



## Law Enforcement Torch Run Manual

A guide to help raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics Arkansas

Updated January 2021

Greetings Fellow Law Enforcement Officer,

On behalf of the Arkansas Law Enforcement Torch Run Executive Council, we would like to personally thank each of you for becoming involved in the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Arkansas year-round movement to help raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics Arkansas. We have consistently raised over 500,000 since 2006, reaching our top year in 2019 with 596,000. Our next milestone goal is \$750,000 and we are thrilled to have you on our team.

Our success is a direct result of hardworking, dedicated officers, just like you who organized fundraising events and collected donations from people and companies to help us reach our goal. We not only raised funds but awareness for the more than 20,000 Special Olympics athletes and young athletes in the state. We are so grateful to each one of you for assisting in the success of the Torch Run movement.

In addition to hitting a new fundraising milestone we aim to recruit more departments/agencies. To do this we have created subcommittees in five regions in the state: northwest, northeast, central, southeast, and southwest. The main objective of the committees are to enhance networking, communication and opportunity around the state.

We host many events throughout the year including Tip-A-Cops, Truck Convoy, Polar Plunge, Boots and Badges, Fire Truck Pulls, Charity Olive Hour Live and Silent Auction, and Cops on Top of Donut Shops just to name a few. We also have tremendous partners such as Casey's General Stores, and Centennial Bank that provide opportunity to grow through cause related campaigns.

We encourage you to dive in and commit to the athletes. Run with the Flame of Hope when the opportunity is there, attend a fundraiser, and be present at the awards stands to celebrate ability and success!

This handbook provides you with a lot of information to help you engage in this year-round movement!

Sincerely,

*Eli Keller*

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LETR Arkansas State Director

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# LETR AREAS

## LETR AREAS



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# ABOUT LETR

Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics (LETR) is a volunteer movement that was established by members of the law enforcement community to support Special Olympics. The mission of LETR is to increase awareness and raise funds for the Special Olympics movement.

LETR began in 1981, when Wichita, Kansas (USA) Police Chief Richard LaMunyon saw an urgent need to increase awareness of Special Olympics. He also saw it as an ideal way to get local law enforcement personnel involved with the Special Olympics community. The LETR was quickly adopted by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the founding organization of the Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics. What started as a flicker over thirty years ago has grown into a roaring flame of support and stability for Special Olympics athletes worldwide.

The Arkansas Secret Service is the founding law enforcement agency for LETR for Special Olympics Arkansas. What began as a 30-mile run is now a four day relay that includes more than 1200 miles and 700 runners. LETR is open to all law enforcement groups including, but not limited to: federal and state law enforcement agencies, sheriffs' departments, park rangers, corrections and campus police, and is endorsed internationally by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

The Torch Run in Arkansas originates in over 12 locations and culminates at the site of the state Summer Games. Arkansas has consistently ranked in the emerald level of excellence raising over \$500,000 each year since 2010.

The term "Torch Run" is a little misleading of the true efforts of law enforcement throughout Arkansas. The Torch Run is much more than just running a torch across the state to the Summer Games in May. In fact, it is an active year-round movement. Officers representing every branch of law enforcement work within their local communities to raise both money and awareness for Special Olympics Arkansas through special events like Polar Plunges, Boots-N-Badges, Tip-A-Cop, Cops-on-Top, Trivia Night, as well as golf and softball tournaments. Their efforts generate tremendous positive media coverage and demonstrate daily that law enforcement cares about people.

A major source of funding comes from the sale of Torch Run T-shirts that feature a new design each year. Sponsors and corporate donations help round out these fund-raising efforts.

## GLOBAL IMPACT:

- For the last 37 years, a largely untold story has been happening—members of the law enforcement community have been going above and beyond the call of duty for the most marginalized citizens in their communities, and volunteering together for acceptance and inclusion on behalf of people with intellectual disabilities—the athletes of Special Olympics.
- The Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics is the largest grassroots fundraiser for Special Olympics with more than 100,000 law enforcement participants around the world. At its most basic level, the Torch Run is an actual running event where law enforcement officers and Special Olympics athletes run the "Flame of Hope" into the Opening Ceremonies of Special Olympics competitions.
- In 2014, LETR marked a milestone, surpassing \$511 million—more than a half-billion dollars—in funds raised for Special Olympics since its inception. All dollars are raised in law enforcement's off-duty time and the funds stay local to the communities they protect and serve.
- Volunteering takes form in a variety of ways including unique fundraising events such as Boots & Badges, Tip-A-Cop, Cops-On-Top, Polar Plunges and more.

# REASONS TO ENGAGE WITH LETR

## Camaraderie

Law enforcement officers working together with and on behalf of Special Olympics athletes create powerful personal connections that heighten fellowship and enhance spirit and partnership among officers and Special Olympics athletes.

## Dignity

Athletes and officers are acknowledged and esteemed for their achievements and contributions to the community.

## Joy

Through law enforcement's association with Special Olympics and its community and fundraising activities, moments of great delight and happiness are created that celebrate the human spirit and are shared by all – athletes, volunteers, officers and members of the community at large.

