COUNTRY GUIDE



EUROPE

Denmark.

The Danish Criminal Code punishes failing to help a person in obvious danger of death when help is possible without special danger or sacrifice. Municipalities are required by the Social Services Act to cooperate with voluntary social organizations and to set aside money each year to support voluntary social work, and first-time driver's license applicants must complete a traffic-related first aid course.

DUTY TO HELP A STRANGER

Yes

PROTECTION FOR HELPERS

Limited

GIVING AND SERVICE

3 programs and laws

Is there a legal duty to help a stranger?

YES

Straffeloven section 253 punishes with a fine or up to 2 years in prison anyone who, although it was possible without special danger or sacrifice to themselves or others, fails to help, according to ability, a person in obvious danger to life, or to take the steps the circumstances require to rescue a seemingly lifeless person or care for people hit by shipwreck or a similar accident. Paragraph 2 provides up to 2 years in prison for breaching paragraph 1 while fleeing a traffic accident in which someone suffered considerable personal injury.

Bekendtgørelse af straffeloven, LBK nr 434 af 25/04/2024 (printout marked Historisk) (Retsinformation (Danish Ministry of Justice)) Straffeloven § 253 (Danske Love (secondary reproduction))

Are people who help protected?

LIMITED

Straffeloven section 14 says an act that would otherwise be punishable is not punished when it was necessary to avert threatening harm to a person or property and the offense was of relatively minor importance. Under Serviceloven section 18 a, municipalities and regions may take out liability and accident insurance for citizens who volunteer on municipal or regional tasks; it is optional, not a general protection for helpers.

Bekendtgørelse af straffeloven, LBK nr 434 af 25/04/2024 (printout marked Historisk) (Retsinformation (Danish Ministry of Justice)) VEJ nr 10266 af 19/12/2017 Vejledning om det frivillige område efter serviceloven (Retsinformation (Social- og Boligministeriet))

How the government promotes giving and service

Municipal duty to cooperate with and fund voluntary social work

Serviceloven section 18 states that the municipal council shall cooperate with voluntary social organizations and associations and shall each year set aside an amount to support voluntary social work, with the framework for cooperation set by each municipality. The ministry guidance reproducing the text is marked as in force (Gældende).

RETSINFORMATION (SOCIAL- OG BOLIGMINISTERIET)

Tax deduction for gifts to approved associations (Ligningsloven section 8 A)

The Danish Tax Agency's legal guidance says gifts to approved charitable or public-benefit associations are deductible if the recipient is approved by Skattestyrelsen and reports the payment. It gives a combined cap of 19,000 kroner for 2025 and 20,000 kroner for 2026.

SKATTEFORVALTNINGEN (INFO.SKAT.DK, DEN JURIDISKE VEJLEDNING)

First aid course required for a first driver's license

The driver's license order (BEK nr 1151 of 26/09/2025), section 55, says a first-time license can be issued only to applicants who have completed a traffic-related first aid course, run by instructors registered with Dansk Førstehjælpsråd.

RETSINFORMATION (BY-, LAND- OG TRANSPORTMINISTERIET)

Ways to give and volunteer

Denmark has a very high rate of volunteering through associations, local volunteer centers and the Danish Red Cross. Public street and door fundraising needs approval, so knowing who is approved is the first thing to check.

Check a charity before you give

The state body that supervises public fundraising and keeps rules and information on approved collections.

Indsamlingsnævnet (Civilstyrelsen)

Give your time

Frivillighed.dk
A national portal for finding volunteer jobs and volunteer centers across Denmark.

Dansk Røde Kors: Bliv frivillig
The Danish Red Cross page for signing up as a volunteer.

FødevareBanken: Frivillig
A Danish organization that moves surplus food to social organizations, with a page for volunteers.

Give money, blood or a donation

Bloddonorerne Danmark
The national information site for giving blood at hospitals and donation centers.

Organdonorregistret (borger.dk)
The official page on how to register your decision about organ donation.

ISOBRO
The trade body of Danish fundraising charities, which sets ethical rules for its members.

In an emergency or a crisis

Livslinien: 70 201 201
Suicide prevention phone counseling, open every day of the year; page lists 09:00 to 05:00 (likely 5 a.m.); call 112 in immediate danger.

112.dk
The official page for Denmark's emergency number 112.

Before you act

- Collectors on the street or at your door should show proof of approval; if unsure, ask for the organization's name and donate through its own website.
- Be careful with MobilePay requests from unknown numbers and with messages that claim to be from a charity but ask for card details.
- Foreign visitors may volunteer with associations, but non-EU residents should check with their host whether their permit allows unpaid work.

This list does not cover small local associations, sports clubs or church groups. 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

Danish law ties first aid skills to getting a driver's license: a traffic-related first aid course is a legal precondition for first-time applicants, with limited exceptions in the order.

What this does not mean

The Criminal Code text comes from a consolidation printed as historical (LBK 434 of 2024), so a later consolidation may exist; it should be checked on retsinformation.dk. The Frivilligcharter (a charter on cooperation between voluntary organizations and the public sector) could not be verified from a retrievable primary text and is therefore not described. Statutes are paraphrased from the Danish originals, and this is not legal advice. 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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