

CORRESPONDING WITH YOUR DONORS

Need help figuring out how to write thank you letters or appeals for donations? Use this helpful guide to determine the best way to reach your donors.



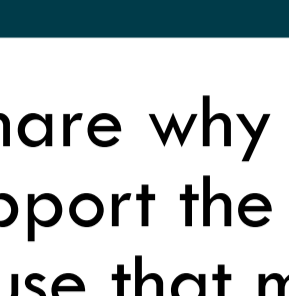
CREATING A CONNECTION

Throughout the year, you will correspond with donors and prospective donors from your Lodge, district or state. The tone, message and means of your correspondence will change with your reason for contacting these individuals. For example, you may contact donors to thank them for a recent gift to the Elks National Foundation, or you may appeal to donors who haven't donated in a while to give again.

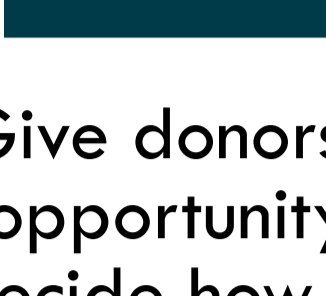
Face-to-face and personal, hand-written correspondence are the two best ways to communicate with donors and prospective donors. The sample letters below are a base for correspondence, but we encourage you to make each connection with donors and prospective donors as personal as possible.



MAKING IT PERSONAL



Share why you support the ENF, because that makes a bigger impact on existing and potential donors than anything.



Give donors the opportunity to decide how they give, when they give, and how much they give to the ENF. Don't limit your ask!



Ask other dedicated ENF supporters, like Fidelity Club members or Loyalty Club members, to share why they support the ENF.

Even if you have never met the member you are contacting, there are still ways to make the message personal to them. Utilize the reports on the [Lodge Reports page](#) of the ENF Fundraising Chair Dashboard to figure out the donor's classification, and tailor your message to that category as recommended below. If you know that there is a specific ENF program the donor likes, you can tailor the message to that, too!

UNDERSTANDING DONOR CATEGORIES

There are four main classifications the ENF uses to look at members of your Lodge: **prospective donor**, **lapsed donor**, **new donor** and **returning donor**. Tailoring your letter to these classifications shows your members that you care about them, that you recognize their past giving, and that you are invested in their future connection to the ENF. Use our tips in red to tailor your letters to these categories!



Prospective Donors haven't yet made a gift to the ENF, though they would be good candidates to make gifts in the future. New members of your Lodge are prospective donors, and it is likely that they don't know very much about the ENF. It is your job to teach them and appeals can be a great way to do that!

APPEALING TO PROSPECTIVE DONORS

- "The ENF helps youth develop lifelong skills, send students to college, meet the needs of today's veterans, support the charitable work of the state Elks associations, and fund projects that improve the quality of life in local Elks communities!"

- "The ENF is the great heart of Elkdom, and making a gift to the Foundation ensures that Elks make a difference now and in the future."

- Share with these donors why you think it is important to donate to the ENF!



New Donors have just made their first gift to the ENF, which means you successfully moved them out of the Prospective Donor category! It is important that new donors feel thanked for their gift and understand their gift's importance to our mission so that they will give again in the future and become a returning donor.

- "Thank you for making a gift to the Foundation! Your donation helps ensure that the ENF can continue helping our Lodge strengthen our community."

- "Donors like you help students realize their dreams of attending college, provide kids with youth activities, help the Elks fulfill their pledge to our nation's veterans, and get us closer to reaching the per-member-giving goal!"

- "It's our dream to have 15% of Elks contribute to the great heart of Elkdom, and your support gets us closer!"

THANKING NEW DONORS



Lapsed Donors gave to the ENF in the past, but it has been more than a year since their last gift to the Foundation. These donors might feel disconnected from the Foundation and its mission or might have simply forgotten to give in the last fiscal year. It is important to reignite their connection to the ENF!

APPEALING TO LAPSED DONORS

- "The ENF strives to give back more money to each state than it received from that state in donations. The amount we donate this year impacts how much we receive next year."

- "When you designate a gift to the Foundation, that money goes to work immediately to make a difference in Elks communities!"

- "If we reach the per-member-giving goal this year, our Lodge will be eligible for a Gratitude Grant next year. Your renewed support will help our Lodge make a difference in our community."