## Gratification

Law enforcement participation at all levels provides a sense of achievement above and beyond the normal call of duty as officers help champion opportunities for and showcase the capabilities of people with intellectual disabilities. Officers feel a heightened sense of satisfaction and gratification that transcends that which they typically experience performing their normal duties.

## Pride

Law enforcement's partnering with Special Olympics and volunteering to make a difference create a heightened sense of merit, dignity, self-respect and self-esteem for law enforcement in general and for the participating individual officers in particular.

## Community Impact

Positive transformation is catalyzed through local, grassroots law enforcement/Special Olympics activities which ultimately result in a more inclusive, civil and just society overall.

## Connectedness

Law enforcement, athletes, local governments, civic organizations, educators, businesses, and volunteers come together in a unified manner to make a positive impact on all people—with and without ID—and on the community as a whole. There is a universal bonding of officers that happens worldwide because of their connection to the movement.



# HISTORY OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS ARKANSAS

Special Olympics Arkansas (SOAR) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit headquartered in North Little Rock (Pulaski County). The Mission of Special Olympics Arkansas 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 fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendships with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

Special Olympics Arkansas began in 1970, just two years after Special Olympics Incorporated founder, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, held the first Special Olympics games at Soldier Field in Chicago (1968). Arkansas's games were held in Conway, Arkansas at Hendrix College. There were approximately 260 athletes in attendance. The following year, games were held in North Little Rock, Arkansas at Old Main. Eunice Kennedy Shriver was in attendance. Since our first games in 1970, Special Olympics Arkansas has grown to 17 Areas encompassing all counties in the state. SOAR supports 15,000 adults and children with intellectual disabilities.

There are 15 different Olympic-type sports offered and 240 competitions year-round. Some sports include Bocce, Bowling, Field Hockey, Basketball, Flag Football, Softball, Golf, Soccer, Athletics, and Volleyball,. The largest competition event is Summer Games. The event, held in May each year, is host to 2000 athletes participating in 6 different sports. Arkansas athletes also compete in Special Olympics USA Games held in the summer every four years and Special Olympics World Games held every four years alternating between winter and summer competitions.

In addition to our competitions and training, Special Olympics Arkansas has programming in health, education, and community building. Special Olympics Healthy Athlete is a Special Olympics program that provides free health screenings in a fun, welcoming environment that removes the anxiety and trepidation people with intellectual disabilities often experience when faced with a visit to a doctor or dentist. Young Athletes, a unique sport and play program for children age 2-7 with intellectual disabilities. The focus is on fun activities that are important to mental and physical growth. As Special Olympics athletes gain in confidence and feel empowered, they often seek new challenges. They want to build on their successes, including their social skills. Our Athlete Leadership Program is designed to meet this need. Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools promotes communities where all young people are agents of change, fostering acceptance, respect, dignity, and advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities and thereby anyone who is perceived as different.

Special Olympics Arkansas currently has a volunteer base of 5,000+. Volunteers are a huge part of the Special Olympics movement, from games and competitions to fund-raising and programs. 1 in 6 families is touched by Special Olympics through athletes, donors and volunteers. The Special Olympics Arkansas movement continues to evolve while always remaining focused on paving the way for social inclusion community-wide.

***Special Olympics***  
***Arkansas***



# SPECIAL OLYMPICS LANGUAGE GUIDE

Words matter. Words can open doors to enable persons with disabilities to lead fuller, more independent lives. Words can also create barriers or stereotypes that are not only demeaning to persons with disabilities, but also rob them of their individuality. The following language guidelines have been developed by experts in intellectual disabilities for use by anyone writing or speaking about persons with disabilities to ensure that all people are portrayed with individuality and dignity.

## Appropriate Terminology

- Refer to participants in Special Olympics as Special Olympics athletes rather than Special Olympians or Special Olympic athletes.
- Refer to people with intellectual disabilities as individuals, persons or people with intellectual disabilities, rather than intellectually disabled people or the intellectually disabled.
- A person has intellectual disabilities, rather than is suffering from, is afflicted with or is a victim of intellectual disabilities.
- Distinguish between adults and children with intellectual disabilities. Use adults or children, or older or younger athletes.
- A person uses a wheelchair, rather than is confined or restricted to a wheelchair.
- “Down Syndrome” has replaced Down’s Syndrome and mongoloid.
- Refer to participants in Special Olympics as athletes. In no case should the word athletes appear in quotation marks.
- When writing, refer to persons with a disability in the same style as persons without a disability: full name on first reference and last name on subsequent references. Do not refer to an individual with an intellectual disability as “Bill” rather than the journalistically correct “Bill Smith” or “Smith.”
- A person is physically challenged or disabled rather than crippled.
- Use the words “Special Olympics” when referring to the worldwide Special Olympics movement.

## Terminology to Avoid

- Do not use the label “kids” when referring to Special Olympics athletes. Adult athletes are an integral part of the movement.
- Do not use the word “the” in front of Special Olympics unless describing a specific Special Olympics event or official.
- Do not use the adjective “unfortunate” when talking about persons with intellectual disabilities. Disabling conditions do not have to be life-defining in a negative way.
- Do not sensationalize the accomplishments of persons with disabilities. While these accomplishments should be recognized and applauded, people in the disability rights movement have tried to make the public aware of the negative impact of referring to the achievements of physically or mentally challenged people with excessive hyperbole.
- Use the word “special” with extreme care when talking about persons with intellectual disabilities. The term, if used excessively in references to Special Olympics athletes and activities, can become a cliché.

