THIS IS DISCLOSURE

Treat each other like humans.

COUNTRY GUIDE



AMERICAS

Chile.

Chile's Código Penal lists, among minor offenses, failing to help a person found wounded, mistreated or in danger of perishing in an unpopulated place. Ley 19.885 gives tax benefits for donations to qualifying nonprofits serving people with low income or disabilities, and Ley 20.500 governs associations and citizen participation.

DUTY TO HELP A STRANGER
Limited

PROTECTION FOR HELPERS
None found

GIVING AND SERVICE
3 programs and laws

Is there a legal duty to help a stranger?

LIMITED

Article 494 no. 14 of the Código Penal punishes, with a fine of one to four monthly tax units, anyone who does not help a person found 'en despoblado' (in an unpopulated place) wounded, mistreated or in danger of perishing, when able to do so without detriment to themselves. The wording is limited to unpopulated places.

Código Penal de Chile (Ley Chile, art. 494 no. 14) (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile)

Are people who help protected?

NONE FOUND

No statute specifically protecting people who help a stranger in good faith was found in the sources reviewed.

Código Penal de Chile (Ley Chile) (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile)

How the government promotes giving and service

Ley 19.885 on donations for social purposes

Per the tax authority, the law grants tax benefits for donations to corporations or foundations that directly provide services to people with low income or disabilities and are in the registry the law creates. Donating companies may receive a credit against first-category tax, with limits set in the law.

SERVICIO DE IMPUESTOS INTERNOS (CHILE)

Donation accountability rules

Recipient organizations must issue certificates to donors, keep a donations ledger and file an annual report on the use of donated funds. The tax authority notes that benefits depend on meeting the legal requirements in each case.

SERVICIO DE IMPUESTOS INTERNOS (CHILE)

Ley 20.500 on associations and citizen participation

The tax authority's Oficio 511 explains that associations formed under Ley 20.500 are constituted under the Código Civil's rules for nonprofit corporations and can receive donations under Ley 19.885 if they meet its conditions.

SERVICIO DE IMPUESTOS INTERNOS (CHILE)

Ways to give and volunteer

Chile relies heavily on volunteers: the fire service (Bomberos) is staffed almost entirely by unpaid volunteers, and the Cruz Roja Chilena, food banks and many local foundations also

take volunteers and gifts. Many social services are also run by church-linked groups; this list does not recommend any of them.

Check a charity before you give

The government page for the national registry of nonprofit legal entities, where you can confirm that a foundation or association legally exists.

Registro de Personas Jurídicas sin Fines de Lucro (Registro Civil, via ChileAtiende)

Give your time

Cruz Roja Chilena: Voluntariado
The Chilean Red Cross page for signing up as a volunteer.

Bomberos de Chile
The national body of Chile's volunteer fire companies, which accept new volunteers through local companies.

UN Volunteers (UNV)
The United Nations volunteer program, which lists international and national volunteer assignments and country information.

Give money, blood or a donation

Minsal: Dona Sangre
The Ministry of Health list of places and hours where you can give blood.

Cruz Roja Chilena: Donar
The Chilean Red Cross page for one-time or monthly donations.

Red de Alimentos
A Chilean network that collects surplus food and passes it to social organizations.

In an emergency or a crisis

Salud Responde (Ministerio de Salud): 600 360 7777
Ministry of Health phone service staffed by health professionals, 24 hours, with psychological guidance and support; cost of a local call.

Before you act

- Before giving, ask the group for its RUT and its registration, and check it in the national registry; be careful with street collectors and unsolicited calls or messages asking for transfers.
- Official bodies such as the Red Cross, Bomberos and the Ministry of Health do not ask you to pay to volunteer.
- Visitors can volunteer, but short-term foreign volunteers should confirm with the host group whether their visa status allows unpaid work.

This list does not cover small local groups, animal welfare or the many church-run services. Checked 2026-10-28. Listing an organization is not an endorsement, and none of them has endorsed this site. Some official sites block automatic checks, so a link may need a second try.

One thing worth knowing

Chile ties donation benefits to a public registry and recordkeeping duties for the recipient organizations, as described by its tax authority.

What this does not mean

Translations are this guide's own. The texts of Ley 19.885 and Ley 20.500 could not be retrieved from the Biblioteca del Congreso, so those two entries rely on official Servicio de Impuestos Internos rulings that describe them; the statutes themselves were not read directly, and Ley 20.500's participation provisions are not described. Article 494 is a minor-offense provision limited to unpopulated places. This is a plain-language summary of public sources, not legal advice, and it does not rank countries. No government named here has endorsed this site. Not reviewed by a lawyer. Statutes were read in public sources and may have changed. Last checked October 26, 2026.

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