2026

Georgia Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) for Special Olympics

Department Coordinator Handbook

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Law Enforcement Torch Run Mission Statement

The mission of the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics is to raise funds for and awareness of the Special Olympics movement worldwide. Law Enforcement officers from every state and more than 80 countries carry the *Flame of Hope* in honor of Special Olympics athletes in their area and around the world.

Special Olympics Georgia Mission Statement

The mission of the Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

The goal of Special Olympics is to help bring individuals with intellectual disabilities into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted, respected, and given the chance to become useful and productive citizens.

Special Olympics Georgia Facts

Number of participating athletes:	18,546
Number of Unified Partners:	18,286
Number of Volunteers Statewide:	49,222
Number of eligible athletes not served:	74,000

Number of Annual State Competitions: 3

Indoor Winter Games, January, Cobb/Bartow Counties
Summer Games, May, Emory University
Fall Games, October, Valdosta

Number of Local & Area competitions annually: 600

Number of local agencies accredited: 193

Number of Local Coordinators: 212

Number of Sports offered by SOGA: 29
Number of Unified Sports offered by SOGA: 24
Number of Certified Coaches: 10,608
Number of counties participating in the program: 117

Age of Athletes participating on a State Level: 8 and up
Age of Athletes participating in the Young Athletes program: 2 – 7

SOGA Team: 17 full-time (6 full-time team members are in the Valdosta office)
2 part-time Athlete Intern

Sports offered:

Alpine Skiing*
Athletics
Badminton
Basketball
Bocce
Bowling
Cycling
Equestrian
Flag Football
Floor Hockey
Golf
Gymnastics – Artistic
Gymnastics – Rhythmic
Ice Skating
Powerlifting
Roller Skating*
Sailing
Soccer
Softball
Table Tennis
Tennis
Volleyball
Kayaking
Speed Skating
Snowboarding*
Cheerleading
Pickleball

**Indicates non-unified partner sports*

Special Olympics Georgia Terminology

Words matter. Words can open doors to cultivate the understanding and respect that enable people with disabilities to lead fuller, more independent lives. Words also can create barriers or stereotypes that are not only demeaning to people with disabilities but also rob them of their individuality. The following language guidelines have been developed by experts for anyone writing or speaking about people with intellectual disabilities to ensure that all people are portrayed with individuality and dignity.

Use the following correct terminology:

- A person **with an intellectual disability**, rather than is suffering from, afflicted with, or a victim of mental retardation. It is preferred terminology not to write or say that a person is "mentally retarded." The important point to remember when writing or speaking is to refer to the person first to avoid labeling them by their disability.
- Refer to people in Special Olympics Georgia as **athletes**. The word athletes should not appear in quotation marks.
- **Down Syndrome** has replaced "Down's Syndrome" and Mongoloid.
- A person with a **Physical challenge** or **disability** rather than crippled.
- Someone who is partially sighted is a person with a **visual impairment** rather than blind.
- A person with a **hearing impairment** rather than deaf or deaf mute.
- A person has a **seizure** rather than a fit.
- A person has a **seizure disorder** or **epilepsy**, rather than is epileptic.
- Distinguish between adults and children with intellectual disabilities, and older or younger athletes.
- When writing, refer to persons with a disability in the same style as persons without a disability: full name on first reference and last name on subsequent references. Resist the temptation to refer to an individual with an intellectual disability as "Bill," rather than the journalistically correct "Bill Smith" or "Smith."
- A person **uses a wheelchair** rather than is confined or restricted to a wheelchair.

Do not use the following terminology:

- **Do not use the word "kids" when referring to Special Olympics athletes. Adult athletes are an integral part of the program.**
- Do not use the adjective "unfortunate" when talking about persons with intellectual disabilities life-defining conditions do not have to be life-defining in a negative way.
- Do not use the word "the" in front of Special Olympics Georgia unless describing a specific Special Olympics event.
- Do not sensationalize the accomplishments of people with a disability. While these accomplishments should be recognized and applauded, people in the disability rights movement have tried to make the public aware of the negative impact of referring to the achievements of physically or mentally challenged people with excessive hyperbole.
- Do not overuse the word "special" when referring to persons with intellectual disabilities. Their accomplishments should not be trivialized by using cute words to describe their efforts.