Returning Donors have the strongest connection to the ENF. They have given in the past and they continue to give. While you can count on these donors, it is important that you don't ignore them! It is important to recognize and correspond with returning donors so they continue to give and don't become lapsed.

- "Your dedication to the Foundation is greatly appreciated."

- "Thank you for your continued support of the Elks National Foundation! Donors like you help ensure that the Foundation can build stronger communities now and into the future."

- "The Elks national Foundation strives to give back more money to each state than it receives from that state in donations. Your continued support helps our state continue to serve children, veterans and those in need."

THANKING RETURNING DONORS

SAMPLE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

New Message ☰ ↶ ↷ ✕

To _____

Subject Thank you for your support!

Hello _____,

Some people make choices that change lives. Thank you for being one of them. Your donation will help change the lives of veterans, students and community members today, tomorrow and for years to come.

Tremendous support from generous donors like you allows the Elks National Foundation to foster incredible programs like the Community Investments Program. Every Lodge that meets the National President's per-member-giving goal can apply for a Gratitude Grant the next year. Gratitude Grants ranging from \$2,000 to \$3,000 are the ENF's way of saying thank you and helping our Lodge make a difference in our community!

Without your support, the ENF wouldn't be able to give back to Lodges, provide healthy activities for youth, care for our veterans, or support our future leaders with scholarships. Thanks again for your generosity. Your gift counts toward both your individual giving level and our Lodge's per-member-giving goal. Let's keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

ENF Fundraising Chair
BPO Elks Lodge <No.>

To download a word document this acknowledgement, [click here](#).

SAMPLE APPEAL

Mr. Elroy T. Elk
2750 N. Lakeview Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614

Dear Elroy:

The Elks National Foundation has upheld its commitment to helping Elks build stronger communities for more than 90 years. The Foundation helps students realize their dreams of attending college, provides youth with constructive activities, and helps the Elks fulfill their pledge to our nation's veterans.

The possibilities are endless with member support. Your help can ensure that we will forever build a better tomorrow. This is your chance to be a part of something amazing.

For example, the ENF's Community Investments Program invests directly in Lodge communities to have a lasting impact in the areas where Elks live and work. Lodges know and understand the needs of our communities best, that's why we decide how to use these grants. With last year's increased grant flexibility, more than 4,000 grant applications were approved and Lodge's were able to use or donate their grants to provide immediate COVID-19 relief. More than 52% of funds went toward alleviating hunger in Elks' communities.

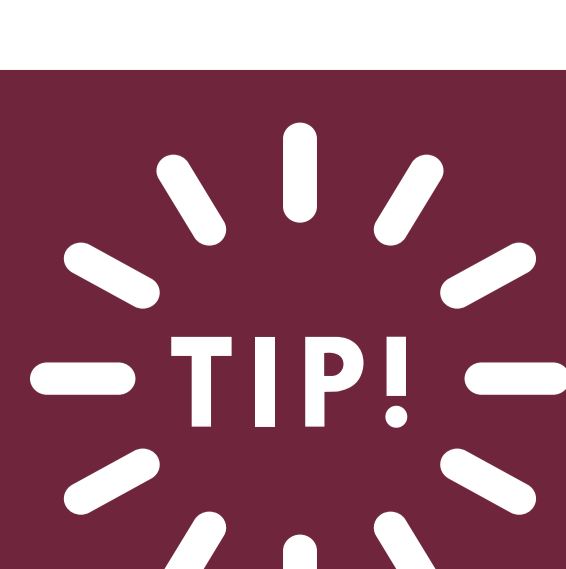
We need your help! With your donation, you will join a group of donors whose contributions will make a difference today and in the future. You can help a child attend the college of their dreams. You can provide kids with a place to go after school. You can put a smile on the face of a lonely veteran. And you can help improve our community.

Remember, the Foundation depends on support from generous Elks like you to improve communities everywhere. Please consider donating to the ENF so we can make a difference in our community. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ENF Fundraising Chair
BPO Elks Lodge <No.>

To download a word document this appeal, [click here](#).



If possible, **handwrite** your thank you notes, even if it means you shorten the amount of text. Handwritten notes are the most personal, and people really enjoy receiving letters. Typed letters are the second best method, and email is the least personal, but it is a great tool if you have many people to contact at once.

Questions?

Contact the ENF Fundraising Department at 773/755-4762 or fundraising@elks.org