# TOP 10 THINGS TO KNOW

1. All funds raised in the name of Special Olympics are the property of Special Olympics. You are responsible for collecting all funds raised and forwarding them to the Special Olympics Arkansas (SOAR) office. You will receive a receipt by mail. Agencies are not permitted to open bank accounts bearing Special Olympics' name.
2. Take advantage of matching funds from Wal-Mart and Sam's.
3. Participate in Polar Plunge, Tip A Cop/Tip A Hero, Cops On Top—all LETR events where your agency can raise funds.
4. Special Olympics Arkansas is a year-round sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities – serving over 15,000 athletes!
5. As a volunteer, you are the best person to have ask for a donation. People in your community are more likely to give when a volunteer asks. Don't underestimate your value as a volunteer!
6. Have fun! Your "real" jobs are serious, so when working on LETR projects be creative, have fun, think outside the box, and now you have a lot of resources available to you for information. They include:
  - > SOAR's Website: [www.specialolympicsarkansas.org](http://www.specialolympicsarkansas.org)
  - > Law Enforcement Torch Run Facebook: Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Arkansas
  - > Law Enforcement Torch Run Instagram: @LETR4SOAR
  - > State Torch Run Office
  - > Your Special Olympics Arkansas Area Director or Field Representative
7. We encourage agencies to localize the Torch Run. This is the best way for the Torch Run to have special meaning for your officers and community. If you want to coordinate a leg of the Torch Run through your town, contact your area Field Representative ASAP. He/she will point you in the right direction!
8. Attend sports competitions; see firsthand how the money you work hard to raise is used. Cheer on a champion!
9. Communicate events going on in your area to Special Olympics Arkansas's home office for use to promote on social media, website, and other media news outlets.
10. Be sure to familiarize yourself with and follow the Cash Control Procedures listed on page 26.



# VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION

It is required by Special Olympics, Inc. to have anyone who has a direct impact on the athletes or who has fiscal or administrative authority, to complete a Class A Volunteer Application Form.

This form can be found on our website at [www.specialolympicsarkansas.org](http://www.specialolympicsarkansas.org) under the "Get Involved" tab. Click on volunteers and download the volunteer application form. This is a two page form that includes a release for background check and both pages must be filled out completely, signed, and a copy of your driver's license must be attached.

Class A Volunteer applications must be submitted every 3 years.

Examples of those who need to complete the forms:

1. LETR event committee members (like Polar Plunge & Tip-A-Cop) who handle substantial amounts of cash or other assets of the program with a sum of \$1,000 or more.
2. Anyone who coaches or chaperones our athletes.

Examples of those who need NOT complete the forms:

1. Torch Runners
2. Fundraiser participants or attendees



# RECRUIT MORE PARTNERS

SOAR's strategic plan focuses on recruiting and growing partnerships at every level. Please join us in recruiting additional partners into the LETR program.

## Why do we want them?

- To increase public awareness
- To generate revenue
- To help our budget with in-kind or budget relieving expenses
- Access to new volunteer base
- Pro bono work
- Ideas
- Loaned executives
- Introduction to other businesses

## Why would companies want to partner with us?

- Improve their image
- Affiliation with law enforcement
- Opportunity to change a life
- Leadership opportunities for their young employees
- To stand out
- Increased employee morale
- Increased sales – cause marketing is proven
- Promotions with non-profits work

## What we offer?

- A strong brand
- Emotional impact to engage customers and employees
- Opportunity for them to develop a marketing program
- "The feel good"



# FUNDRAISING IDEAS

**T-shirts & Hats** - These are the most popular ways to raise funds. It's easy and it can help you reach Torch Club status.

**Dress Down Day** – This can be promoted city wide and anyone who has purchased a T-shirt can dress down for the day. A great time to promote this fund-raiser is during the actual Torch Run. Ask your Mayor to establish this day and issue a proclamation to the effect.

**Sports Tournaments** – Golf, softball, bowling, dodge ball, and volleyball are just some examples that work.  
**Plane/School Bus/Fire Truck Pull** – Gather teams of about 20 and see who can pull the fastest or furthest.

**Fueling Dreams**- Pick a gas station that will allow you to pump gas for the customers for a day. You can work it out with the gas station as to whether they give you a portion of the profits for the day or if you do it for donations.

**Squeegee Day** (aka – window washing) – This can either be done at a gas station or at a Drive thru restaurant. If done at a drive thru: Place one person at the beginning of the drive thru to ask the person if they would like their windshield washed for a donation to Special Olympics Arkansas. If they say yes, take their donation and place a pamphlet under their wiper. When they get to the window and are waiting for their food, have two volunteers waiting for them. Take off the paper and proceed to squeegee their windshield.

**Car Wash** – Pick a central location with high car traffic. Be sure that you have several hoses so that you can wash several cars at once. You can also have someone selling t-shirts and hats while people wait. Another option is to contact a car wash company and ask them to pick a day or two dedicated to SOAR and the LETR, and then they donate a portion of their proceeds from those days.