Special Olympics Georgia Terminology FAQ's

Q: What are Intellectual Disabilities?

A: According to the definition by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), an individual is considered to have intellectual disabilities based on the following three criteria:

- → Intellectual function level (IQ) is below 70-75
- → Significant limitations exist in two or more adaptive skill areas; and
- → The condition manifests itself before the age of 18

Adaptive skill areas are those daily living skills needed to live work and play in the community. The definition includes 10 adaptive skills: communication, self-care, home living, social skills, leisure, health and safety, self-direction, functional academics, community use and work. A person with limits in intellectual functioning who does not have limits in adaptive skill areas may not be diagnosed as having intellectual disabilities.

Q: How Prevalent are Intellectual Disabilities?

A: According to the World Health Organization, up to 3% of people of the world's population have intellectual disabilities – this is the largest disability population in the world.

Seven and a half million individuals that reside within the United Sates have development disabilities. Each year, 10,000 babies in the United States are born with intellectual disabilities. In the United States, intellectual disabilities are:

- → 7 times more prevalent than blindness
- → 7 times more prevalent than deafness
- → 10 times more prevalent than physical disabilities
- → 12 times more prevalent than cerebral palsy
- → 35 times more prevalent than muscular dystrophy

Q: Why did Special Olympics update its terminology from "mental retardation" to "intellectual disabilities"?

A: In response to a call from our athletes and the growing social unacceptability of the term "mental retardation" around the world, Special Olympics has adopted the term "intellectual disabilities" when referring to the population with whom we serve. The word "mental" can be confused with "mental illness" and the word "retardation" is associated with offensive terms as "retard" or "retarded".

Q: Why is the language and specific terminology important?

A: Special Olympics prefers to focus on people and their gifts and accomplishments, and to dispel negative attitudes and stereotypes. In an ideal world, labels would not exist, but unfortunately, they do, and language choices can have a powerful impact on impressions and attitudes. As language has evolved, Special Olympics has updated its official terminology to use more widely accepted terminology that is more acceptable to our athletes.

Law Enforcement Torch Run International

The History

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics, the largest grassroots fundraising program for the cause, began in 1981 when Wichita, Kansas Police Chief Richard LaMunyon saw an urgent need to raise funds for and increase awareness of Special Olympics.

The idea for the Torch Run was to provide local law enforcement officers with an opportunity to volunteer with Special Olympics in the communities where the officers lived and worked. After three years of successful

runs in Kansas, Chief LaMunyon presented his idea to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, which endorsed Special Olympics as its official charity through the Torch Run.

At its most basic level, the Torch Run is an actual running event where officers and athletes run the Special Olympics "Flame of Hope" to the Opening Ceremony of local tournaments, State, Provincial or National Summer or Winter Games. As a whole, the Torch Run program encompasses a variety of fundraising vehicles in addition to the actual Torch Run such as T-shirt or merchandise sales, raffles, donations or pledges for runners in the Torch Run, corporate donations, and special events, such as, Polar Plunges, golf tournaments or other events that have local appeal.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police is the founding law enforcement organization of the Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics. For more information about the Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics, please visit our website at www.specialolympics.org.

Georgia Torch Run Program

Each year, law enforcement officers from around the state raise money for Special Olympics Georgia (SOGA) by conducting the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR). Since 1986, when the Georgia Torch Run began, it has grown consistently every year. In 2025, the law enforcement torch-run initiatives raised over **$830,000 in partnership with Publix.** Through the combined efforts of hundreds of law enforcement volunteers throughout the State, LETR has contributed **over $15 million** to Special Olympics athletes in Georgia since its inception.

How It Works

LETR involves hundreds of law enforcement officers from agencies throughout the state who take part in a 1,000-mile, two-week torch relay to pass the Special Olympics Georgia 'Flame of Hope' across the State. Each year, officers raise funds for the honor of being a Torch Bearer in the Torch Run. The top five money-raising departments have the honor of running the 'Flame of Hope' into the Opening Ceremony and the top fundraising department will light the Cauldron to signify the beginning of the State Games.

