



Polar Plunge Toolkit





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What is a Polar Plunge?

The Polar Plunge® is a Law Enforcement Torch Run® signature event. It is a unique opportunity for individuals, organizations, and businesses to support local Special Olympics Montana athletes by jumping, running or slowly crawling into the frigid and icy waters of Montana.

It's primarily organized by local law enforcement officers with support from sponsors, volunteers, athletes, and members of the Area Management Team.

History of Montana's Polar Plunges

In 1999, Flathead County Sheriff Jim Dupont, Kalispell Police Chief Frank Garner and Mike Ferda from the Whitefish Police Department joined forces with local law enforcement agencies and fire departments to hold the 1st Annual Penguin Plunge in Whitefish to support Special Olympics Montana. Over \$16,500 was raised that year. There are currently 13 Polar Plunges across Montana, raising over \$350,000 for Special Olympics Montana athletes.

Sponsors

Year-Round Torch Run Sponsors



Presenting Plunge Sponsor



Other Plunge Sponsor



Polar Plunge Locations



NOV. 25, 2022
SIDNEY



DEC. 2, 2022
GREAT FALL



DEC. 2, 2022
MILES CITY



DEC. 3, 2022
GLASGOW



DEC 3, 2022
HAVRE



DEC. 10, 2022
BILLINGS



JAN. 21, 2023
BUTTE



JAN. 28, 2023
LEWISTOWN



JAN. 28, 2023
POLSON



FEB. 4, 2023
WHITEFISH



FEB. 11, 2023
HELENA



FEB. 18, 2022
BOZEMAN



FEB. 25, 2022
MISSOULA

STEPS TO BECOME A SUCCESSFUL PLUNGER

STEP #1

Pre-Register for the plunge! Visit <https://bit.ly/plungeregistration2022> to register online. Each individual will need to register for the plunge, whether on a team or an individual plunger. You may also register the day of at the plunge site, but official plunge incentive is not guaranteed at time of plunge.

STEP #2

Solicit and collect pledges! Ask family, friends and co-workers to pledge you as you are “Freezin’ for a Reason”! Each plunger will need to collect the minimum amount in pledges. For example, if the minimum is \$125 and you have 5 plungers on your team, you will need a minimum of \$625. You can collect pledges online or offline. Visit <https://www.somt.org/torch-run/polar-plunge/> to find Pledge Forms. All pledges will need to be collected beforehand and brought to the plunge.

STEP #3

Have FUN! Form a team and plunge with friends, family or co-workers; create a team name and crazy costumes (within reason)!





PLUNGE TEAMS

Create a plunge team with family, friends or co-workers.

- * All plungers on the team must pre-register.
- * Assign a Team Captain and create a Team page
- * Design a crazy team costume – remember costumes cannot be heavy or bulky.
- * Challenge similar organizations to see who can raise more pledges or create a larger team.
- * Each team member must join the team and create their own Just Giving Page.
- * You can collect pledges as a team online or offline. The team will need to collect the minimum amount for each plunger. For example, if the minimum is \$125 and you have 5 plungers on your team, you will need a minimum of \$625.
- * The team captain can bring the pledge forms, pledges and a waiver for each team member to the plunge check in. The team captain will then receive further instructions for their team.

HOW TO RAISE \$250 IN ONE WEEK

SUNDAY	Your personal contribution	\$30
MONDAY	Ask your significant other & best friend for \$25	\$25
TUESDAY	Ask three relatives for \$25 each	\$75
WEDNESDAY	Ask three friends for \$20 each	\$60
THURSDAY	Ask four co-workers for \$10 each	\$40
FRIDAY	Ask two neighbors for \$10 each	\$20
SATURDAY	Celebrate your Accomplishment!!	