**Monopoly Tournament** - This is a great event for all ages, and believe it or not there is an actual website that you can go to and get all of the information on hosting this event!

**Cookbook Fund-raiser** – Have members of your agency submit their favorite recipes, compile them all and have the cookbook printed.

**Bags and Badges** – With permission from your local grocery store, you can help bag groceries and even carry them to the car for donations. Target one or two days, promote it in the media, and have fun.

**Mall Coat Check** – Between Thanksgiving and Christmas is a great time to host this fund-raiser. Talk with mall management and pick a secure area to have the coat check. Ask stores to donate the temporary use of racks to hang the coats on, and have tables available to store packages that customers may want to check. You can purchase “coat check” tickets at most office supply stores.

**BBQ** – Food is always a great fund-raiser; everyone has to eat! You can offer “package” deals, for example – 1 hotdog, bag of chips, a cookie, and a can of soda for \$3. Ask your local grocer to donate the food.

**Chili Cook-off** – Have different people from your agency make pots of chili and have judges do taste tests to pick the winning chili. Everyone wanting to eat that day pays a couple bucks.

**“Mile of Quarters”** The International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA) supports Special Olympics through the “Mile of Quarters” fund-raiser. Individuals, groups and organizations are asked to donate a quarter, foot of quarters (\$3), a yard of quarters (\$9), or whatever they wish to donate to help reach the university's goal—a quarter, half, or full mile. You can get this started at a University near you or within any school.

**Minute that matters or School pick up line collection:** - This is a great idea for SRO teams. They can collect during morning drop off or select a day and time for collection during morning announcements and collect change from all classrooms for 60 seconds.

# BOOTS & BADGES

## WHAT

Boots & Badges is an event where law enforcement officers and firefighters raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics Arkansas by collecting donations outside of a grocery store.

## WHEN

Most people prefer to do their grocery shopping when it's not raining or snowing so the better the weather, the more donations you'll collect, traditionally.

## WHERE

While there are a wide variety of locations suitable to host such an event, the most common site is at a Wal-Mart Supercenter.

## HOW

Set a date with the venue manager; start the planning process about three months ahead of the event. Be prepared to sign a contract agreeing to the venue's terms and conditions (no harassment of patrons, must stand so far away from entrance, etc.)

Park law enforcement, fire, and first responder vehicles up front where they're visible and draw attention.

Position volunteers near each exit holding buckets with LETR stickers on them to collect donations in.

Set up an LETR merchandise/sales table on both sides of the venue.

In the event of rain, bring umbrellas and offer to walk patrons to and from their vehicle, as well as load their groceries.



# COPS ON TOP



# COPS-ON-TOP

## WHAT

Also referred to as building sits, Cops-On-Top is an event where law enforcement officers are perched on top of a building to raise both funds and awareness for Special Olympics Arkansas.

## WHEN

Anytime. Ask the restaurant or store when their busiest times are and go from there.

## WHERE

While there are a wide variety of locations suitable to host such an event, typical sites that have been used include: Wal-Mart, Krispy Kreme, Dunkin Donuts, and Chick-fil-A.

## HOW

Set a date with the venue manager; start the planning process about six months ahead of the event.

Ideally, have at least five officers/volunteers work this event (however, you can work with fewer).

- At least two officers positioned on the venue's rooftop.
- One person at the drive-thru collecting donations and issuing coupons for contributions.
- 1-2 officers greeting outside of the store.
- An officer in the store itself.

Have Special Olympics Arkansas athletes present to greet customers and create awareness of the Special Olympics programs in the area.

Have donation jars present at every cash register inside.

Create a donation apparatus for your officers on the rooftop (this can be as simple as a bucket and rope).

Set up an LETR merchandise/sales table inside or outside of the store to sell LETR hats and t-shirts. Have a donation jar at this table, too.

In addition to collecting donations from customers, make calls to local individuals and business leaders asking for pledges.

Find local community officials, media personalities or sports figures to join you on the rooftop and contribute to your fund-raising efforts.

Have a local radio DJ or morning show personality on air with you during Cops-On-Top. Invite them as an equal partner to this unique community event. If they can't do it live, you can call in to the station with reports of dollars collected.

# COPS-ON-TOP Cont.

## WHY

This is a high visibility event – good for your agency, good for the business and good for everyone to see your department’s commitment to the community. This is a proven fund-raiser. It works to support the Polar Plunge if you’d like to tie it into a Plunge theme use the idea of “Freezin’ for a Reason.”

## ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS:

- Position squad cars outside of your venue – turn lights on to attract attention.
- If possible, try to have Special Olympics Arkansas athletes at your event; pairing them with officers to greet customers or help with an information table has been a proven success.
  - ⇒ This is a great way to use this event to get more people involved, not just raise money.
- Recruit as many friends and family as possible to come out to the building on the designated date.
- Have your Chief of Police invite the Mayor, Trustees, City Manager and other local administration figures to join you on the rooftop.
- Greet everyone and let them know why you are there.
- Set a fundraising goal.
  - ⇒ Continually update the manager and the media on money totals.
  - ⇒ Refuse to leave the rooftop until your goal is achieved.
- Go up on the roof on time – make this a media event.
- Establish a relationship with a local radio station for an all-day live remote on site.
  - ⇒ Periodically provide updates on how close you might be to reaching your goal.
  - ⇒ Auction items live and over-the-air to benefit this Torch Run event.
- It is important that you foster a good working relationship with the venue manager.
- Auction off a dozen donuts that an officer will deliver to the winning individual/business.
  - ⇒ Provide this opportunity once an hour.
  - ⇒ Use the radio to promote this donut auction.
- If the manager provides them, hand out fresh hot donuts to motorists at a nearby intersection and encourage them to stop by the store.
- Provide an added incentive for individuals to donate.
  - ⇒ Work with the retail location to get something for free.
  - ⇒ Tie in with the radio DJ to have free giveaways from advertisers for people who make a \$10 or higher donation.
  - ⇒ Provide LETR merchandise for higher donations (e.g. a hat for a \$15 donation).
  - ⇒ Offer to send a car/officer to pick up donations if they call your number.

# Tip-A-Cop or Tip-A-Hero



# TIP-A-COP/HERO

## WHAT

This successful fundraising event allows members of the law enforcement community to assume everyday restaurant tasks and responsibilities, including greeting and seating guests, waiting on tables, serving beverages and meals and bussing tables. The goal of the Tip-A-Cop event is to collect as many donations as possible for Special Olympics Arkansas (SOAR) through "tips." Officers do not handle alcoholic drinks and are usually in LETR shirts. One greeter should be in uniform at the door explaining the promotion.

## WHEN

There are year-round opportunities for scheduling a Tip-A-Cop event in your area, mutually determined by the restaurant manager and the local law enforcement organizer. Ideally, try to hold the event during a period of high traffic: for example, during a Friday evening (5-9pm) or a Saturday (noon-8pm).

## WHERE

While there are a wide variety of restaurants suitable to host such an event, typical locations that have been used include: Applebee's (Bees & Badges), Red Lobster (Cops & Lobsters), Colton's, Red Robin and Texas Roadhouse (Roundup at the Roadhouse). Feel free to expand beyond these sites and start your Tip-A-Cop at a new location.

## HOW

- Set date(s) with the restaurant manager. Start the planning process about six months ahead of the event.
- Event runs anywhere from 4 to 8 hours.
- Typically requires 6-12 officers/volunteers. Have officers dress in uniform if approved or in a LETR shirt.
- Provide different volunteer opportunities: wait staff, greeters, and sales staff at merchandise and ticket tables.
  - ⇒ The location usually provides extra incentive for the volunteer officers and clerks by providing a free meal before the event.
- Greet everyone who enters the restaurant and let them know why you are there.
- Directly inside the main entrance provide a merchandise/sales table, complete with LETR t-shirts, hats, a donation jar, etc.
  - ⇒ Many locations also have a table with giveaways for kids, including such items as pencils, rulers, whistles, Jr. Police badges, etc.
- Officers must ask for additional "tips," with all proceeds benefitting SOAR.
  - ⇒ You can leave a Tip-A-Cop envelope (available from SOAR Headquarters) at each table after explaining this event and how it benefits the LETR and SOAR athletes. Get approval from management before providing the envelope.
- Get the local media involved and advertise to the general public as much as possible.
  - ⇒ Convince them to run ads on the radio or in the newspaper starting two weeks prior to the event.
  - ⇒ On the day of the event, have reporters and news crew show up for a live broadcast.
- Use an appealing name for your event that coordinates with your location (Cop & Lobsters, Bees & Badges, Roundup at the Roadhouse, etc).

# TIP-A-COP/HERO Cont.

## WHY

This is a fun way to raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics Arkansas while earning credit for your respective department.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- A popular trend is to let patrons round up their bill, with the difference being donated to SOAR. Arrange this with the restaurant in advance.
- Position squad cars outside of your venue. Turn lights on to attract attention!
- If possible, try to have Special Olympics Arkansas athletes at your event. Pairing them with officers to greet customers or help with an information table has been a proven success. This is a great way to use this event to get more people involved, not just raise money.
- Recruit as many friends and family as possible to come out to the restaurant on the designated date.
- In the parking lot, let guests test the radar gun on cars speeding past the restaurant.
- Once a date is set, look to get your public information officer involved. They can help get your event information to local papers, TV stations, the city's website, and even the employee email system.
- Have your Chief of Police invite the Mayor, Trustees, City Manager and other local administration figures.
- Pick a date that will enable your event to be successful.
  - ⇒ For example, Columbia PD in Missouri selects Secretary's Day at their local Red Lobster. Others like to host it during lent at Red Lobster for higher traffic opportunities. Those are typically the busiest days of the year for Red Lobster, so a big crowd is a given.
  - ⇒ It is important that you foster a relationship with the restaurant manager.

# FIRE TRUCK PULL

## WHAT

Also known as a pumper pull, this event involves teams of 8 competing to see who can pull the fire truck the fastest. This event is an exciting fundraiser as well as a great way to get gyms involved due to its "strong man nature".

## WHEN

There are year-round opportunities for scheduling a Fire Truck Pull. The pulls that have been most successful have taken place during community festivals or events.

## WHERE

Fire Truck pulls can take place in a variety of places. The only requirements are that the road be flat, have enough open space that the truck can be pulled 150 ft. with room to stop and that the truck is empty.

