



Friends
OF THE POOR®
WALK

EVENT INFO PACKET

WELCOME, FRIENDS!

Congratulations on hosting a Friends of the Poor Walk in your area. Since 2008, more than \$27 million has been raised to help neighbors in need in YOUR community! Conferences and Councils across the country have hosted this event to both raise funds and awareness for the work of SVdP both nationally and locally.

In this packet you will find everything you need to get started, including the official policies and strategies from the field. If you have any questions, please reach out at fopwalk@svdpusa.org.

Thank you for your commitment to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and our neighbors in need.

Yours in Christ,
Alyssa Bergman
Director of National Fundraising Programs
National Council of the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul

“Let us do our duty well, let us go straight to God, let us work to become very humble, very patient, and very charitable.”

– St. Vincent de Paul



FRIENDS OF THE POOR WALK[®]

OFFICIAL POLICIES

OVERVIEW

By participating in the Friends of the Poor[®] Walk, all Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) Conferences / Councils and Walk coordinators are subject to compliance with these Policies and Event Standards.

This packet exists to help SVdP Councils and Conferences run a successful FOP Walk and provides guidance with branding and strategy.

This document reflects the OFFICIAL EVENT RULES AND STANDARDS. These policies must be followed. Violation of the policies and/or event standards may result in expulsion from participation in the Friends of the Poor[®] Walk event.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

The Friends of the Poor Walk is a nationwide signature event of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. This event raises awareness and funds supporting local Conference/Council services to neighbors in need.

BRANDING

The Friends of the Poor[®] Walk is a trademarked brand, and must be respected as such. Please remember to use the official name as “Friends of the Poor[®] Walk”, or if abbreviated, “FOP[®] Walk.”

It is important to follow branding requirements, including the official FOP[®] Walk logo, when creating brochures, banners, social media sites, all Walk day materials, etc.

Because this event is branded as the Friends of the Poor[®] Walk, please use this as the official title, not any “spinoff” titles, including “Walk for the Poor.”

WEBSITE

The official website for the Friends of the Poor Walk is maintained by the National Council office (www.FOPWalk.org). This website contains: planning materials, and administrative/organizational materials, including marketing graphics.

ETHICS

All events must be planned in accordance to the Mission of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul: Inspired by Gospel Values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to people in need.

Employ sound event planning; and keep the fundraising costs and event expenses as low as possible. (Sponsorships can play an important role in offsetting expenses.) Suppliers/sponsors of the event should not receive any special treatment in return for their support, beyond the typical recognition for their donation. Beware of any conflict of interest with your Board and/or planning committee members.

PROCESS

Walk Coordinators must register their event location online ahead of time. Participants may register for their event location prior to the Walk day, or on the day of the event.

All participants must sign the Accident Waiver and Release of Liability waiver. Online walkers sign virtually when registering online, but all offline walkers, volunteers, and other participants must sign a copy before participating.

Event management materials are provided at FOPWalk.com. Councils and Conferences are encouraged to outreach to local media and businesses to develop local exposure and cultivate sponsorships/donations.

The event can be organized and implemented individually by any SVdP Conference or Council, and/or by banding together to form larger, more lucrative events.

Contact information for each donor and participant can be found in your iDonate account. Event organizers are encouraged to thank and track these donors. **contributions are secured by the website's online pledge and security system**

PRIVACY POLICY

iDonate asks for personal information, including credit/debit card information, for the sole purpose of processing donations. This credit card information is gathered under a secured website, to prevent any issues of information being stolen.

Personal credit/debit card information is not stored in our system, and will not be given out. Should a donor not wish to be contacted by SVdP, they will simply opt-out on the donation page. If you have questions or concerns about the security or safety of a donor, walker, or Walk coordinator, please contact the National Council Office: (314) 576-3993, or FOPWalk@svdpusa.org.

