

walk



walk to  
create a world  
free of MS

## Walk MS 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: Go to [www.WalkMS.org](http://www.WalkMS.org) and select the location you want to volunteer for. Then you will be taken to the details for the specific address and route map.
- Attendance: hundreds of walkers and volunteers
- Route is anywhere from 1 to 7 miles, depending on the Walk location
- The Walk MS event takes place rain or shine.
- Registration opens at: 7:30am (for Chicagoland areas); 9:30am (Chicago) and 11:30am (for Bloomington, Springfield) OR go to [www.WalkMS.org](http://www.WalkMS.org) and find your specific times by location
- At the start/finish line, there will be tents or areas with information and activities
- Water & snacks will be available for everyone, but please bring a bottle of water to use and refill. Keep yourself hydrated throughout the day!



# What's my volunteer role? | Registration



## REGISTRATION

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

- Once a participant approaches the registration line, greet and thank them for their participation.
- Only participants with completed collection envelopes enclosed with money will need to come to this line. Otherwise, they do not have to check in or register in this area.
- If participants have already registered and do not have money to turn in, they are free to go to other areas of the Walk until it starts.
- Receive sealed collection envelopes and make sure all fields are completed.
- For those who have raised at least \$125, please direct them to the T-shirt pick up area.

### NOTE:

Only Walk MS participants can count their own monies and seal their own envelopes. Blank collection envelopes can be found at the writing tables or areas.



# What's my volunteer role? | Registration

## REGISTRATION (Cont.)

For those with money to turn in, the collection envelopes will be available at the writing tables. Please see this image for a sample of this year's envelope:

- NOTE: If participant wants to submit alternate collection forms, please also have them complete the official collection envelopes, and have them place their form and donation inside the official collection envelope.

### On the collection envelope

- Circle the total amount (only what's enclosed in the envelope) using a red marker. Ask the participant to make sure the total covers ONLY the amount included in the envelope being turned in that day. Pledges made online or submitted before Walk MS day are counted separately.
- If the total amount submitted is \$125 or more, please give that person a T-shirt coupon and s/he can redeem it at the T-shirt Pick up area/tent. Some participants might already have a T-shirt coupon, so please direct them to the pick-up area.
- Thank the participant. Take the *sealed* envelope and drop it into one of the designated bins. A staff or committee member will gather all envelopes and will be counted by the end of the event.
- If the participant is paying by credit card, please ask the National MS Society staff accounting lead to process the payment.

When the walk event has started and the registration area has closed, please begin gathering materials, organize by type of supplies and neatly pack them away in the bins or boxes. Please check with the area lead or staff on what else is needed to close the area. We appreciate your cooperation to keep all supplies back into bins or boxes so we can return them to the office.

walk MS CHECK-IN ENVELOPE

Name: Mr./Mrs./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_  
Constituent ID#: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ph: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Event Location: \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM INFORMATION:  
Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Team Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

CONNECTION WITH MS:  
 I have MS     I have a relative with MS  
 I have a friend or co-worker with MS     Other: \_\_\_\_\_

DONATIONS TURNED IN TODAY:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE YOUR CHECK OR MONEY ORDER IN THIS ENVELOPE. PLEASE CONVERT CASH TO CHECK OR ONLINE DONATIONS.

Please fill out completely and sign waiver on reverse. Even if you are not turning in donations you must turn this in at Walk MS.

DIRECTIONS:  
1. One participant per envelope.  
2. Fill out this envelope completely.  
3. Read and sign waiver on back.  
4. Place all donations in envelope - include checks and matching gift forms.  
5. Turn in your envelope at Walk MS.

See you at Walk MS!  
If unable to attend, please send donations to Chapter name, City, State & Zip.

# What's my volunteer role? | T-shirt Pickup

## T-SHIRT PICKUP

Your role is to help with handing out Walk MS participant T-shirts to qualified individuals

- Greet the participant with a smile and offer friendly customer service
- As a thank you and incentive for raising \$125.00 or more, walkers will receive one Walk MS T-shirt. You will be presented with a coupon or voucher to claim the T-shirt. Only one T-shirt per coupon, please.
- When the participant presents you with a coupon, please ask for their preferred shirt size. If a coupon is not available, you may also check on the provided list of qualified individuals who are eligible to receive a Walk MS T-shirt. Supplies are available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- If a participant insists on having additional T-shirts, please ask him/her to step aside while you get someone who can resolve the situation. Please look for the volunteer area lead or staff liaison to assist the participant. This will ensure that the line keeps moving and that all walk participants will receive good customer service.
- When supplies are out, please ask the participant to write down their information so we can mail them the item after the event.



