GENERAL EVENT INFORMATION

Q: What is the minimum amount that I need to raise to participate?
A: There is no minimum fundraising amount required to take the Plunge, but individuals are encouraged to raise as much money as they can to help support our athletes. Incentive levels start at $100 fundraised. Participants raising higher amounts are eligible for greater incentives.

Q: Where/how do I turn in my money on Plunge day?
A: Any monies you have in-hand should be turned in at the Registration area on Plunge Day. This includes cash, checks, and money orders. Credit card donations are also accepted at Registration.

Q: What prizes are available to participants who raise more than the minimum $100?
A: For a full list of fundraising incentives, click here (this should go to the incentive pdf).

Q: How far do I have to go into the water?
A: We do not have any depth requirements for the Plunge. Instead, we leave it up to the comfort level of the individual participant. Some choose to go all the way under, while others go ankle-deep and then go home. Everyone is a Plunger in our book!

Q: How old do you have to be to Plunge?
A: While we do not have any age restrictions, participants under the age of 18 must have written consent from a parent or legal guardian. Over the years, many young children have participated quite safely and we defer to the parents on what makes the most sense for their family. Remember, Plunging can mean dipping a hand or a big toe, which is plenty of cold water for a little one!

Q: Is there someplace where I can change before and/or after the Plunge?
A: Yes! In each venue we have either heated indoor changing areas or male/female heating changing tents. Please note that neither the event committee nor Special Olympics New York are responsible for personal belongings left inside the tent that are lost or stolen during the course of the event. Leave items at your own risk.

Q: What should I wear to the Plunge?
A: Pretty much whatever you want, within the following guidelines:
You must wear shoes of some sort
Lewd or indecent bathing suits or outfits are not permitted. Please remember that this is a family event. Participants who disregard this policy will be asked to cover up, or will be escorted from the park.

Q: I am a first-time Plunger. Can you tell me what I should expect when I arrive?
A: The most fun you’ll ever have at the beach in the winter! You should expect a very large crowd and lots of energy. In most Plunge venues you can listen to music, buy some great Plunge gear or other food and drink, and mingle with thousands of fellow Plungers and spectators as you all gear up for your chilly dip.

DONATIONS / FUNDRAISING

Q: Who should checks be made out to?
A: Checks should be made out to Special Olympics New York. Please include in the memo area of the check the Plunger’s name and event location that is to be credited for the donation.

Q: I am trying to make an online donation but it doesn’t seem to be going through. What can I do?
A: Call us and we can help! While we are very pleased with the service provided by Kintera and the overall performance of this online fundraising program, they do occasionally experience technical issues and/or implement service upgrades that cause service to be interrupted. So if you do experience any challenges or errors, please call us at 800-836-6976 and someone will assist you in processing your contribution.

Q: I have received additional donations for the Plunge but the event is over. What should I do with them?
A: Donations to the Plunge are accepted at any time of the year, and simply need to be mailed or delivered to: Special Olympics New York
504 Balltown Rd
Schenectady, NY 12304
Please be sure that the name of the individual or team that the donations should be credited to is clearly indicated.

Q: I/my team raised funds for the Plunge but I was/we were unable to attend. What should I/we do with the money I/we raised?
A: In every case that we have ever been asked this, Plunge participants find that their donors still want their contribution to go to Special Olympics New York so we encourage you to send the money in. Donations to the Plunge are accepted at any time of the year, and simply need to be mailed or delivered to:
Special Olympics New York
504 Balltown Rd
Schenectady, NY 12304
Please be sure that the name of the individual or team that the donations should be credited to is clearly indicated.

Q: I have registered online but I also have cash and checks that people have given me, what can I do with these?
A: All donations should be turned in at the event Registration, these additional funds will be added to your fundraising total.

Q: Does Special Olympics New York issue refunds?
A: Charitable contributions are non-refundable, and the minimum Plunge registration fee is considered a charitable contribution and is therefore also non-refundable.

Q: I have received some cash donations and I want to update the fundraising total on my webpage to include these. How can I do this?
A: Individual Plunge participants can enter donations in the system, but they must be confirmed by the staff at Special Olympics New York. All donations — cash, check, money order — received via mail or in person are entered by the administrative support staff for the Plunge. Contributions in this form should be mailed to Special Olympics New York
504 Balltown Rd
Schenectady, NY 12304
for processing. Please allow at least 5-7 days from receipt of the donations for totals to reflect online.

Q: How long does it take for checks that are mailed in on my behalf to show up in my fundraising total?
A: Generally speaking, contributions will be entered no more than 5-7 days after they are received by Special Olympics New York. When checking on a donation that has been mailed, please remember to allow 2-3 days for handling by the USPS. During the week of the Plunge, processing time WILL increase due to the volume of mail received. In this case, contributions may or may not appear on your webpage prior to the event.

Q: My company offers matching gifts. If I get my personal contribution to the Plunge matched, does that count towards my fundraising total and how do I go about getting credit for it?
A: Yes, that is an excellent way to raise additional funds on behalf of your Plunge. All you need to do is complete a request with your employer. They will have us verify your donation and will send us the matching funds — usually within 6 weeks, sometimes longer.

Q: Can I get blank receipt forms to give to my donors?
A: Blank receipt forms are available for you to give back to donors upon receiving a contribution. They are at the following LINK.

TEAM INFORMATION

Q: What is the minimum amount that my team needs to raise?
A: Teams are not required to raise any specific amount.

Q: Can general donations made to our team be split up among team members?
A: All Plungers must fund-raise individually. However, we are aware that in some cases a family member or a company will issue one check that is intended to cover multiple team members, but will just use the team name. You can help us to avoid this by asking donors to indicate in advance exactly who they are sponsoring and in what amounts. If that information is not included ahead of time but the donor did intend for it be split among team members, please contact us at polarplunge@nyso.org. If you are bringing a bulk check or dollar amount with you to the event registration, PLEASE have exactly how you would like the funds split up between each Plunger written out or the donation will go to which ever team member is handing it in during registration.

Q: My team would like to put out some banners/posters/flyers/other promotional materials to promote a special fundraiser and/or our general participation in the event and help us raise money. How can we get these?
A: We are happy to work with teams to assist in promoting participation in this event.
SPECTATORS

Q: As a spectator, where is the best place to watch the Plunge?
A: Spectators are welcome to stand along the outside perimeter of the fence line designating the official “Plunge Zone” in order to watch the action; however, they will not be allowed entry into the Plunge Zone. For those Plungers who need photographic proof, we recommend taking a waterproof camera to the water with you and asking a fellow Plunger to capture the moment. Another option is to delay your Plunge until the bulk of the crowd has already entered and exited the water, making it easier for your supporters to see you from the spectator area.

Q: Is there any charge to get into the event if I am just coming to cheer on a Plunge participant?
A: No! Spectators are welcome to the event free of charge. There are, however, tons of great food and beverage vendors, crafters and other merchandise for sale at the event so you might want to have some money on hand for when you see that sweatshirt you just can’t live without!

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Q: I was going to participate but now I can’t. Is there a way for me to cancel my registration?
A: If you simply want to let us know that you are no longer attending, there is no need. We expect a certain % of no-shows each year and plan accordingly. Because it is a charitable contribution, it is non-refundable even if you are unable to participate.

Q: I was going to participate but now my schedule doesn’t allow. Is it possible for me to turn in my money early and still receive the Plunge sweatshirt?
A: Absolutely! Please contact your regional Plunge staff and they will help you arrange that!