



**READY.  
SET.  
PLUNGE!**



**TEAM CAPTAIN  
HANDBOOK**



# Thank you for the difference you make in our athletes' lives!

By funding for our Polar Plunge, you are helping Special Olympics Florida give opportunities to our athletes to become active citizens in their communities.

They are able to be part of an inclusive environment that inspires them to be agents of social change and conquer obstacles that stand in the way of their dreams.

Thank you for your devotion of time, effort, selflessness, and advocacy for Special Olympics Florida and the athletes we serve. Our reach is growing because of you.

Now ... READY. SET. PLUNGE!



For more information please contact: Hilary Kendrick at [hilarykendrick@sofl.org](mailto:hilarykendrick@sofl.org) | 352.243.9536



## You're giving them the time of their lives

It all began in the 1950s, when Eunice Kennedy Shriver saw how unjustly and unfairly people with intellectual disabilities were treated. She also saw that many children with intellectual disabilities didn't even have a place to play. She decided to take action. In 1968, Mrs. Shriver organized the first International Special Olympics Games.

Today, Special Olympics Inc. is the world's largest provider of fitness training, education and athletic competition — coupled with social, life, and leadership skill development opportunities — for children and adults with intellectual disabilities or a similar developmental disability. Special Olympics Florida, an accredited program of Special Olympics Inc., was founded in 1972 and is one of the largest volunteer-driven athletic organizations in the state.

Thanks to dedicated and motivated sponsors like yourself, Special Olympics Florida is able continue its life-changing mission. Thank you!



### History:

Special Olympics Florida, an accredited program of Special Olympics Inc., was founded in 1972 and is one of the largest volunteer-driven athletic organizations in the state.

### Cost:

\$0.87 of each dollar raised for Special Olympics Florida goes to program costs and services.

### Competitions:

Special Olympics Florida offers sports training and competition with more than 500 events throughout the year.

### Involvement:

Special Olympics Florida serves more than 47,000+ athletes statewide. Neither athletes nor parents/caregivers are charged a fee to participate in the program, and activities exist for all ability levels, from severely challenged to elite athletes.



For more information please contact: Hilary Kendrick at [hilarykendrick@sofl.org](mailto:hilarykendrick@sofl.org) | 352.243.9536

## What Special Olympics Florida provides:

Special Olympics athletes are given opportunities to participate without regard to economic, demographic, religious, or social factors. Neither athletes nor parents are charged a fee to participate in the program, and activities exist for those of all ability levels, from the highly functioning to the severely challenged.



2017

### TOTAL SPORTS PARTICIPATION

UNIQUE ATHLETES MULTIPLE SPORTS

**63,838**



### TOTAL ATHLETES

UNIQUE ATHLETES SERVED

**47,000+**



### TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

**31,014**



### COMPETITIONS

**500**

COUNTY GAMES **352**

AREA GAMES **132**

STATE GAMES **10**

REGIONAL/NATIONAL GAMES **6**



### YOUR FUNDRAISING PAYS FOR :

Young Athletes program ages 2-7	\$659.24
Complete health exam	\$62.50
Choice of Coaches sports kit	\$431.00
1 Athlete transportation for an event	\$24.00
Little ELITES program	\$659.24
Portable bocce court	\$1,500.00
Cheerleading uniform with shoes	\$339.00
Strider Bike	\$99.00
Motor Activities Training Program	\$250.00

For more information please contact: Hilary Kendrick at [hilarykendrick@sofl.org](mailto:hilarykendrick@sofl.org) | 352.243.9536



## About Special Olympics Florida

Special Olympics Florida brings joy, confidence, and self-worth to people with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics Florida is **not** a single-day event or competition. It is a year-round, 365-day movement to inspire, pursue, and achieve dreams through participation in sports. Combine these sports with wraparound programs, and Special Olympics Florida athletes have a gateway to life-long empowerment, competence, acceptance, and joy.



## About Polar Plunge

Special Olympics Florida Polar Plunge is a fun, interactive experience where team members charge the cold waters of Aquatica or Florida's beaches. Plungers must raise a minimum of \$100 to participate. Your efforts allow Special Olympics Florida to continue providing year-round training and athletic competitions at no cost to our 47,000+ athletes statewide.

Each team member who raises \$100 will receive a Polar Plunge t-shirt, eligibility to plunge, and additional incentives. Join the fun, help raise funds, and earn prizes all in support of Special Olympics Florida.

## What is a Team Captain?

Team Captains are the leaders of our Polar Plunge teams. You choose your own team members who share a passion and commitment to raise money for the athletes and programs of Special Olympics Florida. There is no cap to the number of plungers you can have on your team.

Fundraising efforts are culminated and celebrated at Polar Plunge! Team Captains organize the team, delegate any team fundraising efforts, and coach and motivate their members and donors along the way!

Teams can be composed of friends, families, co-workers, companies, churches, social clubs, offices, small businesses.....the list goes on!



For more information please contact: Hilary Kendrick at [hilarykendrick@sofl.org](mailto:hilarykendrick@sofl.org) | 352.243.9536

# LET'S GET STARTED!

## STEP 1: ORGANIZE | 4 Months to Polar Plunge

*Register your team at [www.PlungeFL.org](http://www.PlungeFL.org) and set a team Fundraising goal.*

- Personalize your team page and your individual plunger page and set your goals.
- Work with your Special Olympics Florida staff partner to devise a plan that includes fundraising targets and ensure our mission is at the core of your campaign.
- Do you have a CEO who will help drive this campaign at work? Set up a meeting for you, your staff partner, and your CEO so the support of leadership and managers can be effectively established.
- Set a goal. If you have started a company team, aim to get at least 20 percent of your company involved.
- Recruit a team ambassador or ask your staff partner for mission stories to share with your team throughout the campaign.

