walk MS®

Greater Illinois Chapter

Walk MS – St. Charles Volunteer Guidelines

Event Details

- Walk MS is an excellent way to raise much-needed dollars and to support ongoing research, programs and services for people living with MS in Illinois.
- Founded in 1952, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Illinois Chapter covers a 73-county territory, starting at the Illinois-Wisconsin border on the north and continuing south through the central areas of Illinois.
- Location of start/finish line: Pottawatomie Park, 8 North Avenue (at east bank of the Fox River) (see site map)
- Attendance: Approximately 1,100 people
- Route options are: 2.6 miles, 4.6 miles or 6 miles
- Walk MS event takes place rain or shine.
- Registration time: 7:30am and start time 9am
- Water & snacks will be available for everyone, but please bring a bottle of water to use and refill. Keep yourself hydrated throughout the day!

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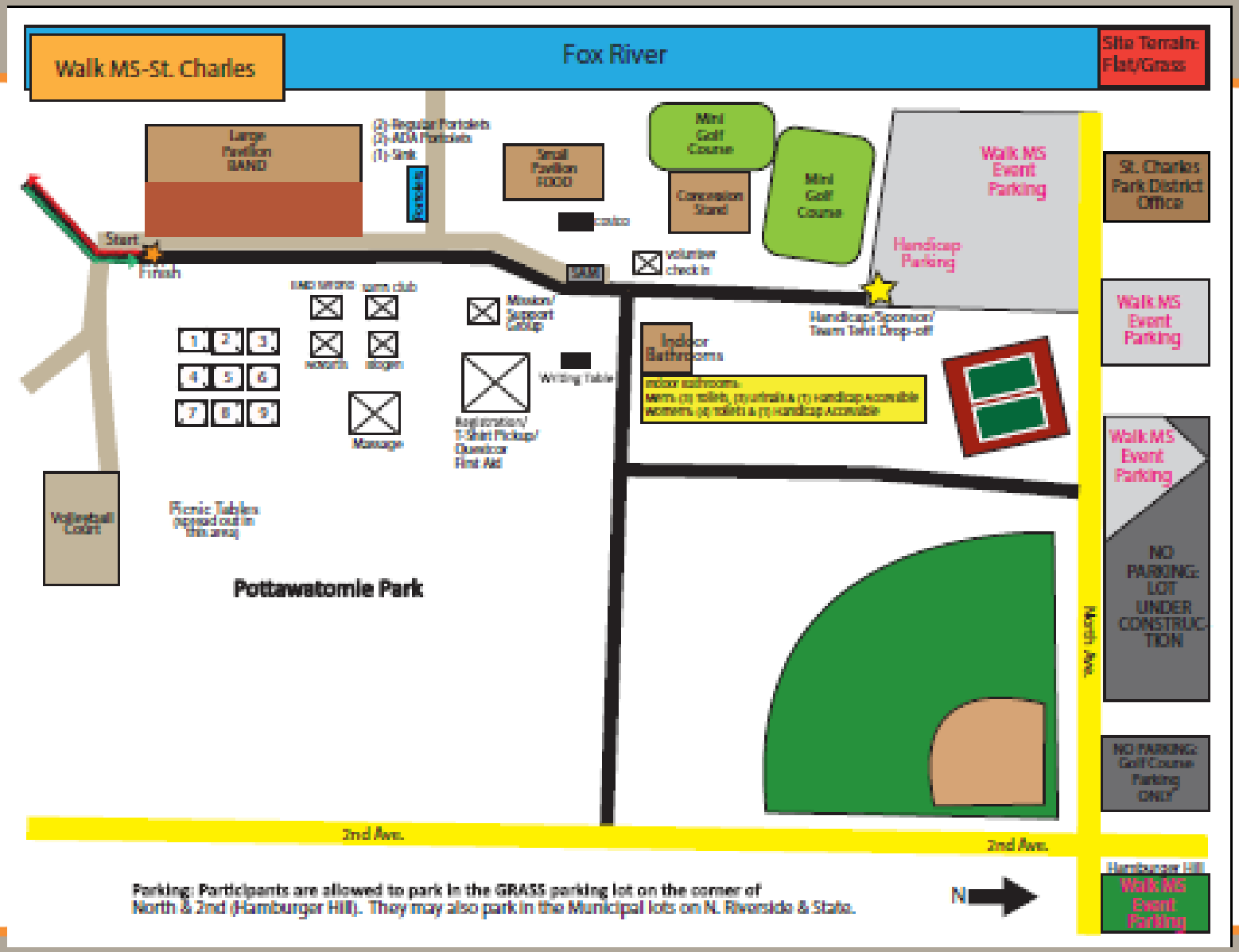
Event Details



