



Polar Plunge Toolkit

What is the Polar Plunge?

It's when thousands of people around Oregon run into icy cold water to raise money for Special Olympics Oregon. As a plunger you register to participate in one of the five plunges around the state. Maybe you join a team. Maybe not. Then you raise a minimum of \$50 in pledges from friends, family, co-workers, Facebook friends, etc. (the more you raise, the bigger your incentive prizes). On plunge day you run or jump into the water and get out as fast as you can. You decide how far you want to go in. It's all done for fun and to raise money for a great cause.

Polar Plunge Oregon is a Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) event and began in 2007 when Bend Police Department and Deschutes County Sheriff's Office decided to take the Plunge for Special Olympics Oregon.

LETR is the largest grassroots fundraising effort for Special Olympics Oregon. More than 70 law enforcement agencies throughout the state raise money and awareness year-round for the athletes of Special Olympics Oregon.

How can your donation make an impact?

The heart and soul of Special Olympics Oregon **begins in the hometowns of our athletes.** Your participation and fundraising for the Polar Plunge will directly impact athlete experiences at a local & state level. \$25 from every plunger goes directly to the Local Program in the plunger's community!

\$50 - Provides an athlete with training equipment for one season

\$100 - Provides uniforms for one athlete for the entire year (3 sport seasons)

\$250 - Provides training and equipment for an entire basketball team for one season

\$500 - Allows a team to compete for one season

Polar Plunge Teams

Why put together a team?

This is a great opportunity to bond with family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers while showing your support to Special Olympics Oregon. It's cold enough and you are bold enough!

What is a Team Captain?

A team captain serves as a liaison between the plunge and the team members. You will help keep your team motivated and excited for the plunge!

- The Role of a Team Captain:
 - Register your team online
 - Recruit people for your team
 - Share fundraising tools with teammates
 - Start fundraising!
 - Help create a great team costume
 - Motivate
 - Show your enthusiasm for the event!
 - Stay in contact with your team about your progress
 - Educate
 - Let your donors & teammates know that you are fulfilling a very important mission
 - Learn about Special Olympics Oregon

Fundraising Event Ideas

Organize and hold fundraisers to bring in the donations!

Personal Assistant for a day

Offer to run errands, babysit, organize, clean a fridge, dog-sit, etc for a donation.

Bake Sale

Bring baked goods into workplace and sell.

Chili/Pie/BBQ Cook Off

Charge a small entrance fee, then small tasting fee.

Sports Bracket or Pools

Organize weekend game brackets for NFL/College Football. Charge a fee, with a split of proceeds to the winner.

Charity Game Night

Organize a game night. Charge a small entrance fee.

Potluck lunch at work

Have co-workers bring a dish into work, and everyone can donate money for the food instead of eating out or bringing lunch.

Pancake Breakfast at Work

Cook breakfast at work and sell it.

Christmas Light set up and/or removal

Offer to help set up or remove lights for donations.

Gift Wrapping

Offer to wrap gifts in exchange for a donation to your Plunge.

Icon Sales

Sell Polar Bear icons (provided by Special Olympics Oregon) in your school's student store, at your company or a neighborhood business.

50/50 Trivia Night

Organize a trivia night at your house, with a small buy-in. Split proceeds with winner.

Change Collection

Set up a collection jar at your workplace or ask friends for spare change.

Can Drive

Reach out to neighbors for cans.

Yard Sale

Clean out your house and sell what you no longer need

Guess Jar

Fill a clear jar with candy, and people pay a small fee to guess how many pieces are in the jar. Proceeds split and go to your Polar Plunge.

Restaurant Night

Get a local restaurant to donate proceeds to your Polar Plunge efforts. Examples: Chipotle, Burgerville, etc.

How to raise \$500 in 7 days!

DAY 1: Start by sponsoring yourself for \$25

DAY 2: Ask 3 family members to sponsor you for \$25

DAY 3: Ask 5 friends to donate \$15

DAY 4: Ask 5 co-workers to sponsor you for \$10

DAY 5: Email 15 people and ask for \$10 each

DAY 6: Ask your company for a \$75 donation

DAY 7: Ask 2 businesses you frequent for \$25

Social Sharing

Utilize Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram to reach out to your friends and family when asking for donations. Make sure that you link your Plunge Account to your posts so it's super easy for people to donate right to you!

TIPS

Get creative! Feel free to share pictures and videos to your posts. Have a personal story? Share it with your followers and let them know why you Plunge.

Tag Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Oregon in your posts!