The Purpose

In addition to formally guarding the 'Flame of Hope' for Special Olympics, Law Enforcement officers help raise awareness and funds through the Torch Run. The LETR activities in communities across Georgia increase public awareness and understanding of Special Olympics.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run is the largest fundraiser for Special Olympics Georgia. In 2026, more than 6,000 athletes from throughout Georgia will participate in one of the State Games and Competitions conducted by Special Olympics Georgia. For a few days, these children and adults with intellectual disabilities will get to compete in a high-quality sports competition, interact with their peers, and experience new places. Participation in the State Games also means that these athletes are focusing on a goal, learning new skills, and developing healthy habits that may lead to improved overall health.

In 2026, the State Games and Competitions will require more than $1,000,000 in cash. While there are many corporate sponsors for these games, the funds raised from companies cover only half of the expenses. Funds

raised through the Law Enforcement Torch Run help offset the expenses of State Games and are specifically used for facility rental, housing, meals, equipment rental and purchase, officials' fees, and medals. **Your help** is vital to the continuation of Special Olympics Georgia!

Special Olympics Georgia History

Special Olympics Georgia (SOGA) was founded in 1970 in conjunction with the Special Olympics movement that was begun in Washington, D.C. in 1968 by **Eunice Kennedy Shriver**. In its early years, SOGA was run by volunteers and in conjunction with the Georgia State Department of Natural Resources. By 1975, Special Olympics Georgia had a staff person who worked with a few hundred athletes and conducted competitions in only a few sports. Over fifty years, SOGA has grown to serve 18,546 individuals. Athletes train year-round for competition in 29 sports which are patterned after the Olympic Games and held annually at each organizational level including four statewide events. More than 600 games, meets, and tournaments are held in communities throughout Georgia. Every two years SOGA sends athletes to compete internationally at the Special Olympics World Summer and Winter Games. An officer from the SOGA LETR usually participates in the World Games Final Leg Law Enforcement Torch Run.

Special Olympics is distinctive in that it works to accommodate competitors at all ability levels in order to give everyone a reasonable opportunity to win. It does this by assigning all athletes to competition divisions based on previous performances and/or preliminary heats. Athletes from all divisions may advance to Area, State, Regional, and World Games.

The goal of SOGA is to help bring persons with intellectual disabilities into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted, respected, and given the chance to become useful and productive citizens. Special Olympics Georgia contributes to the physical, social, and psychological development of people with intellectual disabilities. Through successful experiences in sports, athletes gain confidence and build a positive self-image, which carries over into the classroom, the home, the job, and the community. In addition, involvement with SOGA strengthens families, causing a richer appreciation of talents, increased level of pride, and greater support between the Special Olympics athletes, siblings, and parents. Also, the community at large is united in understanding people with intellectual disabilities in an environment of equality, respect, and acceptance.

DID YOU KNOW…?

The lifetime benefits of participation in Special Olympics were documented in a study conducted by the Yale University School of Medicine which demonstrated that individuals with intellectual disabilities who participate in Special Olympics programs achieve higher success, including living independently, maintaining employment and developing closer social relationships.

DID YOU KNOW…?

- ✓ Special Olympics has a 97% name recognition
- ✓ 68% of the public say that they feel more positive about companies that support Special Olympics
- ✓ 1 in 6 people are touched by Special Olympics (volunteers, donors, athletes, family of athletes, etc.)

2025 Top 10 Agencies

Johns Creek Police Department

Georgia Bureau of Investigation

Gwinnett County Police Department

Columbus Police Department

Kennesaw Police Department

Warner Robins Police Department

Acworth Police Department

Department of Community Supervision

Department of Juvenile Justice

Cobb County Sheriff's Office

Dunwoody Police Department

Fundraising

Why Raise Funds?

Special Olympics Georgia receives no state, local, federal or United Way funds. Our budget, which supports year-round training and competition, is totally dependent upon individuals, corporations and special events such as the Law Enforcement Torch Run. It costs a lot to provide programs, training, and equipment and to send athletes to State and World games. **The cost to send one athlete to Atlanta to participate in the state Games is $110**. No athlete or his or her family ever pays a fee to participate in Special Olympics Georgia. Funds are also needed to reach others who are eligible for the program. Special Olympics Georgia serves

more than 24,000 athletes, while still reaching out to recruit the more than 74,000 athletes who do not yet reap the benefits of our program.

