



Community Event Organizer Guidelines

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society (the Society) is extremely grateful that you are interested in “Joining the Movement” and working toward a world free of MS through a Community Event or fundraising activity. However, only those Community Events which meet specific criteria, and legitimately and genuinely benefit the Society, will ordinarily be approved. Each event will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

What is a Community Event?

The Society defines a Community Event as any fundraising activity by a non-affiliated group or individual (third party), where the Society has no fiduciary or agency responsibilities and little or no staff involvement.

Getting Started

Before proceeding, the Organizer must submit a “Community Event Information Form” (attached) so the Society may determine if the event or campaign meets our guidelines. The Society will not associate with any businesses or individuals known to conduct themselves in a manner incompatible with our mission. Please return the Community Event Information form to your local All America Chapter office (see Community Event Information Form for a complete list of All America Chapter offices).

The Organizer must state in the “Community Event Information Form” the terms of the donation to the Society (for example: 75% of profits, one-time donation of \$1,000, or all proceeds). This information must also be included in all event/campaign promotions.

We understand that all details for your proposed event may not be available at the time of your submission, but please fill out the form to the best of your knowledge. We will review your proposal within 10 business days and contact you.

Fundraising

The Organizer must secure permission from the Society in advance to solicit any businesses for donations or sponsorship to avoid duplication with Society efforts and to ensure the association does not negatively impact the Society’s credibility.

All funds received from this Community Event are considered unrestricted unless requested otherwise in writing. Requests to restrict funds for specific use are subject to approval by the Society.

Collection of fees, entries, payments and all contributions are the responsibility of the Organizer or designated contact. If expenses are being taken out from the gross, the Organizer should indicate either the guaranteed donation or the % of net proceeds that will go to the Society. The Society reserves the right to review event financial statements at any time.

All funds must be received by the Society within 45 days of the event. Checks made payable to the Society should be sent unendorsed to the Society upon receipt.

Unless the Organizer is registered as a 501(c)(3), donations made payable to the Organizer do not qualify as a charitable, tax deductible contribution. Donations made payable to the Society (via check or online at nationalMSSociety.org) are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

Marketing and Promotion

The Society owns the registration for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society name, logo, 1-800-FIGHT MS toll free number, “Join the Movement” and corresponding event and fundraising logos (i.e. bike MS, walk MS, Challenge Walk). Use of the National MS Society name (other than as a beneficiary as specified below), logo, or any of its licensed marks is prohibited by third parties.

A special logo has been developed that designates that a third party supporter has “Joined the Movement” through a Community Event. The Society will provide access to this logo when/if the Community Event has been approved.

The Society must review and approve the marketing materials that include mention of the Society and/or use the “Joined the Movement” Community Event logo.

When a Community Event benefits more than one charity/non profit organizations, this specially designated Community Event logo should appear in the same size as the other charity/non profit’s logo. The National MS Society reserves the right to revoke the use of this logo at any time.

The Society operates under the Better Business Bureau guidelines for charitable giving. In compliance with these guidelines, the Society requires full disclosure on all packaging, advertising or promotional materials when funds are raised through a consumer purchase or promotion (e.g. \$1 from the sale of each item). You must be able to comply with this requirement if applicable.

Similarly, event advertising, promotion and associated materials must state that the proceeds of an event will benefit the Society, but should not imply or state that the Society is the host, sponsor or endorser. Any sponsor of the event should be clearly identified: (i.e. The Elks Club, Bob’s Variety, The Smith Family, is hosting X event, “with 75% of net proceeds benefiting the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.”)

The Society reserves the right to participate in similar promotions and other Community Events.

All events benefiting the Society should be accessible to people with disabilities.

Depending on the nature of the event and number of participants, the Society may be able to provide educational literature and informational material for distribution.

Liability

The Society shall not be responsible, under any circumstance, for the promotion and/or staging of a Community Event. The Organizer assumes **all risk** for expenses and liabilities.

Should the Organizer choose to serve alcohol, to minimize risk, we recommend you do so via a "cash bar". In addition, the availability should not be promoted. The responsibility of serving the alcohol to attendees and/or participants should remain with a third party (i.e. restaurant or facility staff, etc.) Proof of age is required and signs should be posted to that effect. Alternative means of transportation should be available to attendees and/or participants.

Local municipalities and property owners will oftentimes require Event Organizers to provide evidence of insurance, particularly when the event is involving a specific number of participants/attendees. We recommend Event Organizers comply with insurance requirements as the Organizer assumes ALL risk associated with the event

Community Event Organizers are also responsible for obtaining applicable permits and licensing in use of all public facilities and/or properties through the appropriate municipality.

In some instances, Event Organizers may become involved with various vendors in support of the event. It is recommended that vendors provide evidence of insurance and include the Organizer as additional insured.

For more information

Thank you again for your interest in joining the movement and supporting the critical work of the National MS Society through a Community Event. If you have any questions about these guidelines, please contact your local office at 1-800-344-4867 (FIGHT MS), option 2, or visit www.nationalMSSociety.org/aac.