TOTAL = \$250

*Remember to mention that all donations are tax deductible.
All proceeds benefit Special Olympics Montana athletes.*



FUNDRAISING IDEAS AND HINTS

- * **Most Successful Idea.** Mail a fundraising letter to your friends, family and neighbors with a self-addressed stamped envelope. See our sample donation request letter.
- * **Create a Personal Fundraising Webpage through JustGiving.** Email those you know out-of-state/town to support your cause by donating through your webpage.
- * **Add the Plunge logo to your email signature.** Be sure to include the link to your personal fundraising webpage to encourage everyone to visit and donate.
- * **Form a team at work or with friends.** Select a captain, choose a team theme...like "Super Plungers" and dress up like superhero's - wear matching shirts and make a statement or showcase your business.
- * **Double your fun.** Challenge a friend or colleague to Plunge! See our sample challenge letter.
- * **Track your pledges.** Use the [Pledge form](#) to track your off-line donations. All donations made on-line through JustGiving will be tracked on your personal fundraising webpage. Add your off-line donations to see your total amount.
- * **Double your pledges with matching funds.** Ask your supporters about matching funds from their employers.
- * **Share your plunge experience on Facebook.** Blog, video, photos - share for everyone to enjoy.
- * **Always follow up via phone and/or email.** People will appreciate the reminder.
- * **Send thank you letters to all sponsors** and include a crazy photo so they will remember you for next year.



Sample Donation Request Letter

<date>

Dear <name>

I am writing to ask for your help. On <date>, I have committed to "Freezin' for a Reason" for the athletes of Special Olympics Montana by taking a chilly dip during the <Polar Plunge>. I have set a personal fundraising goal of \$<insert amount>, and I need your help to reach it! So no, I'm not asking you to take the Plunge alongside, but instead, I am asking if you will make a donation to Special Olympics Montana on my behalf. Any amount would be appreciated - it all goes to a wonderful cause and every little bit gets me that much closer to my goal.

In order to support my Plunge, please visit <link your fundraising website> It will take you to my personal fundraising page where you can make a donation and see my progress. You can also make a donation directly to Special Olympics Montana at PO Box 3507, Great Falls MT 59403. Please include my name and the name of the Polar Plunge so that Special Olympics will know where to credit the contribution. If you want to learn more about this wacky winter event, visit <https://www.somt.org/torch-run/polar-plunge/> to find out all the chilly details. Think warm thoughts for me and I will do my best to make my supporters proud!

Thank you!!!

<Plunger Name>



Special Olympics
Montana



Sample Challenge Letter

<date>

<name>

Hello <name>,

On behalf of this year's Polar Plunge, I have a proposal for you. But first, I'll provide a brief overview of the event.

The Polar Plunge is an icy dip into freezing water on <date> to raise money to benefit Special Olympics Montana athletes. In order to participate, plungers must raise at least \$125 in order to have the "privilege and honor" of taking the plunge.

With that said, we are in the process of recruiting plungers to participate, help raise money and raise excitement about this year's plunge. And we are in fact hoping that you and some of its employees will participate, but with a twist of competition.

Our proposal is this: <you and _____> will both create teams. Each team will compete to see which group is able to raise the most money. The team that raises the most money wins and the prize for winning being the pleasure of seeing the losing team take the plunge into the pool of cold water.

Not only will your business and teams be participating in a friendly competition, but your efforts will directly benefit Special Olympics athletes.

If you are interested in participating in this year's "Polar Plunge Challenge," please let me know. We would love to have your businesses participation. For more information, please feel free to call me at <phone> or email me at <email>.