# What's my volunteer role? | Logistics (Set up/Tear Down) Crew

This 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 event.
- You may be asked to help with the day-of event 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. Your task will most likely include: unloading supplies, setting up tables, chairs, signs, 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 up 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? | 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 National MS Society staff or the committee chair.**

- Welcome and direct walkers, volunteers and guests to the appropriate areas of the event. Be familiar with all of the tables or booths at the Walk MS event.
- Before you direct Walk participants to the registration area, here are scenarios that you may encounter. The Walk participant has:
  - REGISTERED ONLINE AND HAS MONEY TO TURN IN – complete an envelope, seal it and go to the Registration area
  - REGISTERED ONLINE AND DOES NOT HAVE MONEY TO TURN IN – s/he is set; no need to go to the Registration area
  - NOT REGISTERED ONLINE AND HAS MONEY TO TURN IN – complete an envelope, seal it and go to the Registration area
  - NOT REGISTERED ONLINE AND DOES NOT HAVE MONEY TO TURN IN – complete an envelope to sign the waiver; turn envelope to you; you collect all empty envelopes and at the end of the event, please give them to the registration staff or volunteer lead for the office files
  - REGISTERED ONLINE, DOES NOT HAVE MONEY TO TURN IN, HAS A T-SHIRT COUPON - thank them for raising \$125 or more and direct them to the T-shirt pick up area.
  - REGISTERED AND NEEDS TO PICK UP PRIZES – thank them and direct them to the T-shirt pick up area





# What's my volunteer role? | Greeter

## GREETER (continued)

- Ensure registration lines are moving along smoothly.
- Answer general event questions. If you don't know the answer to the question, please write it down and seek a staff or committee member who can assist. Ask the participant to wait in a designated area for a response. If the answer can wait until after the event, please ask for that person's email or phone number so a staff can follow-up with him/her.





# 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 to indicate they agree and have arrived.
- Give them a nametag to complete, and ask them to wear it during the event.
- Ask them for their T-shirt size and provide a Volunteer T-shirt 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 Check-in list. Or, you may also use the volunteer schedule to see what role this volunteer is assigned to. Direct the volunteer to the appropriate table or tent, asking 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.



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

## VOLUNTEER CHECK-IN (Cont.)

- UNREGISTERED VOLUNTEERS or WALK-INS: Ask volunteers who did not pre-register to complete a volunteer form.
  - Consult with the volunteer area lead, staff or committee member to determine if there are any gaps in volunteer coverage. Then assign the 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 as needed throughout the event – floaters should check back in at the volunteer check-in area between assignments).
  - All volunteers should be reminded to check-out at the Volunteer table or area to so that the staff or committee lead are aware 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.
- Please check if items such as ice, water or other items need to be replenished. Apportion the supplies so that there is enough snacks for everyone until the end of the event.
- If you are handling food, please use disposable gloves. Keep your hands sanitized at all times.
- Assist with keeping area clean and clear of trash.
- As the event winds down, pack up unused items or supplies and put them in boxes so they can be used again for the next event. Throw or recycle items as appropriate.
- At the end of the event, make sure all table cloths are removed from tables, fold the chairs and tables, and throw away all trash to make sure area is clean.
- Be aware that some lifting may be needed in this area. If you need help, please ask. Let's try to keep everyone safe and avoid any injuries.



# 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).

- Grab a handful of "I Walk For" sheets, markers and a box of safety pins from the registration area
- Walk around the entire event area and offer the sheets and pins to all participants. Thank the participants for walking.
- If you need more supplies, ask for them in the registration area.
- At the end of your shift or the event, please gather leftover sheets and pins and return them to the registration area. Please pack them neatly in a box so we can use them again next year.



# 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/member 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 or staff 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!



# What's my volunteer role? | Activity Areas

## ACTIVITY AREA / 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 whom 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. Collect and turn in forms to the registration area or staff.
- **MISSION TENT** – arrange all provided materials neatly on the table; familiarize yourself with the MS Society by reading about the organization prior to the event on [www.MSillinois.org](http://www.MSillinois.org); answer questions about the Society (e.g. events, volunteering, advocacy, etc.); hand out giveaways (if any); ask participants to sign-up for events as participants or volunteers. 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 or visit [www.MSillinois.org](http://www.MSillinois.org). At the end of the event, pack all materials neatly in a box and throw all trash away.
- **KIDS AREA** – assist by monitoring the game area (parent must be present with kids at all times); if applicable, hand out snacks or refreshments; at the end of the event, clean up the area and throw all trash away.





# Safety Reminders

- Keep yourself hydrated with water throughout the day
- If you are unable to move, lift or stand, please ask a staff member or volunteer lead 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 [jocelyn.cheng@nmss.org](mailto:jocelyn.cheng@nmss.org) OR 312.423.1139. You may also contact your local committee member who is our volunteer partner for a specific Walk MS site.
- On the day of the event, please see a National MS Society staff or official committee member 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 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 or official committee member.



# Volunteer Housekeeping

- When you arrive, check in at the Volunteer Check-in tent or area.
- 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 if needed – let another volunteer know that you are on break, go to the bathroom, have a snack
- Food Safety – if handling food, please use gloves, sanitize and/or wash your hands at all times
- Lifting – know your limitations, ask for help
- Be friendly and provide customer service – smile! Remember to give everyone a positive impression of the event.
- Refer all participants with donations to the Registration area (or to an official MS Society staff when the Registration area is closed)
- Ask staff or committee members if you have any questions or need help

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!