## HOW

- Check your local community calendar for upcoming festivals and outdoor events. See if there is an opportunity to get involved. Most planning committees will allow this event to exist without a charge...make sure to ask!
- Make sure to get the local Fire Department involved as well, they have the fire trucks!
- Ropes and Gloves are available at the SOAR office.
- Event runs anywhere from 1 to 2 hours.
- Costumes and fun team names are encouraged.
- Get the local media involved and advertise to the general public as much as possible.
  - ⇒ Convince them to run ads on the radio or in the newspaper starting two weeks prior to the event.
  - ⇒ On the day of the event, have reporters and news crew show up for a live broadcast.



# T-SHIRT FUNDRAISERS

## WHAT

T-shirt and merchandise sales are a great way to include large numbers of officers. It is an easy project. Merchandise can be sold to neighbors, family, friends or co-workers. Additionally, merchandise can be sold at other LETR events, in sponsor retail outlets or at other locations.

## WHEN

Sell LETR merchandise year-round, not just for a few months. Buy one yourself and wear it!

## WHERE

You can sell LETR merchandise within your department and to all of your contacts. If you are arranging a "T-Shirt Day" fundraiser, some successful locations include local grocery stores, Wal-Mart, gas stations, assorted LETR or police events, and other areas with high visibility and traffic.

## HOW

- Set a fundraising goal.
- Preview the merchandise. Place various LETR items and posters in different areas of your work place or any related agencies.
- When selling LETR merchandise, be sure to specify that all proceeds from sales benefit the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Arkansas.
- Ask everyone in your department if they would like to buy a t-shirt. Set a specific date to physically sell the t-shirts. Send out an email beforehand to this group, letting them know the date that you will be coming around.
- Sell t-shirts and hats at all police and LETR functions. Be sure to provide any personal stories that you can share about your involvement with LETR and Special Olympics Arkansas.
- Greet each person with enthusiasm and a warm smile and explain how their donation would make a difference in the life of a Special Olympics athlete.
- Check to see if any of your local sponsors can sell t-shirts for you.
- Sell to both the law enforcement community and the general public.
- Getting more officers involved definitely increases sales. Challenge each officer in your department to sell at least five t-shirts.
- Develop a plan that challenges officers to sell the most t-shirts. Provide the winner with some type of incentive (e.g. you or your Chief will work one of their shifts).
- Check with local businesses and try to coordinate a "dress down" or "jeans day" for all employees who purchase an LETR t-shirt.

\*See Appendix for example order form

# TORCH RUN TRIVIA NIGHT

## WHAT

A relatively easy to arrange and successful fundraising event organized by law enforcement departments throughout the state of Arkansas. Some areas currently organize Trivia Nights with the Arkansas Realtors Association, such as Fort Smith and Bryant.

## WHEN

There are year-round opportunities for scheduling a Trivia Night in your area, mutually determined by the venue manager and the local law enforcement organizer.

## WHERE

While there are a wide variety of venues suitable to host a Torch Run Trivia Night, be sure to consider the anticipated participant size. Typical locations utilized include: local Knights of Columbus, American Legion, Lions Club, FOP Lodge, etc. (typically no fee for room or space).

## HOW

- Typically consists of teams of 8-10 people (set up your table size to match this).
- Entry fee of approximately \$100 per team.
- Entry fee also includes a number of chances to win door prizes. Look into getting local businesses to donate prizes for raffle drawings.
- Commonly runs for approximately 4-5 hours, including 1 hour for registration and food.
- For an event with 100+ people, try to have at least 3 people at your registration table. Pre-register as many teams as possible. On registration forms, capture email addresses for future contact (e.g. for next year's event).
- Create an event program that details the rules, highlights your sponsors and explains the LETR. Be sure to cover these rules aloud before the start of your event.
- You will need someone to emcee the event and read the questions to the participants.
- Ideally, have at least one judge for every 7 tables (the more judges, the quicker you can score the answers).
- Teams are encouraged to decorate their table or bring a favorite appetizer (best table gets a prize).
- Biggest cost is food for each person (look to get this donated). Price of food is usually included in the entry fee; cash bar often provided.
- Most include a silent auction and 50/50 raffle. Have someone actively selling these tickets (an athlete is great). 1 ticket for \$1, 6 for \$5 and a 'wingspan of tickets' for \$20.
- Typical game format: 10 rounds of 10 questions for a total of 100 questions. Each round of 10 questions covers a different category/topic. Questions will be read a select number of times, with no repeats.
- Winning team determined by the highest number of correct answers.
- Tiebreaker: ties are commonly broken by a team's guess of how many questions they will actually answer correctly (guess must take place before the competition starts).
- Winning team awarded a small prize, normally a traveling trophy or a plaque (minimal cost for prizes) or free admission next year.