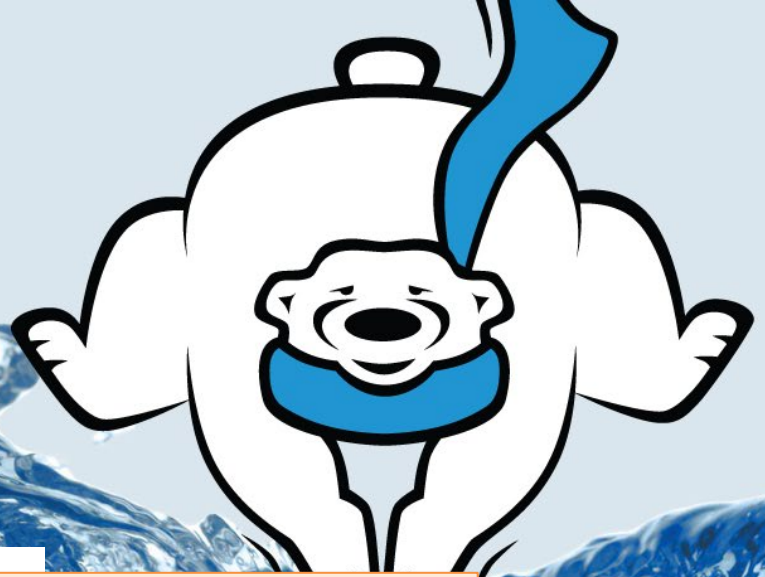
I look forward to hearing from you and I will be in touch.

<name>

On behalf of the Polar Plunge



POLAR PLUNGE®



Toss Your Boss!

Teacher, Friend, Coach....

Be a part of the Coolest Event in Town!

Objective: Nominate your boss to take a dip in the icy waters at **<location>**. Grab your co-workers, nominate your boss and sign-up today!

Step 1: Nominate your boss!

Step 2: Form and register your team

Step 3: Raise at least \$500

Step 4: Watch your boss take the plunge!!!

Is your boss too chicken to take the plunge?

No problem! You can still support Special Olympics Montana. A boss can register as a chicken, pay \$125, and avoid the freezing water.

Why take the plunge? Every dollar you raise helps provide over 3,300 Special Olympics Montana athletes the chance to train, compete, and take on life challenges with skill and confidence.

EVENT DETAILS

<https://www.somt.org/torch-run/polar-plunge/>

<event date>

<time>

<location>

<address>

<city, state>



PLUNGER FIRST TIMER TIPS

DO

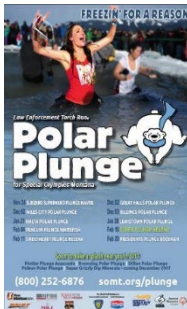
- * Do wear your plunge 'attire' under your clothes - then you don't have to change into them at the plunge.
- * Do choose your plunge 'attire' knowing that you will be cold and your fingers will possibly be numb, so loose-fitting and easy off clothes are best.
- * Do remember that you will be exiting the water quickly, so do not wear anything that may be heavy when wet. You may not be allowed to plunge.
- * Do bring a robe, blankets, towels or jacket to wear while waiting to plunge.
- * Do wear tennis or water shoes - the ground is freezing.
- * Do bring extra towels to dry off with and to stand on.
- * Do bring loose fitting clothing and shoes to change into after the plunge.
- * Do bring your pledge sheet and all pledges with you to the plunge. All money must be collected beforehand.
- * Do have a parent or guardian sign the waiver if you are under 18. Parent or guardian must accompany plunger under the age of 18.
- * Do bring a plastic bag for wet clothes.
- * Do PLUNGE WITH FRIENDS - it is more FUN!

DON'T

- * DO NOT plunge if you have any heart conditions or serious medical conditions. If unsure, consult with your doctor before taking the plunge.
- * ABSOLUTLY NO DIVING, CANNONBALLS OR SOMMERSUALTS!!!! The water is shallow. This is a safety regulation that will be enforced.
- * No wet suits or dry suits are allowed - that would be cheating! Only the divers in the water may wear dry suits.
- * Only get wet up to your neck. There is no pressure to fully submerge yourself.
- * Do not show up at the plunge right before the start time. You will need time to check-in and prepare for the plunge.
- * Do not drink alcohol prior to plunging. Alcohol does not warm you up, it accelerates hypothermia.
- * DON'T forget to SMILE - photographers are on hand to capture your moment of fame. All photos will be posted at www.somt.smugmug.com.