@PlungeOregon | @SOORstate @PlungeOregon | @SOORstate @PlungeOregon |
@SOORstate

SAMPLE POSTS

Help me support the 14,000+ athletes who participate in Special Olympics Oregon. Please donate to my Polar Plunge page! #plungeoregon <insert link to personal Plunge page>

You can make a difference! Help me reach my fundraising goal as I take the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics Oregon. #plungeoregon <insert link to personal Plunge page>

'Tis the Plunge season! Help me support Special Olympics Oregon by donating to my Polar Plunge! #plungeoregon <insert link to personal Plunge page>

Fundraising Incentives

At each plunge, prizes will be awarded to the:

Plunger raising the most money.

Team raising the most money.

Law Enforcement employee raising the most money.

Team with the most members

Best Costume Contest

K-12 School Raising the most money

2020 Incentives are still being determined.

Plunge Day Checklist

- ✓ Plunge costume
- ✓ Shoes to plunge in (required – except in Medford)
- ✓ Change of clothes for after plunge
- ✓ Towel
- ✓ Plastic bag for wet clothes
- ✓ Offline Donations
- ✓ Friends

Letter Campaign

This is one way to raise a lot of money in a short amount of time! Set aside a few hours one day and you can have it all done. Write personal letters to your family, friends, and coworkers and let them know you are plunging.

Make it easy for people to donate! Consider including a self-addressed envelope (stamped or not) in the envelope when you mail a letter.

Feel free to compose a one page letter. Write it on your own as if you were sending it individually to a close friend. ☐ Send it to everyone who has ever sent you something

Early on, make the ask. Don't limit your donors, but ask for a specific range. Ask for "\$10, \$20, \$50 or whatever your budget will allow."

Give a 10 day deadline for response. People will respond when there is a sense of urgency.

Copy the letters. Before stuffing into the envelope; handwrite in colored ink, on the top of the letter the person's name and a quick line, "Hope you can support me." Sign it to add that personal touch.

Feel free to use our sample letter on the following page. Remember to share sample letter with team members to get them started. Also, make sure your plunge date is correct (the sample letter is for the Portland Plunge, so for others you should change it accordingly).



Dear [Insert Name],

On February [insert your Plunge date], I will be participating in the 2020 Polar Plunge in [change to your Plunge city]. I have decided that it's cold enough, and I'm bold enough to take a freezing dip into the [change to the body of water you will be plunging in] for the athletes of Special Olympics Oregon!

I have set a personal fundraising goal of \$[insert amount], and I need your help to reach it! Any amount would be appreciated—it all goes to a wonderful cause, and every little bit gets me that much closer to my goal. The other option--join me in taking the plunge!

There are three easy ways to support my Plunge:

1. Online donation: Credit or debit card. Visit [insert donation page URL]
2. Offline donation: Cash or checks. Make checks payable to "Special Olympics Oregon" then mail to Special Olympics Oregon Polar Plunge / 8313 SW Cirrus Drive, Beaverton, OR 97008. If you do it this way, please be sure to include my name in the memo area so that the staff will know where to credit the contribution.
3. Join! Join my team [insert team name] at www.plungeoregon.com

If you want to learn more about this exciting and zany winter event, visit www.plungeoregon.com to find out all the chilly details. Think warm thoughts for me as February [change to your Plunge date] approaches. Can you believe how much WARMTH can come out of so much COLD? Your support changes lives!

Thank you!

[Plunger Name]

Special Olympics Oregon Fact Sheet

WHO WE ARE: Special Olympics Oregon is a statewide year-round sports program for Oregon's children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Oregon offers training and competition opportunities in 14 different Olympic-style sports. We serve the largest disability population in the state, more than 14,000 participants, ages eight and above.

OUR MISSION AND VISION: The mission of Special Olympics Oregon is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

The vision of Special Olympics Oregon is to help bring all persons with intellectual disabilities into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted, respected and given the chance to become useful and productive citizens.

OUR HISTORY: The concept for Special Olympics was born in the early 1960s when Eunice Kennedy Shriver started a day camp for people with intellectual disabilities at her home in Rockville, Maryland. The first International Special Olympics Games were held in 1968 at Soldier's Field, Chicago with 1,000 athletes participating from 26 states and Canada.

HOW WE'VE GROWN: Mrs. Shriver's vision of an international sports organization for people with intellectual disabilities, one that would bring the joy and pride developed through sports competition to those the world believed could not learn or play sports, has grown into one of the largest and most successful sports and volunteer organizations in the world. Special Olympics programs are in every state and in over 160 countries worldwide, serving close to four million athletes every year.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Eligible athletes are all children and adults, at least eight years old, with intellectual disabilities, a cognitive delay, or a closely related developmental disability. Children age six and seven may participate in Special Olympics training, but may not compete.

OUR GAMES ARE ALWAYS: There are training and competition opportunities every day throughout the year. Our programs are free to all eligible athletes and are possible thanks to the generous support from individuals and businesses who believe in Special Olympics athletes. Financial support comes exclusively from individuals, organizations, corporations and foundations. We receive zero government funding. The average cost of supporting one athlete, for one season is \$150.00. Your support changes lives.