Anyone who has ever volunteered at one of our games will tell you that what you receive from the athletes is much more than what you give. No price can be put on the joy seen on the athletes' faces on the medal stand, the courage they display in order to finish a race. The hug at the finish line will light up your heart. Special Olympics believes this amazing group of people deserves to be accepted, respected and given the chance to become a productive member of society. **You** help make this happen!

How to Ask for Donations

The best way to solicit for a donation is to simply **ask**! Ask as many people as you can: friends, family, doctors, car mechanic, barber…everybody. Remember you are not asking for yourself, but to provide the opportunity for an individual athlete with developmental disabilities to discover his or her full potential.

How do I raise $500 in a week?

Day 1: Start by sponsoring yourself for $25
Day 2: Ask 3 family members to sponsor you for $25
Day 3: Ask 5 friends to donate $15
Day 4: Ask 5 co-workers to sponsor you for $10
Day 5: Email 15 people and ask for a $10 donation
Day 6: Ask your company for a $75 contribution
Day 7: Ask 2 businesses that you frequent for $25

The first step in a successful Torch Run effort is setting a **fundraising goal for your agency.** For new departments, that goal should be something ambitious but realistic. For departments that have been involved before, try to increase your results from last year. Whatever your goal is, make sure that you periodically inform everyone in your department concerning the progress of that goal, for example: "We have raised $2,500, almost halfway to our goal of $5,000."

The second step is to make sure that your **agency's upper management is behind the Torch Run effort** and that everyone in your department knows the goal and can easily get involved.

Next, **form a committee**. This will be very helpful in terms of organization and relieving you from all of the responsibilities. If your department is large, by forming a committee consisting of representatives from all areas of your agency, communication lines will be greatly improved to officers working different shifts. Use the posters provided and departmental newsletters to keep everyone informed.

Merchandise

The easiest way to get started and main mechanism of raising funds is through our merchandise. The design

changes each year and is based on design suggestions given to the Executive Council. The 2024 merchandise/starter boxes can be initially picked up at the kick-off meeting in December.

Shirts are available in Adult Small through 3XL, short sleeve only, **for a $25 donation each.**

We also have a hat available for **$25 each**.

For any additional merchandise requests, you will find an order form in this handbook labeled **Materials Order Form** that you should fill out and sent to **Conner King**: Conner.King@SpecialOlympicsGA.org (fax 404-393-2929). The shirts will be shipped ASAP.

*In past years, we have ended up having a large volume of shirts returned at the end of the LETR season. This adversely affects our fundraising efforts, so we all must strive to improve in this area. **You must turn in the funds you have raised for the shirts you have already ordered before placing another order.**

For new departments that have not sold T-shirts in the past, we recommend that you start with a small order and re-order only after your initial order has been sold.

*****Most importantly, please do not allow merchandise boxes to sit unpacked in your offices. If you feel you will not be able to sell the merchandise, please arrange to return them to Special Olympics Georgia to be redistributed. When returning merchandise, complete the Materials Return Form, and enclose with your shipment. *****

Cash, check and charge are all accepted forms of payment. Checks should be made payable to Special Olympics Georgia. Credit Cards should fill out the "Receipt of Donation/Credit Card Donation" Form which can be found in the Forms Appendix of this manual.

Please make sure to turn in money on a regular basis. You would not want someone to hold onto your checks without depositing for a long period of time, please be courteous and do the same.

Fundraising: Statewide Events

Statewide Events

Statewide events are those that are produced by the Special Olympics Georgia State Office and offered to participating agencies. These are events in which most of the work has been done, each law enforcement agency will need to tailor to their specific location and secure any donations or items needed to make your location successful. All materials are provided by the State Office as well as guides.