Parking: Participants are allowed to park in the GRASS parking lot on the corner of North & 2nd (Hamburger Hill). They may also park in the Municipal lots on N. Riverside & State.

What's my volunteer role? | Logistics Crew

This volunteer role is to assist in making sure the event runs smooth by helping with continual set up and logistics management throughout the event.

- You are a vital part and we will be relying on you to help us unload the truck, set up tables and chairs, and organize the signage for the next day.
- You will help with day-of site set-up, distribute supplies around the site and route, set up the rest stop, hang signs, and lay out signage along the route.

→Day Before Walk

- Check in with the Walk MS staff or committee member to indicate that you are ready to work.
- Receive specific instructions from the Walk MS staff or committee member. Will most likely include: unload supplies, set up tables, chairs, barricades, cones, etc.
- *Please be aware of your own limitations. If you need help with carrying or moving items please ask for help. Remember to lift items using your legs and not your back.*

→Day of Walk

- Check in at the Volunteer Tent so we know that you have arrived and are ready to work.
- Receive specific instructions from the Walk MS staff or committee member.
- Help staff with site set-up, distribute supplies around the route and site, hang signs, set up the rest areas and mark the route.
- Assist with continual set up, tear down and logistics management throughout the day

What's my volunteer role? | Rest Stop

REST STOP OR FAMILY TURNAROUND HELPERS

Your role is to assist Walk MS participants as they take a much-needed break at the rest stop.

- When you arrive at the rest stop, arrange all of the supplies in a neat manner.
- Hand out refreshments to the Walk participants.
- Cheer on and motivate Walk participants
- Replenish supplies when needed
- As the event draws to a close, pack-up all unused supplies in a box and throw away all trash
- Look for a National MS Society staff member or Committee Chair if you have any questions or problems.

What's my volunteer role? | Route/Site Support

ROUTE AND ON-SITE SUPPORT

Your role is to assist in making the Walk MS route and event site safe for all participants.

- ROUTE MARKER – Work with committee lead in marking the route with directional, warning and safety signs at least 30 minutes to an hour before the event begins. At the end of the event, pick-up all signs and return them to the registration area in the main event site.

- PARKING SUPPORT – Direct participants to parking areas. Direct those needing handicap-accessible parking to the marked/reserved areas.

- CHEERLEADERS – Be at the start/finish line or along the route to cheer for participants and to motivate them to continue along the route. Thank everyone for their participation. Woo-hoo, yeah! Way to go! Keep it up!

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What's my volunteer role? | Registration

REGISTRATION

Your role is to assist the staff with checking-in participants, collecting sealed envelopes, organizing materials and assisting with tear-down.

- **You must have completed the background check in order to work inside the registration tent**
- Once a participant approaches the registration line, greet and thank them for their participation.
- All registrants who come to this line will have money to turn in. If they have already registered, do not have money to turn in and have raised at least $125, please direct them to the T-shirt pick up area.
- Let them know that they must have completed and signed the collection envelope. If not, ask that they complete their forms at the writing tables.
- Receive collection envelopes and make sure all fields are completed.

NOTE: Only participants can count their own monies and seal their envelopes. Volunteers are not allowed to count or handle money.

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What's my volunteer role? | Registration

REGISTRATION (Cont.)

Collection envelopes will be available at the writing tables. Participants may turn-in:
1) Collection Envelopes, or 2) Walk Sponsor / Pledge Sheets

→ If participant wants to submit alternate collection forms, please have them also complete the form printed on one of our official collection envelopes, and have them place their forms and donations inside of the official collection envelope.