# TORCH RUN TRIVIA NIGHT Cont.

## WHY

This is an easy and fun way to raise funds for Special Olympics programs throughout the state, while also earning credit for the Arkansas Law Enforcement Torch Run.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Have a laptop computer, LCD projector and screen (two of each for a large venue) so you can display your trivia questions and answers in a PowerPoint presentation (add more appeal and interest to your slides and include fun photos).
- Other supplies needed: question sheets, answer sheets, pens, pencils, 50/50 raffle tickets, auction items, decorations (if you are having a themed event) and the event program/flyer.
- Design flyers/posters to advertise and attempt to get the media involved with promoting your event.
- Once a date is set, get your public information officer involved. They can help get your event information to local papers, TV stations, the city's website and even the employee email system.
- Get sponsors for your event. For example, \$100 sponsorship for a round/category of questions. Be sure to include their company logo on the PowerPoint slides for this round and also in the event program.
- Ask everyone you know to participate! Teams can consist of law enforcement, doctors, teachers, students, restaurants or any group of friends that want to play. Have your Chief of Police invite the Mayor, City Manager and other local administration figures.
- Look to get your local Knights of Columbus involved with this event and create a Torch Run Trivia Knight. They can help provide such things as food and a location to host your event.

# POLAR PLUNGE



# POLAR PLUNGE

## WHAT

Plunge season is exciting at SOAR! We love gearing up for the official party of winter. Polar Plunges are our signature event, and they attract many new people (young and old) to our program. Organized by local committees of community volunteers, law enforcement and staff, the plunges involve participants raising money to jump into freezing bodies of water in winter. It's the reason for freezin' that we love – all proceeds benefit the programs of SOAR. Participants also really love the bragging rights and the warm shirt afterwards!

## WHEN

Starting January-February

## WHERE

Creeks, rivers, quarries, lakes, and pools

## HOW

- Hosting law enforcement agencies are already set for all of our current plunges.
- We know Plunges are successful, but in order to handle what we currently have, we have a conservative plan in place for future plunges. Contact your area director, field representative or our Director of Marketing and Partnerships if you want to see another plunge in your area. Be mindful that we need to achieve full potential at our current sites before adding a new site.
- The Polar Plunge name is trademarked by Special Olympics Inc. Please notify the Director of Marketing and Partnerships if you know of anyone using this name for their copycat plunge event.
- People register mostly online because it's simple, fun and they can raise funds by using [Firstgiving.com/soar](http://Firstgiving.com/soar). It is a proven fact that you can raise more money online than off because you can email anyone you know!
- You can also use your Facebook friends and account to promote your personal fundraising page.

## WHY

Why not? Come on – join the fun! It's a great way to build camaraderie in your agency, neighborhood, and family. Start a team, sign up first and get others to join your team. You can compete for more than bragging rights—there are some fun prizes to win as well, especially if you want to be really fun and dress up in costume.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Recruit as many friends and family as possible to come out and plunge with you, or simply invite them to come and watch—they'll decide to do it next year!
- Start fundraising at your agency. Put out a donation jar. Create an online fund-raising page through [Firstgiving.com/soar](http://Firstgiving.com/soar).
- There are rules in place to plunge. A minimum must be raised, there is a minimum age requirement, and you only have to go in as far as you want.
- Super Plungers: this is for the super stars among us who aren't challenged by just one dip in the freezing waters. Super Plungers plunge 24 times in 24 hours and raise a ton of attention and money while doing so.

# POLAR PLUNGE Cont.

## ONLINE DONATIONS

- Each Field Representative sets up the online giving page for each plunge in advance.
- Empower your supporters to become lifelong fundraisers and cause ambassadors through peer-to-peer fundraising. Encourage Teams and Individuals to register to get instant standings and group totals. You will be able to set clear goals for your Plunge Experience and have a way to track your progress.
- Online personal fundraising pages are passionate, powerful, and persuasive, and you will raise more money, with less effort.
- When a person donates to your page they are able to print off their receipt for tax records and are able to track charitable donations easily.
- Customize the text and the photo on your online personal fundraising page to express your passion and your purpose for LETR and Special Olympics.
- On the day of the plunge print off your online giving page and bring it along with the Polar Plunge registration form to the event. This will make registration easy and you will not have to deal with handling cash at the day of the plunge.

# Payroll Deduction

## Getting Started:

Meet with Chief of police for approval to start this at your department or within your city After approval meet with accounting/payroll department  
Special Olympics Arkansas can provide W-9 if it becomes

necessary **Suggestions for success:**

Edit the template payroll deduction form to best fit your department

E.g. reflecting pay periods

Print the form and include it in the open enrolment or city employee

benefit packets These meetings tend to be in October-December

You can also include this in any new employee packet/orientation

Have a Law Enforcement Torch Run member or the athlete speak during the meeting

## Once you are up and rolling

The accounting/payroll department can direct deposit or cut a check to Special Olympics  
Arkansas per month or qtr. reflecting the departments total deductions.

