8	Connecticut	61.50%	8.49	28.80%	50.20%	80.16
9	Missouri	55.00%	8.99	30.50%	54.20%	77.93
10	Kansas	54.00%	8.68	31.50%	57.60%	75.08

Note: We considered seven metrics in our analysis, four of which are displayed above.

1. This represents the percentage of residents who gave \$25 or more to charity in 2021.

2. This represents the number of charities per 1,000 residents, as of 2022.

3. This represents the share of residents who volunteered for an organization in 2021.

4. This represents the share of residents who performed a favor for a neighbor in 2021 (i.e., housesitting or pet sitting).

Tips for Saving Money To Give to Charity

If you'd like to give money to charity, don't be afraid to start small. Here are a few ways you can start building donations into your budget:

Make automated monthly gifts. Break up your donations to make them easier on your budget, and automate them so you don't forget. A monthly donation of just \$20 translates to \$240 a year, which is more than many people give in a one-time donation. Plus, recurring donations help charities maintain steady cash flow.

Get your family involved. Get your children on board by choosing a cause together, like [Ukraine relief](#), and picking a charitable organization to give to. Then, encourage your family members to toss spare cash into a jar or add a portion of their allowance or birthday money to the donation fund.



example, donates money for every mile you walk or bike. You can also enable certain apps, like Lyft, to "round up" your transactions to the nearest dollar and donate the difference to charity.

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Ways To Help if Money Is Tight

Money isn't the only valuable gift you can [give to charity](#). Nonprofit organizations often accept other kinds of donations, including:

Toys and games

Food

Clothing

Art supplies

Furniture

[Vehicles](#)

Books

Gift cards

School supplies

Hygiene products

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Before making a donation, contact your local charity to find out what items are needed, and ask if they need to be in new or gently used condition. Consider inviting friends and family to donate, too, by offering to pick up and drop off donations on their behalf.

You can also check to see if any local organizations need volunteers or could use any professional services you have to offer. If you don't live in an area with many charities, consider contacting national organizations to see if they could use virtual volunteers. Websites like VolunteerMatch can help you find both local and virtual volunteer opportunities.



There are plenty of good reasons to give money to charity, but if you're looking for a financial incentive, the IRS provides one: Taxpayers who itemize their deductions may be able to [deduct charitable contributions](#) of money and property. You can generally deduct up to 60% of your adjusted gross income (AGI) for charitable contributions.

Your charitable donation may also make you eligible for a tax credit or deduction on your state taxes.

Methodology

To determine the most and least charitable states, Forbes Advisor examined data for all 50 states and Washington, D.C. We considered the seven metrics listed below and gave them the corresponding weights.

Charitable Giving Rate (25% of total score): Data comes from the AmeriCorps 2021 Civic Engagement and Volunteering Survey.

Formal Volunteer Rate (20% of total score): Data comes from the AmeriCorps 2021 Civic Engagement and Volunteering Survey. Formal volunteering is defined as helping others through organizations and can extend to public health efforts.

Informal Help Rate (20% of total score): Data comes from the AmeriCorps 2021 Civic Engagement and Volunteering Survey. Informal helping is defined as helping others outside of an organizational context (favors for neighbors like housesitting, watching each other's children, etc.).

Number of Tax-Exempt Charities per 1,000 Residents (10% of total score): Data comes from the Internal Revenue Service and is from 2022. We excluded all churches and/or religion-based organizations from our list. Population data comes from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Change in Charitable Giving Rate from 2019 to 2021 (9% of total score): Data comes from the AmeriCorps 2021 Civic Engagement and Volunteering Survey.

Change in Formal Volunteer Rate from 2019 to 2021 (8% of total score): Data comes from the AmeriCorps 2021 Civic Engagement and Volunteering Survey.

Change in Informal Help Rate from 2019 to 2021 (8% of total score): Data comes from the AmeriCorps 2021 Civic Engagement and Volunteering Survey.

Based on these seven metrics and the weighting outlined above, we scored and ranked all 50 states and Washington, D.C.

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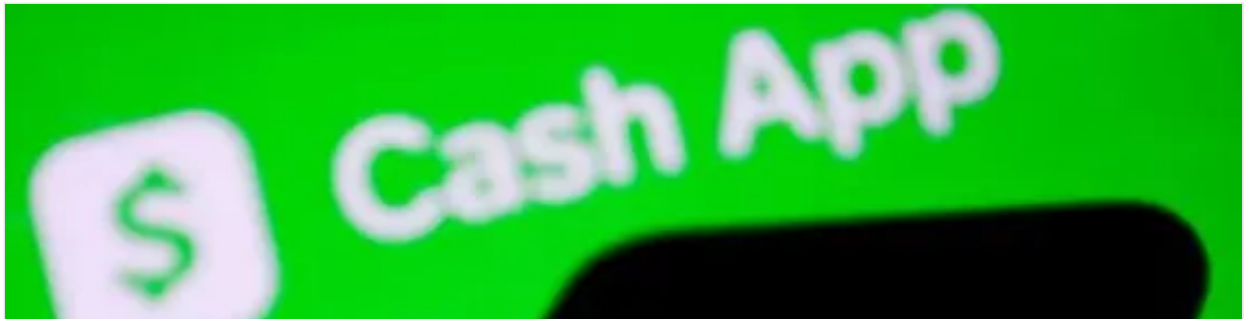
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