



SPECIAL OLYMPICS
**Virginia
Polar Plunge®**



Guidelines for Polar Plunges in 2018

Events like the Polar Plunge in Virginia Beach and the regional plunges around the state are excellent opportunities for Areas to raise money to run their program. Some Areas are even able to raise their annual budget by participating in one event. The best part is that the event is planned and organized by SOVA staff so it should be less work than a fundraising event run by local volunteers. In order to be successful there are a few key steps:

1. Organize. Somebody needs to be the cheerleader or team captain behind the effort. This person recruits plungers and makes sure that everyone plunging maximizes their fundraising opportunities. They also set up the team on the online fundraising portal and may choose to organize costumes and travel to the Plunge. In some Areas this person is the Area Coordinator or Fundraising Chair, but it can also be a good opportunity to ask a volunteer to take on an annual project.
2. Recruit. Ask plungers who have plunged before for the Area to find a friend and do it again! Brainstorm about new groups of people who would not have plunged before and aren't already involved in Special Olympics.
3. Online. Over 55% of the funds raised for Plunge happen online. You can reach people via email and online fundraising that you would never be able to ask in person.

Online Fundraising:

1. Go to polarplunge.com to register for the plunge event of your choice.
2. The Team Captain will need to set up their own fundraising page and a team fundraising page.
The team name must include Area ## in order to be credited to the Area.
3. For groups that want to be separate from the Area team but still raise funds for the Area (such as when a local social group or service organization raises money for your Area), they still need to have Area number in the team name. The Area number can be after their name (Plunging Icicles Area ##). If you realize a group that you have recruited to raise money for your Area has not put the Area number in their team name they need to change it by January 19, 2018 (for regional plunges this date is 2 weeks prior to the event).
4. Once the team name has been set up, promote the team so that others don't set up another team.

5. Note that when you are on a fundraising page, the totals include offline money entered upon receipt by Richmond office (this is new for 2018 plunges).

Offline Fundraising:

If you do not take advantage of online fundraising you can still designate your plunge efforts as Area by mailing them to the Richmond office or turning the money in to your Area Treasurer. The money must be deposited by January 24, 2018 (for regional plunges this date is Feb 14, 2018 or May 30, 2018) and the deposit backup sent to Connie Johnson (cjohnson@specialolympicsva.org) so that you will get credit at registration for incentives. You must identify the plunger or plungers on the Deposit Summary.

Any funds not turned into the Area Treasurer should be brought to the event. These funds should be turned in at the Area registration room on Friday or Saturday.

Plunger Recruitment:

1. Area and Local programs are welcome to recruit NEW plungers to the event.
2. Plungers that have previously plunged for an Area or Local program are also great people to recruit.
3. Plungers & teams that have previously plunged as general plungers are not eligible to be Area fundraisers unless they have become actively engaged with the Area/Local program.
4. Students/schools participating in the Cool School Challenge or as Champions Together teams at any plunge location are not eligible to raise funds for Area/Local programs. This means schools not currently involved in Area training programs cannot raise funds for an Area/Local.
5. Areas/Locals who knowingly and willingly attempt to recruit previous general plungers may lose the privilege of using the Polar Plunge Winter Festival and regional plunges as a collaborative fundraising opportunity.

Allocation of Funds:

In 2018, Areas will receive 65% of funds raised by their plungers. The remaining 35% will offset the costs incurred by the Chapter to run the event. As we improve the event and work for greater Area participation and fundraising, we will continue to monitor the percentage vs. the actual costs of the event. This is true for the plunges currently in place: Virginia Beach, Northern Virginia and New River. See collaborative fundraising document attached for more information.

We are looking at adding more regional plunges. All Area fundraising at new collaborative events (plunges or other events) will be split 50/50 between Areas and Chapter.