



## Fundraising Schedule

The Chicago Polar Plunge may seem far off, but now is the perfect time to get started on fundraising!

### • 3 months (December)

- Holidays: In lieu of presents for the Holidays, ask your family and friends to contribute to your Chicago Polar Plunge fundraising page or ask them to join you team and take the plunge with you!

### • 2 months (January)

- Host a virtual fundraising event: Plan an event or activity, where all your current and potential donors can come together and support your fundraising efforts. You can host a virtual bingo game, or trivia night, or virtual cocktail party. Ask your friends and family to donate to attend your event.
- Send thank you cards: Because supporters will be donating to your campaign at different times, don't forget to thank them promptly! Write a thank you note handwritten notes send a more personal message, letting your donors know you took the time to thank them.
- Utilize Matching Gift Programs: Matching gifts are an easy way to double or even triple your fundraising dollars! Check to see if your company matches gifts to Special Olympics Chicago by reaching out to your Human Resources department. Check out the Matching Gift section for more information on where to send donations.

### • 1 month (February)

- Follow up: Make sure to follow up with anyone on your list that has not yet responded to your emails/letters with a friendly reminder. Include any updates to keep your donors aware and engaged. Continue to post on your social media platforms!
- Check out our postcards that you can send to donors before the event with that final ask and/or send it post-event as a thank you!
- Ask your friends and family to forward your fundraising letter to their own networks. You can even give a small prize to the person who helped you get the most donations. Having smaller, internal incentives for your donors can encourage them to share and donate even more!



- Get a \$5 Starbucks card and put supporters who donated more than \$10 in a raffle to win.
- Venmo your top donor “Coffee on me today! Thanks for donating to my cause!”
- Feature a family member or friend who donated to your page with a Facebook shout out.

• **Post event (March- April)**

- Send Thank you's: Send personal notes or emails to all of your donors, thanking them for helping you reach your goal and furthering Special Olympics Chicago's mission of providing athletes with intellectual disabilities more opportunities. Share your experience; including your fundraising total and pictures of you/your team Plunging, from our free photo download link.

**TIP:** Stay organized! Keep good records of all offline donations (checks or cash) before sending them to Special Olympics Chicago. That way, you will have an accurate and up-to-date record of both your online and offline donations.

**TIP:** Check out our printable Offline Donation Form under the Resources Tab, which is available for supporters who would like to donate offline via check, money order, or credit card.