- **Polar Plunge; Saturday, February 21, 2026**

Join us for the 'Coolest Winter' Statewide Event – the Polar Plunge! Our Annual Plunge will be held at Acworth Beach at Cauble Park on February 21st. Last year we hosted over 300 plungers and raised over $200,000. Polar Plunges are large fundraisers hosted by Special Olympics programs across the nation. Special Olympics Maryland's plunge raises over $1 million in one day! All it takes is a warm heart and a little guts and just enough craziness to plunge into cold water in the middle of winter! A minimum donation or pledge of $50 will get you started! This is a large-scale event, and all departments are encouraged to participate in order to make the 14th Annual Polar Plunge a huge success!

- **Cops on Donut Shops; June 5th, 2026**

Annual Cops on Donut Shops, we will hold this fundraiser on National Donut Day, June 5, 2026. With over 100 locations around the state, this event has the potential to be one of the largest LETR fundraising efforts to date. The event consists of officers, volunteers, and athletes 'staking' out their local Dunkin' Donuts shops and collecting donations for Special Olympics Georgia. We plan to have teams of 3-4 officers to collect donations outside each store, at the drive-thru, and inside the restaurants. LETR T-shirts and Hats will be made available for sale at each site as well. This will be a one-day, go-for-broke event with a fundraising goal of $95,000.

If you are interested in conducting this event in your area please contact Conner King, at 770-414-9390 ext. 1142 or Conner.King@SpecialOlympicsGA.org as soon as possible.

Fundraising: Statewide Events

- **Publix Torch Icon Sales – January 9th-16th, 2026**

For two weeks in January, Publix Super Markets sells torch icons at their registers for $1, $3, $5, or $10. All donations received for icon sales in the State of Georgia come directly back to Special Olympics Georgia. Be sure to stop by your local Publix and purchase your torch and say thanks! This is our biggest fundraiser of the year raising more than $800,000 statewide in 2025! Publix Super Markets is the Presenting Sponsor of the Law Enforcement Torch Run.

- **Golf Tournaments**

Golf tournaments are a popular and effective fundraising event held by many agencies. Many corporations will supply teams in exchange for sponsorships and recognition in your program, pre-tournament brochure, pre-tournament advertising, etc. **Be careful of your expenses. All agencies should turn in a written budget to SOGA before planning for review and approval, the form included in this packet**. Remember we can only give you credit on the net amount raised or the amount you actually turn in. To help cut back on the cost, get items donated by businesses in the community such as food, prizes, perhaps a car as a hole-in-one prize from a local dealer, donated brochures, etc. For more information on past successful tournaments contact your Law Enforcement Torch Run Liaison.

- **Payroll Deductions**

Another simple way to boost your department's overall total is to speak with your finance department to see if your agency has this capability and then notify your employees. Employees can choose how much they would like to donate per paycheck, month, or year. Depending on the finance department's policies is how often it will be deducted from each individual's paycheck. Checks are mailed directly to the SOGA State Office and then credited towards your department's total.

- **Adopt-A-Cop**

The concept is easy...each law enforcement runner enlists a school, club, civic group or small business to solicit funds for the Law Enforcement Torch Run in his/her name. The group has, in effect, "adopted" the runner. Schools or church circles can sell paper torches or M&M's. Offer to make a presentation, with a video and athlete to the group and invite them to volunteer at area games. Selling points: donation is tax deductible, allows groups to see law enforcement in a non-intimidating way, and helps build employee or group morale.

- **Pledges**

Officers themselves can use the same concept for Adopt-A-Cop. In other words, you can get the pledges yourself rather than asking a sponsoring organization to "adopt" you. **Remember, each runner who participates in the actual "run" is asked to raise $100.**

- **The "Mile of Quarters"**

Did you know that it would take 68,640 quarters laid end to end to make a mile? That's $17,160!! Radio stations and shopping malls love gimmicks and the "Mile of Quarters" is an excellent promotion that raises big bucks! Ask a local disc jockey to make appeals over the air to raise money for the Torch Run. You can collect the money in jars at retail stores, in a mall or at a chain of convenience stores.

- **Elk's Lodges and Fraternal Order of Police Lodges**

Both the Elk's and FOP have shown a strong tendency to contribute to local Torch Run efforts. Find out who the president is for your local lodge and approach them about the possibility of contributing to the Torch Run.