POLAR PLUNGE TOOLS

Printed materials can be sent to you at no cost. Email abliss@somt.org with what items you would like and quantity.



Plunge Posters

Polar Plunge posters are great for displaying in public areas to bring awareness of your local Polar Plunge. These can be downloaded at <https://www.somt.org/torch-run/polar-plunge/>



Plunge E-mail Tag

The Plunge E-mail Tag can be included in your email signature. Link to somt.org/plunge or your team page. This can be downloaded at <https://www.somt.org/torch-run/polar-plunge/>



2016-2017 Polar Plunge Season

Plunge Website

You'll find everything you need on the plunge website. It includes information about each plunge, forms that can be downloaded and a link to Justgiving - our online registration system. Visit the plunge website at <https://bit.ly/plungeregistration2022>



PLUNGER BUSINESS CARDS

Polar Plunge Donation Receipt

Name: _____

Address: _____

Donation Amount: _____ Date: _____

Plunger Name: _____

Circle Form of Payment: Cash Check

Thank you for your donation. Special Olympics Montana is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Polar Plunge Donation Receipt

Name: _____

Address: _____

Donation Amount: _____ Date: _____

Plunger Name: _____

Circle Form of Payment: Cash Check

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Polar Plunge Donation Receipt

Name: _____

Address: _____

Donation Amount: _____ Date: _____

Plunger Name: _____

Circle Form of Payment: Cash Check

Thank you for your donation. Special Olympics Montana is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Polar Plunge Donation Receipt

Name: _____

Address: _____

Donation Amount: _____ Date: _____

Plunger Name: _____

Circle Form of Payment: Cash Check

Thank you for your donation. Special Olympics Montana is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Use the donor receipts for cash or check donations that are less than \$250. Checks made for \$250 or more will receive a receipt from Special Olympics Montana in the mail. Online donors will automatically receive a receipt via email. If you have questions, contact us at (800) 242-6876 or abliss@somt.org.



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: Share with others why you participate, whether it's because you are Plunging for fun or because you love Special Olympics Montana.
- ✦ 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 going to frigid! This winter I will be taking the Plunge to support Special Olympics Montana. You might be asking yourself "what is this Plunge?" Well, I will be raising money so I can jump into freezing waters to support Special Olympics Montana.

I have set a personal fundraising goal of \$<amount> and I need your help in reaching it. I am hoping you will make a donation to Special Olympics Montana on my behalf and support my Polar Plunge. You can support my Plunge several ways. My personal page can be found at **<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 Montana at the address below. Please make sure to include my name and which Plunge with your donation so I receive credit.

Special Olympics Montana
710 1st Ave N
Great Falls, MT 59401

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 Montana, visit <https://bit.ly/plungeregistration2022>

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook and Twitter 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/Instagram

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MTLETR>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/letrmontana/>

- * Like us
- * Share a post from
- * Add a link to your online Plunge page to send people directly to your Facebook profile
- * Make your Plunge an event on Facebook. Invite friends to support your fundraising effort, that way they will have a reminder before your Plunge!
- * Update your status:
 - o Share why you are Plunging and what your goal is
 - o Update you fundraising progress each time you continuously until you take your Plunge. Don't forget to share your "training" (i.e. how you are preparing for your jump).
- * Let your pictures do the talking:
 - o If you've Plunged before, post a picture of your jump along with your donation request
 - o 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! You can even tag them in your post - just type @ + their name
- * Use Hashtags: you can now use hashtags like #SO_Montana on Facebook
- * Don't forget to thank your friends after your Plunge!

Twitter

- * Follow us: https://twitter.com/SO_Montana
- * Retweet a tweet from SO_Montana and/or your followers
- * 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. Don't forget to mention them in your status, just type @ + their name
- * Set your profile picture and twitter header image to a photo of you Plunging
- * Don't forget to thank your followers after your 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 \$125 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!

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.
- * 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.
- * 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!

