



**2018
TEAM CAPTAIN
TOOLKIT**

PLUNGEMN.ORG

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TEAM CAPTAIN TOOLKIT

So you’ve been tasked to lead the charge for your team. Now what?

Whether this is your first time, or you’ve Plunged more times than you can remember, the concept is simple. Each year, the Polar Plunge challenges thousands of brave jumpers at numerous locations around the state. It’s a great way for everyone—individuals, organizations and businesses—to get involved in supporting Special Olympics Minnesota. All funds raised go towards programming and events for more than 8,200 athletes statewide.

WHO CAN JOIN MY TEAM?

Anyone with a little guts and a warm heart wanting to support Special Olympics Minnesota’s 8,100 athletes is welcome to take the Plunge. In past years, Plungers have included 5-year-olds, 80-year-olds, mayors, police chiefs, sheriffs, deputies, corporations, organizations, clubs, fraternities, families, co-workers and everyone in between. In 2015, more than 16,200 people took the Plunge for Special Olympics Minnesota. That’s a lot of frigid splashes! And for the more hesitant souls, there’s always a need for Plunge cheer teams!

2018 POLAR PLUNGES

White Bear Lake	January 27	Prior Lake	February 17
Owatonna	January 27	Anoka County	February 24
Willmar/Spicer	January 27	South Metro	February 24
Snow Park	January 28	Alexandria	February 25
Maple Grove	February 3	Minneapolis	March 2-3
St. Peter	February 3	Brainerd	March 3
Snow Park Night Plunge	February 3	Eden Prairie	March 10
Rochester	February 9-10	Mille Lacs	March 10
Woodbury	February 10	Buffalo	March 10
St. Cloud	February 17	Grand Rapids	March 17
Duluth	February 16-17	Warroad	March 17

TEAM CAPTAIN RECRUITMENT/FUNDRAISING IDEAS

Encourage everyone on your team to start with a self donation - big or small, it shows people that you're serious about the cause!

- Send email to friends / family asking for donations, and offer to do personal matches.
- Encourage early fundraising, and pre-holiday is a great time to make those asks.
- Seek end of year tax deductible options for companies to sponsor you or your team.
- Personalize 'canned' emails with stories, photos and links to your page
- If they say no, continue to ask them in different ways to support you until they say yes!
- Don't assume who is going to donate – ask everyone and anyone!
- Team Captains should sign up early to encourage others to sign up and start fundraising.
- Share pre-holiday messages to encourage early sign ups / donations.
- Do Facebook Live sharing your excitement and include a link to donate to your page.
- Create costumes based on amount fundraised – if you donate, you'll see the pictures of the costume.
- Make it fun – share embarrassing photos, etc.
- Schedule tabling events at your office or in your community to encourage others to join or donate.
- Organize themed bake sale / chili cook-off / etc. fundraiser - people pay \$5 for bowl of chili and donations go back to your team.
- Have other team members share and encourage new friends to join - don't rely solely on Team Captain to recruit.
- Make a day of the Plunge! Meet up at a local restaurant pre- and post-Plunge to eat and hang out with your team.
- Use casual days at the office to promote your involvement by wearing past Plunge shirts.

RECOMMENDED TIMELINE

STEPS	WHEN	WHAT TO DO
STEP 1	<i>2-4 months before</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register your team at PlungeMN.org. • Set team goals and create a plan to achieve them. • Recruit team members.
STEP 2	<i>2-3 months before</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a team kick-off party. • Continue recruiting team members. • Begin collecting donations - it's never too early to start.
STEP 3	<i>1-2 months before</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a team fundraiser. • Make sure your team members are registered online. • Start planning your team's costumes.
STEP 4	<i>1-2 months before</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure you have the most current pre-registration and day of registration Plunge details from PlungeMN.org and communicate them to your team. • Set a time and place for your team to meet on the day of the Plunge.
DAY OF PLUNGE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet your Plunge team at the planned location. • Ensure each team member checks-in • Take a team photo. • Hold your breath, Plunge into the icy water and have fun!
AFTER THE PLUNGE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect any late pledges and mail them to Special Olympics Minnesota. • Thank team members for their efforts! • Host a wrap up party to recognize your team members. • Send us your Plunge photos, videos and stories. • Take the plunge survey and help us improve future Plunges. • Start planning for next year!