- **Other Fundraising Ideas –** for more information or help to brainstorm, please contact your Torch Run liaison.

Road Race	Chances to win	Basketball Tournament	Silent Auction
Police Show	Car Show	Celebrity Dinner	Car Wash
Spaghetti Dinner	Billboard Sits	Plane/Truck Pulls	Comedy Shows
Bowling Tournaments	Dunk Tanks	Paintball Challenge	Softball Tournament

Location: Wal-Mart stores have proven to be a great location for this event. Most local stores will give a $1,000 matching grant. Malls are another great location. Gwinnett County held two treadmill walks at the Mall of Georgia and raised $5,000.00 each time.

Personnel Needs:

- One officer that is physically fit enough to remain on a treadmill for eight hours
- A minimum of three to four officers/volunteers to work as ground crew, but the more officers and volunteers able to be there in shifts, the better and higher chance of receiving donations.

Equipment Needs:

- One commercial grade treadmill (good quality equipment will make it easier for the officer)
- One set of leg cuffs
- One set of handcuffs
- Two sets of flex cuffs or heavy-duty wire ties
- A minimum of one canopy (two plus is best)
- Two tables
- Four to six chairs

Optional Equipment:

- Outdoor grill/cooker for hamburgers and hotdogs
- Sound system (handheld PA, stereo)
- Blue light

The basic concept is this:
This is a fundraiser that requires very little in the way of upfront money. Most of the equipment will be given/loaned to you for company recognition during the event. Past Treadmill Walk events have always been able to get a treadmill from a local fitness company such as Fitness Resource. The average raised in the past has been around $2,000. The key is to create a carnival atmosphere around the officer on the treadmill. Giveaways such as sticker badges and coloring books are a great tool to draw in the children. It is amazing what a free sticker badge will get from a parent! Food sales are another good way to raise money. Torch run merchandise sales also raise a lot of money, but it is important to keep records of how much merchandise is sold during the event. Another idea is to get the store to donate the treadmill to you after the event. You can then conduct a raffle (day of event or later) for the treadmill and make additional money for SOGA!

The officer will be handcuffed to a treadmill (Yes, moving) for eight hours or until the goal of $2,000.00 is raised. The officer is allowed quick restroom breaks, but no other type of break is allowed. A stand in officer is to get on the treadmill during the times the officer is on break.

Another option is to find a local celebrity to handcuff to the treadmill. How about the local Chief or Sheriff?

The most important thing to remember here is to have FUN!

Event Concept:

Law enforcement officers, local PD's, correctional officers, state troopers, etc., collect donations from customers and the general public as they are perched on the rooftops of a building. These personnel "cannot" come off the roof for a certain number of hours/days or until the fundraising goal has been reached. (GREAT for Dunkin' locations or Local Donut Shops or Restaurants)

Getting Started:

- Identify venue (location, customer traffic, type of venue, hours of operation, rooftop access and architecture should be considered)
  - * Outdoor village-style malls, stand-alone or anchor stores in strip-style malls
  - * Restaurants (24-hour restaurants are handy—i.e. Waffle House)
  - * Indoor malls (although officer will be on top of a scissor lift type of crane)
- Secure permission from building landlord and date
- Once permission is granted, contact SOGA and submit Event Notification Form.
- Develop a list of support needs from SOGA and venue owners/managers.
- Act as liaison between venue owner/managers/marketing staffs and local businesses, organizations and individuals that could sponsor, donate food, in-kind gifts, etc.
- Communicate with SOGA Team on all event logistics i.e. supplies, volunteers, PR
- Communicate with SOGA Team regarding all sponsorships, pledges and business donations.
- Recruit law enforcement personnel to staff the rooftops and venue ground level.
- Secure safe and proper arrangements for themselves and law enforcement staffs for their rooftop stay.
- All officers participating in event will need to sign Waiver before accessing rooftop. All signed waivers should be on file with the SOGA office

How Cops-on-Rooftops Raises Money

- Promote SOGA merchandise giveaways
- Work the venue patrons through PA systems or bullhorns
- Garner "pledges per hour" before the event
- Solicit donations from local area businesses (works especially well if venue is located in a strip mall center, mall or village shopping area)
- Acquire sponsorships for the event
- Make cell calls from the rooftop to local individuals and business leaders asking for gifts or pledges
- Work with venue owners and managers to create giving incentives: matching gifts agreement, donation per item sold, discounts, coupons, etc. These methods increase visitors and business for venue while generating funds for SOGA

Event Concept:

The goal of the Jail 'N' Bail event is to collect as many donations as possible through "warrants." Police Officers along with fraternities/sororities or other groups go on "warrant" runs and arrest faculty/staff and/or students and transport them to jail. All donations are for Special Olympics Georgia.