## STEP 2: RECRUIT | 3 Months to Polar Plunge

*Build Momentum*

- Does your company have more than one team? Work with your staff partner to host a Team Captain training.
- Follow up the training with a company-wide email from an executive encouraging employees to sign up online and start fundraising.
- Promote Polar Plunge and your team's efforts via social media. Share a photo, your goal, and let people know how they can sign up to support the team. If you are on a company team, work with your marketing or public relations department to help promote your campaign.
- Send updates every few weeks to celebrate your team's progress and encourage your team members to do more.



### STEP 3: FUNDRAISE | 2 Months to Polar Plunge

*Encourage fundraising—have lunchtime walks/meetings and challenge one another.*

- Meet with each team member to help them start fundraising. Have them list friends, neighbors, and local organizations they plan to reach out to.
- Check in with your team members and celebrate their successes!
- Arrange incentives to motivate the team, like a free lunch or a vacation day for top fundraisers (for company teams).
- Arrange to make or have signs made to represent your team on Polar Plunge day.
- What will your team wear? Get creative with your team and make team shirts, themed costumes, or even matching outfits.
- Send a save-the-date to all of your team members and potential team members. Remember, your teammates *must* raise a minimum of \$100 to plunge on event day!
- Continue to promote your campaign and goals through social media, email, and follow-up with your team members.



### STEP 4: PLUNGE | 1 Month to Polar Plunge

*Create and review your event-day checklist.*

- Organize your team and celebrate your success on event day!
- Contact your team members and get them excited for event day.
- Create a check list of important items you'll need, e.g., water, sunscreen, sunglasses, towel, etc.
- Don't forget to wear a costume!
- Make thank you notes for each team member!
- Share your photos on social media and use #PlungeFL.
- Send a thank you to your supporters and include event day photos.





# TEAM SUPPORTERS

Team Supporters are local businesses and organizations who support a Polar Plunge team through a 100% tax-deductible donation.

Team Supporters receive special thanks from the team they support.

## The Supporter

Make a tax-deductible donation to Special Olympics Florida. This donation is credited to the team's fundraising total. Teams should turn-in/mail-in donations as part of their team fundraising to Special Olympics Florida with an offline donation form attached or they can also donate online. Special Olympics Florida will allocate your donation to your team page.

## Who to Ask

- Local Coffee Shop
- Hair Salon
- Your personal company/boss
- Landscaping Companies
- Local Grocer
- Daycare Centers
- Doctor/Dentist Office
- Insurance Provider



## Recommended “Thank You” ideas

Team Supporters receive special recognition and acknowledgment for their support from the team.

- Create t-shirts for your team and include your Team Supporters on it.
- Print a postcard with a picture of your team at Polar Plunge and a “Thank You” note on the back.
- Send a special “Thank You” card or drawing from an athlete for whom you are Plunging.
- Snap a picture of a “Thank You” from your team and publicly thank your Team Supporters on your social media pages.

## Team Supporter Benefits

Teams are encouraged to solicit Team Supporter donations to help reach and exceed team fundraising goals. Teams are responsible for providing “benefits” to these Supporters. These Team Supporters, unless secured An Event Sponsorship level, are **not event sponsors** and will not receive benefits in return for their team support.

Give \$100+ to support a plunger's efforts to reach their goal.



# HELPFUL TOOLS AND TIPS



- Visit **PlungeFL.org** and utilize the available resources!
  - From the homepage, click on **“Fundraising Resources”** to find sample letters, downloadable flyers, and fundraiser ideas.
  - Log into your **Plunger account** to find pre-loaded tools, such as email drafts and social media prompts, to assist with your fundraising efforts.
- **Matching Gifts:** Many companies will match donations given to Special Olympics Florida by employees. Check with your team members and donors to see if their company offers matching gifts. *Note: be sure to notify your staff partner of your confirmed matching gifts to ensure you will be credited online appropriately!*
- Use the below **template** as a guide to raising \$500 in just 10 days!

	Tip:	Total:
Day 1	Get yourself started! Make a personal contribution and show others how committed you are to Special Olympics Florida and our athletes.	\$25
Day 2	Challenge 3 family members to match your donation of \$25.	\$100
Day 3	Ask your best friend to match your donation.	\$125
Day 4	Ask your boss for a company donation or a matching gift.	\$150
Day 5	Hang out with friends! Ask five friends to donate \$10 to your plunge efforts.	\$200
Day 6	Email your Polar Plunge page to five out of town friends and ask them to donate \$10 to your plunge efforts.	\$250
Day 7	Hit the town! Tell 5 businesses you frequent why you are plunging and ask for a \$10 donation.	\$300
Day 8	Gather support at work! Ask 5 co-workers for \$10.	\$350
Day 9	Ask 5 neighbors to support your plunge for \$10.	\$400
Day 10	Ask 10 people at your church, club, gym, etc. for \$10 each.	\$500

*\*Remember, the EASIEST way to ask all of your contacts at once is through online fundraising! Make sure you set up your personal plunger page and customize it to showcase why you are plunging for our athletes! For other fundraising ideas, make sure to check out the “fundraising resources” page on our website or work with your staff partner!*

**I AM HERE TO HELP!**

**Hilary Kendrick | Development Manager**

**Office: 352-243-9536**

**HilaryKendrick@sofl.org**