

MAXIMIZING YOUR IMPACT

YEAR-END TAX STRATEGIES THROUGH CHARITABLE GIVING AND QCDs

As the year draws to a close, it's not only a time for festive celebrations but also an opportunity to take a closer look at your financial situation and explore strategic moves to optimize your tax position. One avenue worth considering is charitable giving, coupled with Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs), a combination that can not only make a positive impact on the causes you care about but also provide potential tax benefits. In this blog post, we'll delve into year-end tax strategies, the power of charitable giving, and the advantages of utilizing QCDs.

Charitable Giving: A Heartfelt Approach to Tax Planning

Charitable giving is a powerful way to contribute to the well-being of society while also offering potential tax advantages. By donating to qualified charities, you may be eligible for deductions that can reduce your taxable income. However, to maximize these benefits, it's essential to be strategic in your approach.

1. **Review Your Finances:** Before making any charitable contributions, take stock of your financial situation. Consider factors such as your income, potential tax liabilities, and overall financial goals. This assessment will help you determine the optimal amount to donate.
2. **Donate Appreciated Assets:** If you have investments that have appreciated over time, donating them directly to a charity can be advantageous. By doing so, you not only support a cause but may also avoid capital gains taxes that would apply if you sold the assets.
3. **Bunch Your Donations:** The standard deduction has increased in recent years, making it more challenging for some taxpayers to itemize deductions. Bunching your charitable contributions—making larger donations in specific years—can help you exceed the standard deduction threshold, making itemization more beneficial in those years.

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs): A Tax-Efficient Giving Strategy

For individuals aged 70½ or older, QCDs offer a unique opportunity to support charities while potentially minimizing taxable income.

1. **Understand QCDs:** A Qualified Charitable Distribution allows you to directly transfer funds from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to a qualified charity. This distribution counts towards your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) without being included in your taxable income.

2. Take Advantage of Tax Efficiency: Since QCDs aren't considered taxable income, they can be a tax-efficient way to meet your charitable goals. By reducing your taxable income, you may also lower your adjusted gross income (AGI), potentially impacting other aspects of your tax liability.

3. Be Mindful of Limits: While QCDs offer tax benefits, there are limits to the amount you can distribute annually. Currently, the maximum annual QCD is \$105,000 per taxpayer (up from \$100,000 in 2023). Be sure to stay within these limits to fully leverage the tax advantages.

As the year concludes, incorporating charitable giving and QCDs into your financial planning can be a rewarding and tax-smart strategy. By aligning your philanthropic goals with effective tax planning, you not only make a positive impact on the causes you support but also optimize your financial position. As always, it's advisable to consult with a tax professional to tailor these strategies to your specific circumstances and ensure compliance with current tax laws.

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