PLUNGE TOOLS



TABLE TENTS

Special Olympics Minnesota will supply these to your team at no cost. This tool is an effective way to spread the word about your company's involvement and a great cause!



CUSTOMIZABLE POSTERS

The customizable posters are 8.5 inches by 11 inches and can be customized for your company, school, group or team.



POSTERS

The Plunge Posters come in two different sizes: 8.5x11 inches and 11x17 inches. These posters are great for displaying in public areas to bring awareness of the Polar Plunges.



RACK CARDS

The Plunge Rack Cards are two-sided display cards that can be given to anyone interested in learning more about the Polar Plunge.



EMAIL ICON

The Plunge Email Icon is a photo that can be included in your email signature. Not only does it promote the Plunge, but also can hyper link to PlungeMN.org or even your team page.



WEBSITE

The Plunge website is back -- and it's better and more intuitive than ever this year! PlungeMN.org will continue to be the go-to place for Plungers to get all the latest updates, news, fun facts, photos and tools.

EMAIL OUTREACH

Email is an incredibly effective fundraising tool, reaching people all over the world with the click of a button. It is a great way to spread the word about your Plunge participation, and to ask others to join your team or pledge your cause.

TIPS & TRICKS

- Make it personal: Tell your story. Share with others why you participate, whether it's because you are Plunging for fun or because you love Special Olympics Minnesota.
- If you've Plunged before, share a picture of your previous jump to frozen glory.
- If it's your first time, share your nerves and excitement!
- Have fun with it! Make a contest or game out of it - the first person to donate, or the largest donation gets a gift from you!
- Follow-up. Be sure to say thank you to donors after they make their donation, and again after you take the Plunge. Send them a picture of you Plunging with the results from the event.

SAMPLE TEXT

It's gonna be frigid! This winter I will be taking the Plunge to support Special Olympics Minnesota. You might be asking yourself what this Plunge is? Well, I will be raising money so I can jump into a frozen Minnesota Lake. The Plunge into the water may be a little frigid, but I don't mind because I am supporting the amazing athletes of Special Olympics Minnesota.

To jump into the frigid waters, I have set a personal fundraising goal of \$\$ (amount), and I need your help to reach it. I'm hoping you'll make a donation to Special Olympics Minnesota on my behalf and support my Polar Plunge. Don't you want to see me be freezin' for a reason?

You can support my Plunge several ways. The best and easiest is to visit PlungeMN.org and pledge online. My personal page can be found at [PlungeMN.org\(personal url\)](http://PlungeMN.org(personal url)). You can check this page to see my goal, pledges raised and a photo of me after the Plunge!

If you prefer not to donate online, you can also give your donation directly to me, or mail it in to Special Olympics Minnesota at the address below. Please make sure to include my name with your donation so I receive credit for the pledge.

*Special Olympics Minnesota
900 2nd Ave S, Ste 300
Minneapolis, MN 55402*

If you can't support my Plunge through a donation, why not consider being bold in the cold and join me in taking the Plunge? You can join my team online now! To learn more about the Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Minnesota, visit PlungeMN.org.

EMAIL TAG

Include an email tag at the bottom of your email talking about your Plunge participation. It can be a sentence or two about the Plunge, or use the Plunge photo icon to show potential donors exactly what you'll be doing! You can even hyper link the image to your personal Plunge page. To use, visit PlungeMN.org/tools, right-click the image and choose "save image as."

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat are incredibly powerful tools for fundraising. It has become common practice for Plunge participants to do all of their fundraising entirely through social media. They are easy tools to use and a personal way to connect with friends and family all over the world with a minimal effort.