EVENT STANDARDS SECTION

1. All FOP Walks established by the National Council are usually the Saturday before the St. Vincent de Paul Feast Day – September 27 (the day St. Vincent de Paul died). However, if the date does not work for your Council or Conference, you may choose another date.
2. The FOP Walk is a national sub-brand of the National Council of the USA. All events must adhere to the established graphic standards, including (but not limited to) brochures, posters, banners, signs, website, and social media sites.
3. The official FOP Walk website is the only website permitted for this event. Any duplication or re-creation of this site, in whole or in part, is strictly prohibited. We do, however, encourage linking the Walk website to your local parish and SVdP websites, to drive participants and donors to the official event page.
4. The FOP Walk is a pledge-a-thon event composed of the following:
 - All participants are encouraged to obtain pledges.
 - Participants have the ability to start a team, join a team, or participate individually.
 - Each participant is encouraged to make a personal donation and solicit from friends, family, coworkers, and acquaintances. A personal minimum goal of \$100 is recommended, with many individuals raising much more.
 - Every Walk location should make a focused effort to obtain sponsorships, which play an important role in revenue. Typically, sponsorships should account for at least 20 – 25% of total revenue. Individual walkers' donations (both online and offline) do not count toward sponsorships.
5. Each FOP Walk event should have the following elements of the Event Day experience:
 - Registration (collections of pledges/waiver forms and distribution of event information)
 - Welcome comments and prayer
 - Sharing the mission and community impact of SVdP
 - Start and Finish Line
 - Sponsor identification
 - Recognition or “thank you” to all walkers/runners, sponsors, volunteers, staff, etc.
6. Event general liability insurance is required by each event host (\$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 in the aggregate; we recommend that SVdPUSA is named as an additional insured.
7. Participant safety is a major priority, especially in the staging area, Walk course, and start/finish area. In case of an emergency, event hosts must have access to Police, Ambulance, and Fire Department.
8. Conferences and Councils may choose to band together for one large event.
9. Each event should have a planning committee and participation by local SVdP Board of Directors and/or executive management.

10. Each Walk Coordinator is responsible for ordering and purchasing their event's t-shirts. The National Council will recommend a t-shirt vendor, based on price and company review. The National Council will announce this vendor on an annual basis, giving the local Walk Coordinators the opportunity to order their shirts at a bulk rate.

Walk Coordinators may choose to use their own t-shirt design company (for example, if shirts can be attained as an in-kind donation or at a further discounted price, this is encouraged). However, the design chosen by National Council must be placed on the front of the shirt. All national sponsors should also be placed on the top of the back of the shirts, with local sponsors placed below. If you choose to have shirts made locally, please contact the National Council for artwork.

11. Linking websites: Walk Coordinators are encouraged to promote their event on their local website and link to the FOP Walk website for registrations and donations. However, you cannot create a separate, or second, website for this event.

12. Disclaimer: SVdPUSA works to ensure that the information provided on the website is accurate, timely, and useful. SVdPUSA, its affiliates, or agents, or any other parties involved in the preparation or publication of this website are not responsible for errors or omissions in information provided on this site, or actions resulting from the use of such information. Please direct any questions to the National Council Office, at FOPWalk@svdpusa.org or (314) 576-3993.

GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED



What are the rules, or policies, of the FOP Walk?

By participating in the FOP Walk, Conferences and Councils are subject to compliance with all policies established for the Walk.

How are Walks coordinated between Conferences and Councils?

Walks can be organized and implemented by Conferences or Councils. Conferences may host a local event by themselves, or in conjunction with other Conferences. Additionally, some Councils choose to host an event, thus providing logistical support to ensure a potentially larger and more lucrative event.

Can we pick another date for our event?

If the national date for the FOP Walk is in conflict with another community event, you may pick another date.

What are the details on the Walk t-shirts?

The National Council partners with a vendor to produce and distribute youth and adult Walk t-shirts at a reasonable price. You can still have your local corporate sponsors printed on the back if you wish, although pricing will vary by size. Shirts may be ordered on www.FOPWalk.org.

How do we get people to participate?

The easiest way to get a base of participants is to enlist support from Conference members. Ask each member to attend with at least five friends or family members. That will be your core group.

Since many people enjoy competition, you might issue a challenge between multiple service clubs, schools, or other organizations to see who can get the highest percentage of participation. Send a press release to local news media. Use your personal and work email to invite friends, family, and coworkers. Send a short message inviting them to walk with you or make a financial contribution. Also, ask your email contacts to bring friends or pass along the word about your event. Invite prominent community leaders to talk about the Walk at meetings and events. If they plan to attend, mention them in the press release.

How are walkers registered to participate in the Walk?

After the Walk location has been registered, participants can register online at www.FOPWalk.org.

Where do I get the Accident Waiver and Release of Liability Form?

All participants and volunteers must sign the Accident Waiver and Release of Liability Form provided on the website in the Resource Toolbox. Any participant who registers online has already agreed to this Accident Waiver and will not need to sign a hard copy on the day of the event. If a participant registers online, they will be required to accept the waiver in order to finish their online registration.

What is the registration fee for a walker?

There is no official registration fee required to register as a walker.

How do the pledges work?

As the Walk is operated on a fixed-length course, pledges are solicited in a fixed amount — not in a “\$ per mile” concept. Pledges are collected at the time they are made, with both online and paper-based systems. Online funds are given back directly to the local Conference or Council, and offline money can be collected the day of the event.

Can I raise money from local sponsors to help underwrite local costs?

Yes! You can also seek sponsorships for products used at your event.

How can we increase the chances of greater media attention?

The website offers tools to achieve the best success in penetrating and growing local media attraction for your event. If you have questions, please contact the National Council Communications Team:

- Jill Pioter 314-576-3993 x 203 • jpioter@svdpusa.org
- Kristen Blacksher 314-576-3993 x219 • kblacksher@svdpusa.org

Do we need to keep records?