On the envelope/pledge sheet:

- Circle the pledge amount total (what's enclosed in the envelope) using a red marker. Ask the participant to make sure it covers ONLY the amount actually included in the envelope being collected. Pledges made online or submitted before Walk MS day are counted separately.

→ **If total amount submitted is $125 or more, provide the person with the T-shirt coupon**

- If participant is paying by credit card, please ask the National MS Society staff accounting lead to process the payment.
- Take the *sealed* envelope and drop it into one of the bins labeled "Registration."
- Thank the participant and, if applicable, direct them to the T-shirt area.

When the walk has started and the registration table has closed, please begin gathering materials and assist with pack-up. Check with the area lead or staff what needs to be done to close the area.

What's my volunteer role? | T-shirt Distribution

T-SHIRT DISTRIBUTION

Your role is to help the staff member distribute Walk MS participant T-shirts to qualified individuals

- Greet the participant with a smile and offer friendly customer service
- Walkers who raise $125 or more receive a coupon for ONE MS T-shirt
- When the participant shows you their hand with the coupon, please ask for their preferred shirt size. Supplies are available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- If a participant insists on having additional T-shirts, ask him/her to please come back at the end of the Walk to see if there are any leftover shirts. We want to make sure all eligible walkers receive at least one T-shirt.
- Please ensure that the line keeps moving and that all walkers receive good customer service.

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What's my volunteer role? | Greeter

GREETER

Your role is to set the tone for a welcoming environment. Volunteer greeters provide good customer service and direct participants to the right area, helping the event run smoothly.

- Greeters must be stationed at the entrance of the Walk site and in front of the Registration Tent to direct participants and to answer questions about registration and about the event in general.

→ **Questions from the media should be directed to the Marketing Liaison or staff member.**

- Welcome and direct walkers, volunteers and guests to the appropriate areas of the event. Be familiar with all of the booths in the area.
- Before Walk participants go to the registration line, direct walkers that need to turn-in money to complete their collection envelopes and total their donations for the day at one of the writing tables provided. There will be extra collection envelopes at the writing tables for those who need them.
- Ensure that every participant has completed and sealed their collection envelopes and signed their participant waiver prior to entering the registration line.
- **Every participant must complete a waiver form,** even if they don't have money to turn-in or donate.
- If the participant is already registered and has a T-shirt coupon, thank them for raising $125 or more and direct them to the T-shirt line so that they can pick-up their shirt.
- Ensure registration lines are moving smoothly.
- Answer general event questions.

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What's my volunteer role? | Volunteer Check-in

VOLUNTEER CHECK-IN

Your role is to welcome volunteers for the event and make sure they are ready to do their tasks for the day.

- As volunteers arrive at the table, welcome them. Ask them if they registered in advance, and if so ask for their last name.
- Look for their name on the Volunteer Check-in List by last name.
- Ask the volunteer to read the Volunteer Agreement and to sign their name.
- Give them a nametag to complete, and ask them to wear it.
- Ask them for their T-shirt size and provide one for them to wear at all times while volunteering. After they are done, they can take it off.
- Look for the assignment listed next to the volunteer's name on the Volunteer Check-in list. Direct the volunteer to the appropriate table or tent, ask him/her to report to the staff or volunteer lead in that area for further instructions.
- Let the volunteer know that s/he is welcome to refreshments, and that s/he should tell her/his volunteer or staff lead when s/he needs to take a break.

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What's my volunteer role? | Volunteer Check-in

VOLUNTEER CHECK-IN (Cont.)

→WALK-INS: Ask volunteers who did not pre-register to complete a volunteer form, then ask your staff lead if s/he sees any gaps in volunteer coverage, and assign the walk-in volunteer accordingly. A few roles you can always assign to volunteers include: cheerleaders at the start/finish line, clean-up crew (after the event), and floaters (assigned where and as needed throughout the event -- floaters should check back in at the volunteer tent between assignments).

→If there is no immediate task for the walk-in volunteer, please ask him/her to stay near the Volunteer Check-in Tent or area for further instructions.