FACEBOOK

- Like us on Facebook: [Facebook.com/PlungeMN](https://www.facebook.com/PlungeMN)
 - Share a post from [Facebook.com/PlungeMN](https://www.facebook.com/PlungeMN)
- Add a link to your online Plunge page to send people directly to fundraising page from Facebook
- Make your Plunge an event on Facebook and invite friends to join you or donate to your efforts
- Update your status:
 - Share why you are Plunging and what your goal is.
 - Update your fundraising progress continuously until you take your Plunge
- Let your pictures do the talking:
 - If you've Plunged before, post a picture of your jump along with your donation request
 - Set your profile picture and timeline photo to a picture of you taking the Plunge, or the costume you'll be wearing to Plunge
- Shout outs: post a shout out to your donors when they pledge!
- Don't forget to use the #PlungeMN hashtag

INSTAGRAM

- Follow us on Instagram: [Instagram.com/PlungeSOMN](https://www.instagram.com/PlungeSOMN)
- Repost a photo from the Plunge Instagram account
- Add a link to your online Plunge page in your profile to send people directly to your fundraising page from your Instagram account
- If you've Plunged before, post photos of your previous Plunges!

TWITTER

- Follow us: [Twitter.com/PlungeMN](https://twitter.com/PlungeMN)
- Retweet a tweet from PlungeMN and/or your followers - be sure to use the #PlungeMN hashtag!
- Upload Photos: tweet a photo of you taking the Plunge, if you've done so before. If you're a rookie, tweet a photo of your costume. Don't forget to ask for support!
- Create an engaging 140 character message that shares why you are taking the Plunge
- Shout outs: tweet each time you receive a new pledge!
- Set your profile picture and header image to a photo of you Plunging

SNAPCHAT

- Snap your Plunge experience! Share your Plunge prep, costume ideas and, of course, all the fun you have at the actual Plunge
- Look for Polar Plunge geofilters when you're out at a Plunge!

ADDITIONAL WAYS TO FUNDRAISE

You've sent out emails to friends, called your Grandma asking for her support, and inundated your social media accounts with all things "Plunge!" You've raised the \$75 minimum, but you still want to do more. Great! There are several other great ways to get the word out about your Plunge efforts and fundraise for your cause. Most of all, have fun with it!

HOLD YOUR OWN FUNDRAISER

Whether the fundraiser is for your personal efforts or a team fundraiser, it's a great way to get people together and raise funds AND awareness for the Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Minnesota. Some ideas for fundraisers are below ... you can use these models and make them your own! Be sure to send any fundraisers you are hosting in to Plunge Headquarters at plunge@somn.org and we will post the details to our upcoming events calendar.

- Host a bake sale at your office, in your neighborhood, or posts your items for sale on Facebook!
- Hold a garage sale with proceeds going to your Plunge team.
- Work with a local restaurant to provide a meal for customers at a set cost, with half of it going to your Plunge efforts.
- Hold a silent auction or raffle.

WORKPLACE GIVING

- Before hitting up your coworkers for a donation, see if you can form a company team instead. It's a fun team building opportunity for companies, and wearing your company t-shirts is a great way to maximize exposure at the event too!
- Find out about matching gift policies at your company. Some companies match employee fundraising, while others match donations made by employees. This is an easy way to double your donations!
- Have your donors find out about their companies matching gift policy to see if their donation will be matched.
- To check if a company offers matching gifts, visit www.matchinggifts.com/specialolympics/
- Host a Casual for a Cause day at work. Employees can donate a set amount to wear jeans (or better yet, Plunge gear from previous participation) and funds raised goes to support your Plunge.
- Additional workplace fundraising ideas include:
 - Set out a candy jar and ask for change each time they take a piece; purchase bottles of water and pop at wholesale and put in the company lunchroom. Charge \$1 for drinks and any profit can go to your fundraising efforts.
 - Ask your boss if they'll get in on the fun! If your company raises X amount, they'll take the Plunge with you!