Conferences and Councils are strongly encouraged to maintain complete and accurate contact information for all participants and donors. In addition, accurate receipts of offline monies received should be provided in a timely manner to the donors.





Event Checklist

- Identify your Walk Coordinator.

- Register as a Walk at www.fopwalk.org to set up iDonate account for online registration and donations.

- Ask those willing to assist in leadership capacities to assist as the Walk committee (not every event has a committee, but it does ease the load of the Walk Coordinator).

- Decide if you want to do the Walk on a small scale, or make it a large event with entertainment, walking city streets/park, etc.

- Select a location for the event.
 - If first year, and a smaller event, church grounds or a local high school track will require permission, but is typically easy to obtain, and rarely requires permits.
 - If hosting event on a larger scale that requires streets to be shut down, police escort, etc., then obtain necessary permits.

- Check for liability insurance, and make sure you meet necessary minimum requirements.

- Recruit event day volunteers.

- Identify event needs (such as table/booths, food, water, walk routes, signage, etc.)



Event Checklist

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- Enlist local business involvement for in-kind donations (water, snacks, etc.)

- Recruit corporate sponsors for the event — it's a great way to bring in additional funds.

- Promote participation with marketing materials and registration forms, at city events, after church, parish events, nearby churches, schools, youth groups, outside clubs, and community organizations.

- Order t-shirts.

- Send a press release for media coverage of your event.

- Continue promoting walker registrations (flyers, brochures, etc.)

- Encourage participants to create a team, bring friends, and continue to ask for pledges for the event.

- Assemble volunteers and confirm their duties for event day.

- Set-up day of event.

- Clean-up post-event. (You will want volunteers lined up to assist with this. It's a great way to get youth and young adults involved! Ask the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, high school clubs, etc., to help with this.)

- Post-event evaluation for next year.

STRATEGIES FROM THE FIELD

The following list was compiled by Conferences/Councils that have graciously shared their successful ideas on hosting a FOP Walk, with the hopes others will find similar success.

Food

- Provide potluck meal after the Walk.
- Raise additional funds for a Walk being held in the morning with a pancake breakfast.
- Check whether local businesses can donate lunch box meals.
- Sponsor a cookout after the Walk.

Media

- Make noontime television appearance on local news station.
- Put announcement on the online calendar of local media outlets.
- One Conference asked a local news anchor to host the event, but instead got a 5-minute spot on the FOP Walk.

Involving Schools/Youth

- Involve local high school students, groups/classes, and those needing community service hours.
- Ask whether the school's principal will send email blast to the parents of students.
- See if your school principal will send a letter about the FOP Walk offering a dress down day at \$1/student; money goes to the FOP Walk, and parents are now aware of the event as well.
- Ask your school to sponsor an essay contest among for students with the topic "Being a Good Samaritan in Today's World," then announce the winner at the event.
- Invite the local choir to sing "God Bless America" at the beginning of the event to incorporate students and their families.
- Invite Confirmation groups and the church youth groups to join as a service project.

Involving Your Priest and Church

- Send an email blast to head of ministries within the church.
- Ask your parish priest to send an email blast to the parishioners.
- Ask whether the Mass held the week before Walk can be dedicated to the FOP Walk.
- Find out if the Church website can include registration forms and a link to FOP Walk website.

Fundraising

- Have a “Sponsor a Walker Weekend” at church. Put envelopes labeled Friends of the Poor Walk. One small Walk location raised \$1,108 off just this fundraising method.
- Create a “100 for 100 Campaign” asking your entire parish after every Mass to support your efforts, by having 100 parishioners donate/pledge \$100 each to the Walk.
- Come up with prizes for top fundraisers, both personally and as a team.
- Involve Catholic Financial Life as a Walk team and potential sponsor.
- Have walkers utilize social media such as Facebook to make a personal fundraising ask.
- Ask for donations to your walker page instead of a birthday present (also mention this on Facebook).
- Start early by periodically reminding participants about the upcoming Walk and gently encourage them to raise money (reports online will provide their email addresses, then just send one email to all walkers through the blind carbon copy function on your email provider).
- Collect money for the Walk by asking businesses and/or schools to sponsor a “dress down day” or Casual Friday for \$1 – \$5/person per day.
- Offer a raffle with donated goods.
- Offer a 50/50 raffle.