- All volunteers should be reminded to check-out at the Volunteer Check-in Tent or at least to inform the volunteer or staff lead when they are done with their tasks for the day.

- Thank the volunteer!

What's my volunteer role? | Food Tent

FOOD/REFRESHMENT AREA HELPERS

Your role is to help organize the water or snacks at the tables so that participants can easily take what they need.

- Look for instructions from the area volunteer or staff lead. Some of the items might not be ready for consumption until the end of the Walk.
- Some lifting may be needed. If items such as ice, water or other items need to be replenished, you will need to make sure there is enough snacks for participants.
- Assist with keeping area clean and clear of trash.
- As the event winds down, pack up items or supplies and put them in boxes so they can be used again for the next event
- Ensure proper hygiene. Wash your hands before and after handling food.
- At the end of the event , make sure all tablecloths are removed from tables, fold the chairs and tables, and throw away all trash to make sure area is clean.

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What's my volunteer role? | Pin-On Distributors

PIN-ON DISTRIBUTORS

Your role is to distribute "I Walk For" pin-on sheets to every participant. The sheets offer participants a chance to dedicate their participation to a loved one(s).

- Distribute the "I Walk For" sheets and safety pins to all participants from the Mission tent
- If possible, roam around the entire event area and offer the sheets and pins to all participants. If they need a marker, lend them one and ask for it back so you can reuse it.
- Thank the participants for walking.
- At the end of your shift or the event, please gather leftover sheets and pins and return them to the Mission tent. Please pack them neatly in a box so we can use them again next year.

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What's my volunteer role? | Specialty Tents

SPECIALTY TENTS: Medical, Mission and Kids Areas

Your role is to provide assistance or information to the participants. Have a pleasant attitude toward everyone you encounter.

- MEDICAL TENT– use the provided first aid kit for your supplies; ask each participant you see to complete an injury incident report form; at the end of the event, neatly pack all supplies back in the kit and throw all trash away.

- MISSION/JOIN THE MOVEMENT TENT – arrange all provided materials neatly on the table; answer questions about the Society (*e.g.* events, volunteering, advocacy, etc.); ask participants to sign-up for events as participants or volunteers; ask participants to sign up for advocacy alerts. If you don't know the answer to a participant's question, please write the questions down and refer them to a staff member (you can also recommend they call the Society's Information Resource Center at 1.800.344.4867, and that they visit www.MSillinois.org. At the end of the event, pack all materials neatly in a box and throw all trash away.

- KIDS AREA – assist with handing-out snacks or refreshments; assist in the game area (parent must be present with kids at all times); and at the end of the event, clean up the area and throw away all trash.

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Safety Reminders

- Keep yourself hydrated with water throughout the day
- If you are unable to move, lift or stand, please ask a staff member for assistance.
- If you decide to assist with lifting, do not bend, use your legs, don't twist and keep object close to you.
- Prior to the event, if you have any questions please contact Jocelyn Cheng, manager of volunteer development at 1.312.423.1139 or jocelyn.cheng@nmss.org.
- On the day of the event, please contact the chapter staff or committee member (volunteer) in the Volunteer Check-in or Registration tent if you have any questions.
- A medical tent is on-site with a certified First Aid volunteer
- If a situation should occur, please direct the concern to the chapter staff or committee member. If there is a medical emergency and help is needed, call 911.
- Do not address media questions: Please inform a staff member.

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Volunteer Housekeeping

- When you arrive, check in at the Volunteer tent.
- Please wear a nametag and volunteer T-shirt (provided).
- Keep hydrated – bring a water bottle & drink fluids
- Stay cool – wear a hat and sun block lotion
- Take a break – go to the bathroom, have a snack
- Food Safety – if handling food, please wash your hands at all times
- Lifting – know your limitations, ask for help
- Be friendly and provide customer service
- Ask staff or committee members if you have any questions or need help
- Contact Jocelyn Cheng, Manager of Volunteer Dev. at 1.312.423.1139 or jocelyn.cheng@nmss.org for any questions or concerns

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!

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