COUNTRY GUIDE



AFRICA

Nigeria.

Nigeria's Criminal Code creates duties to provide necessaries of life only for people who have charge of another person, not for strangers generally. The Compulsory Treatment and Care for Victims of Gunshot Act, 2017 requires every person to assist a gunshot victim in some ways; whether a general duty to help exists beyond it was not reviewed here. A federal national service scheme and a company-law route for registering charitable associations are also documented.

DUTY TO HELP A STRANGER

Limited

PROTECTION FOR HELPERS

Limited

GIVING AND SERVICE

3 programs and laws

Is there a legal duty to help a stranger?

LIMITED

Criminal Code Act sections 300 to 302 impose duties to provide necessaries of life on persons having charge of another who cannot provide for themselves, heads of families (children under 14) and masters of servants under 16; these are not duties toward strangers. Section 2(1) of the Compulsory Treatment and Care for Victims of Gunshot Act, 2017 states that every person, including security agents, shall render every possible assistance to any person with gunshot wounds and ensure that the person is taken to the nearest hospital; its table of contents includes an offense of standing by, but that section's text was not read in this research.

Criminal Code Act, Cap. C38 (Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004) (Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC), reproduction of Laws of Nigeria) Compulsory Treatment and Care for Victims of Gunshot Act, 2017 (judy.legal (commercial legal database reproduction; page shows sections 1 and 2 text and a table of contents)) President Buhari assents to Compulsory Treatment and Care of Victims of Gunshots Act, 2017 (PLAC Legist (Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre; summary))

Are people who help protected?

LIMITED

The Compulsory Treatment and Care for Victims of Gunshot Act, 2017 has a section titled "Protection of volunteer" (table of contents), and a PLAC summary says the Act prevents volunteers who assist gunshot victims from being subjected to unnecessary interrogation; the section's own wording was not read. No Lagos State Good Samaritan law and no general road-accident bystander statute were found in this research.

Compulsory Treatment and Care for Victims of Gunshot Act, 2017 (judy.legal (commercial legal database reproduction; page shows sections 1 and 2 text and a table of contents)) President Buhari assents to Compulsory Treatment and Care of Victims of Gunshots Act, 2017 (PLAC Legist (Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre; summary))

How the government promotes giving and service

National Youth Service Corps Act, Cap. N84

Section 1 establishes the National Youth Service Corps, a national service scheme, with objectives including promoting national unity, developing common ties among Nigerian youths and encouraging service in areas of national need; the text also states an objective of removing prejudices among Nigerians of all ethnic groups. The Act as reproduced is the Laws of the Federation edition; later amendments were not reviewed.

POLICY AND LEGAL ADVOCACY CENTRE (PLAC), REPRODUCTION OF LAWS OF NIGERIA

Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020, Part F: Incorporated Trustees

Section 823 allows trustees appointed by an association established for religious, educational, literary, scientific, social, development, cultural, sporting or charitable purposes to apply to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration as a corporate body.

INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR NOT-FOR-PROFIT LAW (REPRODUCTION; THE FILE'S COVER HEADER READS 2019)

Compulsory Treatment and Care for Victims of Gunshot Act, 2017
Section 1 requires every hospital, public or private, to receive and treat a person with a gunshot wound with or without police clearance, and section 2 places the duty to assist on every person, which makes helping an injured stranger a legally recognized obligation in this one context.
JUDY.LEGAL (COMMERCIAL LEGAL DATABASE REPRODUCTION; PAGE SHOWS SECTIONS 1 AND 2 TEXT AND A TABLE OF CONTENTS)

Ways to give and volunteer

Nigeria has many active community groups, and faith organizations run a lot of local aid, which are not listed here. Public records for charities are limited, so check a group's registration and ask for proof before giving.

Check a charity before you give

The government registry for companies and incorporated trustees, where you can check whether a nonprofit is legally registered (the search tool may block automated access).

Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC)

Give your time

Nigerian Red Cross Society
The national Red Cross society, which uses volunteers for first aid and disaster response.

United Nations Volunteers (UNV)
The UN volunteer program, with a search for assignments; check which ones are open to your nationality.

Lagos Food Bank Initiative
A food bank charity in Lagos that lists ways to give and help.

Give money, blood or a donation

National Blood Service Commission
The federal body that runs blood services and gives information on donating blood.

Nigerian Red Cross Society
The national Red Cross society, which accepts donations for emergency relief.

Lagos Food Bank Initiative
A food bank charity in Lagos that distributes food to families.

In an emergency or a crisis

Find A Helpline: crisis and emotional support lines in this country
A directory of free crisis and emotional support lines, run by ThroughLine. No single national line could be confirmed for this guide, so check the line you choose before you rely on it.

Before you act

- Advance-fee and fake charity appeals are common, so never pay a fee to receive money or to volunteer, and avoid wire or cash requests from strangers. Ask a group for its CAC registration number and confirm it. Foreign groups and funding fall under anti-money laundering rules and the SCUML requirements for nonprofits, so visitors should check the rules or work through a registered group.

This list does not cover every state or local group, or faith-based charities. 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

Nigeria's strongest documented duty toward strangers is narrow: the 2017 gunshot Act extends the duty to assist to "every person" with respect to gunshot victims, while the Criminal Code duties apply only to people in charge of another.

What this does not mean

Criminal Code section numbers are from the Laws of the Federation copy (Cap. C38), and Lagos State has its own criminal law that was not reviewed, so a state-level duty or protection may exist that this guide did not find. The brief's Lagos Good Samaritan and road-traffic bystander protections, and National Health Act emergency treatment, could not be verified from the statute text. Sources are reputable reproductions, not government gazette sites. 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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