Increasing the Number of Walkers

- Set a goal to increase number of walkers by 30 – 40% from previous year.
- For first-year Walks, set a goal to have at least 100 participants
- Invite neighbors in need who have benefited from SVdP services to participate.
- Invite Board of Directors, leadership, and parish leaders to participate, walk, and create a team; set a goal for each team to have 8 – 10 walkers.
- Invite a key community leader to be the master of ceremonies.
- Use the Online Reports to contact past year’s walkers to join again.
- Set up booth at local Farmer’s Market asking for donated and/or for participant signup.
- Involve school groups such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, National Honor Society, sports groups, Key Club (in one walk location, the National Honor Society alone brought in over \$2,700).
- Sponsor a booth after Mass, at parish picnic, and other parish events (one Walk location put chalk on the bottom of a boot, and made footprints in church that led to their booth for the Walk).
- Create business cards with the FOP website and your event information; hand them out to everyone! This includes the cashier at the grocery store, the waiter at the restaurant, family, friends, neighbors, etc. (Vista Print offers free business cards if you pay the shipping/handling.)
- Have a Vincentian or priest briefly talk about the upcoming Walk after every Mass for the month before the event.
- Have everyone you know take a Walk flyer to their workplace.

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who supports the Friends of the Poor® Walk, including every walk coordinator, walker, corporate sponsor, and donor. You are making a difference for those living in poverty!

WALK THE WALK

Walkers are encouraged to make a personal donation and collect pledges from supporters. All online pledges go directly to the SVP Council or Conference chosen by the walker.

Registration forms will also be available at each Walk location. Asking for pledges is a great way to spread awareness of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's mission and values!

REGISTER ONLINE

To learn more about the Friends of the Poor Walk®, or to register, visit

www.fopwalk.org



**SOCIETY OF
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL**

ACCIDENT WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

I recognize and acknowledge that there are inherent risks in my presence and participation in the St. Vincent de Paul Friends of the Poor Walk®. I acknowledge that this Accident Waiver and Release of Liability form will be used by the event holders, sponsors, and organizers, in which I may participate, and that it will govern my actions and responsibilities at said event. In consideration of my registration and participation in this event, I hereby take action for myself, my executors, heirs, next of kin, successors, and assigns as follows.

(A) Waive, Release, and Discharge from any and all liability for my death, disability, personal injury, property damage, property theft, or actions of any kind, which may hereafter accrue to me or my traveling to and/or from the event, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, their directors, officers, employees, volunteers, representatives, agents; and event holders, sponsors, directors, and volunteers.

(B) Indemnify and hold harmless the entities or persons mentioned in this paragraph from any and all liabilities or claims made by other individuals and entities as a result of any of my actions during this event.

I am aware the Society of St. Vincent de Paul does not provide health and accident coverage for me, and it is my responsibility to pay any medical bills from injuries sustained while participating in the Friends of the Poor® Walk.

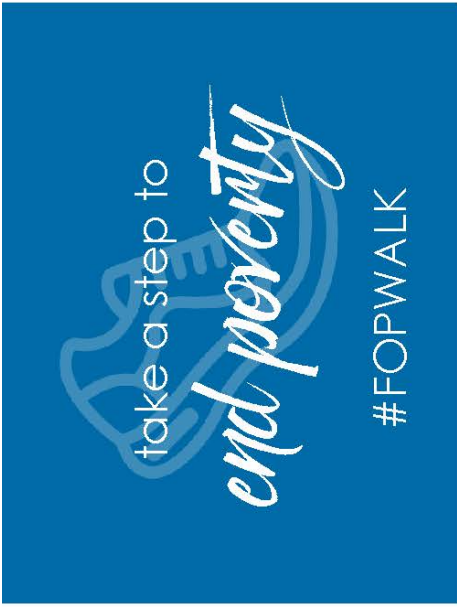
I hereby consent to receive medical treatment which may be deemed advisable in the event of injury, accident, and/or illness during this event.

I understand that at this event or related activities, I may be photographed. I agree to allow my photo, video, or film likeness to be used for any legitimate purpose by the event holders, producers, sponsors, organizations, and assigns.

**Friends
OF THE POOR®
WALK**
fopwalk.com



**SOCIETY OF
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL**



EVENT INFORMATION

- Event Date
(Your Info Here)
- Registration Time
(Your Info Here)
- Start Time
(Your Info Here)
- Event Location
(Your Info Here)
- Event Address
(Your Info Here)
- Event City
(Your Info Here)
- Event State
(Your Info Here)
- Event Zip Code
(Your Info Here)

100% of funds raised
stay in the local
community to help
those living in
poverty.



CONTACT INFORMATION

- Coordinator Name
(Your Info Here)
- Phone Number
(Your Info Here)
- Email Address
(Your Info Here)

WALKER REGISTRATION

- Name
- Phone
- Address
- City
- State
- Zip Code
- Shirt Size

By signing below, I have read and fully understand the waiver and release of liability form in this brochure.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Visit www.fopwalk.org
to register online!



Questions Regarding the Friends of the Poor® Walk, Contact:
Alyssa Bergman
Director of National Fundraising Programs
(314) 576-3993 ext. 218
abergman@svdpusa.org

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