If you have further questions and you would like to speak to a payroll department that currently  
doing payroll deduction please reach out to Camie Powell [camie@specialolympicsarkansas.org](mailto:camie@specialolympicsarkansas.org)

# Payroll Deduction form

City/Department name here

## Payroll Deduction form Benefitting Special Olympics Arkansas

I wish to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_per paycheck to Special Olympics-Arkansas for one year beginning with my first paycheck in January 2021 and ending with my last paycheck in December 2020.  
(minimum \$2.00 donation. Donation over \$4.00 a pay period includes free cotton Law Enforcement Torch Run t-shirt if signed by February 1<sup>st</sup>)

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Department (police, fire, water, etc) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Adult Shirt Size (circle one)                      S            M            L            XL            XXL            XXXL

\*A separate form for actual use can be obtained by emailing [camie@specialolympicsarkansas.org](mailto:camie@specialolympicsarkansas.org)



# CASH CONTROL PROCEDURES

## CASH CONTROL PROCEDURES FOR LETR FUNDRAISING EVENTS

- All monies collected at any fundraising event will need to be given to a SOAR staff member on the day of the event. Monies should be counted onsite by both a member of the volunteering agency and a member of SOAR staff to ensure the parties are in agreement on the final dollar amount raised. If there is not a SOAR Staff member in attendance the following must be completed within 3 business days of the close of the event by the Event Coordinator approved in advance by the Director of Marketing and Partnerships.
  - If in LR/NLR - deliver all money, checks and credit card forms to the SOAR home office or meet with SOAR staff member to schedule a drop-off point. If credit card donations are received at the event, all portions of the credit card form are to be completed and the form must be signed by the donor.
  - If Outside of LR/NLR - must be mailed to SOAR home office. Never send cash and/or coins through the mail. If cash/coin has been collected at the event, it must be taken to a bank the first business day after the event and a cashier's check obtained. The cashier's check should be made payable to Special Olympics Arkansas and the remitter should be the name of the event (NLR tip-a-cop, Monticello boots & badges, Ft Smith polar plunge, etc). In instances where money orders are obtained, you must print Special Olympics Arkansas on the "Pay to the Order of" line immediately upon receiving the money order. If credit card donations are received at the event, all portions of the credit card form are to be completed and the form must be signed by the donor. These are to be mailed in with the checks.
- If your event is a Torch Run event, you must follow up with your primary law enforcement contact person on a weekly basis for up to eight weeks after the fundraising event in order to make sure you have received all the money for the event.

# TIPS FOR WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

The elements of a media release:

- Who is your organization?
- What is happening? Describe the event.
- When is it taking place?
- Where is it going to be? Be as specific as possible.
- Why should the reporter or the public care? Because it's fun, or educational or beneficial in some way and it supports Special Olympics Arkansas.
- How can the media reach you, best cover your event, and invite the public to the event?

For support on constructing and issuing a media release, please contact our Director of Marketing and Partnerships, Camie Powell at [camie@specialolympicsarkansas.org](mailto:camie@specialolympicsarkansas.org).

Here are some tips for working with the media:

Along with either the release or the advisory that you send to the media, send a list of the participants and their agencies, titles and phone numbers. A reporter can then conduct individual interviews before the event begins.

It is best to notify the media with a press release at least 10 days in advance of an event. As the event gets closer, follow-up with personal contacts and an updated press release or alert (a shorter version of the release).

Be sure to also send your press releases to the SOAR office to be incorporated on our website and publications.

For the Torch Run: At the end of each release, mention the International Association of Chiefs of Police—the founder of the Law Enforcement Torch Run—and any other statewide partners.

Really, really promote where the dollars for LETR events go....to Special Olympics Arkansas!

80% of every dollar raised is used to fulfill our mission.

After the media has been sufficiently notified of the event, get your news out to the general public by posting flyers. The local newspaper may run a story about the event, which is free publicity.

Create a TV spot featuring the local Police Chief, Sheriff, Highway Patrol personnel, etc., asking for support for Special Olympics Arkansas through the your hosted event.

Prepare a Torch Run slide show of your agency events at local civic groups' monthly meetings. They may have funds available to support Special Olympics. Arkansas. Many groups are looking for new monthly topics. Ideas: Kiwanis, Lions, Knights of Columbus, Chambers, Jaycees and Rotary.

Ask a local radio personality to promote your fundraiser on their morning talk show. Promote how the general public can help by making a donation or by purchasing a T-shirt.

Your news release is the tool most often used to share information with the media when the story is not breaking news. However, the media is made up of people, and relationships matter. The news release is a concise, informative and straightforward piece of writing that describes what you want the public to know. It can also convey ideas for potential stories to editors and remind them of upcoming events. Put the most important information first. The preference is a one-page release. Always include who to contact for more information.

# ATHLETE AMBASSADORS

Another great opportunity to be involved with the athletes is to have them come and speak at your events. SOAR trains athletes to tell their Special Olympics story and how to give speeches. These athletes are called "Athlete Ambassadors." They love having the opportunity to speak and would be honored to attend any of the Law Enforcement Torch Run® events.

If you are interested in having an Athlete Ambassador attend your event, please contact our office at (501) 771-0222.



## Get Connected!

**Website: [specialolympicsarkansas.org](http://specialolympicsarkansas.org)**



Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Arkansas



@SOArkansas



letr4soar

# Appendix

**In the appendix you will find documents that change year after year. These are examples and most documents can be found on the Law Enforcement Torch Run page of [Specialolympicsarkansas.org](http://Specialolympicsarkansas.org) or by emailing [camie@specialolympicsarkansas.org](mailto:camie@specialolympicsarkansas.org)**

Documents include:

1. T-shirt order form. These shirts are sold year-round as a fundraiser for Officers and the public.
2. Final Leg packet of information. This is helpful for any Officer running the Flame of Hope during May leading to Summer Games. There is additional information if you wish to attend Summer Games.
3. A list of the current Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Arkansas Executive Council members

