

# FRIENDS OF THE POOR® WALK

## Official Policies



### OVERVIEW

The Friends of the Poor® Walk was launched in 2008, at which time the original policies and event standards were approved by the National Board of Directors of the National Council of the United States, Society of St. Vincent de Paul. This version has been updated with the intent to preserve the national branding of the event and to provide further guidance in running a successful event.

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

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 National Council of the United States, Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVdPUSA). This event is coordinated by SVdPUSA's Advancement Team, and is meant to raise awareness and funds to support 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." The trademark symbol "®" should always be used after the word "Poor" (or after the letter "P" in "FOP") within the title.

It is important to follow these branding requirements, including the official FOP® Walk logo, when creating brochures, banners, social media sites (including, but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter), 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](http://www.fopwalk.org)). This website contains the following downloadable event resources: planning, media, sponsor, administrative/organizational material including marketing graphics; as well as administrative reports.

**National Council of the United States, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Inc.**

66 Progress Parkway • Maryland Heights, MO 63043-3706 • (314) 576-3993 • [www.svdpusa.org](http://www.svdpusa.org)

## ETHICS

All events must be planned in accordance to the Mission of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul: *Inspired by Gospel Values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a Catholic Lay organization. Leading women and men to join together to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service, to those who are needy and suffering in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam and Patron, St. Vincent de Paul. Lastly, the Society collaborates with other people of goodwill in relieving need and addressing its causes, making no distinction in those served because, in them, Vincentians See the Face of Christ.*

Ethics also includes employing sound event planning; keeping 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

Event hosts must register their event location online ahead of time. A non-refundable walk location fee of \$150 will be paid to the National Council for each walk event. 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 (planning, media, fundraising, logistics, etc.) will be provided by the National Council's Advancement Team. 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.

Pledges are collected immediately at the time of pledging; either online (credit/debit card donations processed at no cost to the Conference or Council; see below) or by cash/check at the event. Each host is responsible for tabulating the total receipts and reporting them to the National Council through the final report form.

Contact information for each donor and participant will be supplied to the respective event host, available in the Reports section of the FOP® website. Event organizers are encouraged to track and thank these donors.

\*\*contributions are secured by the website's online pledge and security system\*\*

## PRIVACY POLICY

The FOP® Walk website asks for personal information, including credit/debit card information, for the sole purpose of processing donations per the donor's request. This credit card information is gathered under a secured website, to prevent any issues of information being stolen.

If the donor submits their donation with the boxes checked allowing SVdP to contact them via email or mail, then that information will be provided to the local Walk coordinator for the intention of thanking and cultivating that donor. 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 their local or national 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 x213, or [fopwalk@svdpusa.org](mailto:fopwalk@svdpusa.org).

## EVENT STANDARDS SECTION

1. All FOP® Walk events should occur on the date established by the National Council, usually the Saturday closest to the St. Vincent de Paul Feast Day – September 27 (the day St. Vincent de Paul died). National media is focused on this day. However, a 30-day window before and after this date is available to accommodate local scheduling conflicts. If you have a scheduling issue, please contact the National Council Office to discuss alternatives.
2. The FOP® Walk is a national sub-brand of the National Council of the United States, Society of St. Vincent de Paul. All events must adhere to the established graphic standards. This includes (but not limited to), brochures, posters, banners, signs, website, and social media sites.
3. The official Friends of the Poor® 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 official FOP® Walk website link to your local parish and SVdP websites, to drive participants and donors to the official event page.
4. The FOP® Walk website's Coordinator Resource Toolbox houses the following information, to be reviewed by each Walk Coordinator:
  - Guide to Getting Started (overview of information for the Walk Coordinator)
  - Walk Marketing (customizable marketing documents and graphics)
  - Best Practices (templates/ ideas from the field that have worked for other walk locations)
5. FOP® Walk is a pledge-a-thon event composing of the following:
  - All Walkers/Runners 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.

6. 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.
7. Event general liability insurance is required by each event host (\$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 in the aggregate, recommendation is that SVdPUSA is named as an additional insured).
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. Participant safety is a major priority, especially in the staging area, walk/run course, and start/finish area. In case of an emergency, event hosts must have access to Police, Ambulance, and Fire Department.
11. The final event report should be turned into the SVdPUSA office on or before October 15. If your event is held after October 15, you have two weeks from the event date to turn in your final report form.
12. Walk Coordinators will be asked to help evaluate their event, sharing with the National Council how SVdPUSA can improve event performance (written evaluations, phone calls, conference calls, etc.).
13. Each Walk Coordinator is responsible for ordering and purchasing their event’s t-shirts. A pre-determined vendor will be offered at the National Council’s recommendations, based on price and company review. The National Council will announce this vendor on an annual basis, giving the local Conference/Council the opportunity to order their shirts at a bulk rate.

Walk Coordinator 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 Council 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 Office for artwork.
14. Linking websites: Walk Coordinators are encouraged to promote their event on their local website and link to the National Friends of the Poor® Walk/Run website for registrations and donations. However, you cannot create a separate, or second, website for this event.
15. 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 event/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](mailto:fopwalk@svdpusa.org) or (314) 576-3993 x213.