Picking a Spot:

- Outdoors vs. Indoors
- Pick an area where there is high visibility
- Center of main campus, near dining halls or residence halls

Picking Your Date:

- Pick a date that coincides with event on campus i.e. Spring Week, Homecoming, etc.
- Avoid reading or finals week – too much already going on

Getting the Word Out for Volunteers

- Distribute flyers throughout the campus
- Send out an all employees email
- Get fraternities, sororities, athletic teams or other groups on campus to assist you
- Get the rookies involved
- The more officers, the better
- Get faculty/staff, high ranking administrators involved to volunteer as judges
- You can always ask SOGA or your local coordinator to find an Athlete to help out
- Make it FUN!!!

Get the Word Out for Publicity

- Use school newspaper and radio station to help spread the word of the event i.e. article, copy of your warrant, radio broadcast
- T-Shirts with logo, date, time of the event. T-Shirts are given to everyone who fills out a warrant. The day of the event all "arrestees" get a T-Shirts
- Contact SOGA

Planning Tips

- Start planning early at least 3 months out
- Identify potential sponsors or donators
- Have a warrant deadline at 2 weeks prior to event
- Create a committee – you cannot do this alone
- Utilize the school and local newspapers
- Get the word out early
- Everyone MUST be a willing participant!!!

Things to Have at Your Jail 'N' Bail

- Contact SOGA for the following:
  - Banners, Merchandise for Sale, Information on SOGA events, and anything else you may think of that we might have in stock already
  - Special Olympics Athlete
  - Special Olympics Georgia Mission/Fact Sheet

Event Concept:

The goal of the Tip-a-Cop program is to collect as many donations as possible through "tips." Police Officers assist with waiting tables at a restaurant and collect "tip" donations for Special Olympics Georgia (SOGA).

Picking a Spot:

- Find a restaurant with a family friendly atmosphere
- Quick turnover of the tables can give you better results.
- Chain restaurants include: Chili's, Applebee's, and Beef O' Brady
- Ask the restaurant where your crew eats, that way you already know the people

Picking Your Date:

- Thursday, Friday and Saturday are popular nights to eat out
- Avoid Major Holidays – too much already going on
- Make sure local schools do not have conflicting events (band concert, football game, Homecoming dance)

Getting the Word Out for Volunteers

- Distribute flyers throughout your department
- Send out an all employees email
- YOUR PIO really comes in handy here- put them to work!
- Get the rookies or recruits involved
- The more officers, the better
- You can always ask SOGA or your local coordinator to find athletes to help out

Get the Word Out for Publicity

- Make a flyer and get it into the local "hot spots"
    - Send SOGA a copy of your flyer to post on the website

Facts, Facts, Facts

- Provide officers with some easy to remember facts about SOGA and what the money raised will be going towards

Things to Have at Your Tip-a-Cop

- Special Olympic athletes
- Banners, merchandise for sale, SOGA e-newsletters, coin cans, and anything else you may think of that we may have!

The Torch Relay is one of the most highly anticipated events and aspects of the Torch Run annually. For two weeks prior to the State Summer Games each year in May, the "Flame of Hope" is carried across the entire state of Georgia until it reaches the campus of Emory University, where during the Summer Games Opening Ceremony; the cauldron is lit to signify the Opening of the Games.

Route Selection

Route selection for the Torch Relay is very important to the success of the event. Of primary importance is the safety of the Torch Runners. Also important is to allow for the highest visibility of the Torch Relay while attempting to keep any interference with the normal traffic flow to a minimum. Be sure to prepare route maps with directions and a time schedule for all of those involved in the Torch Relay and local media. Distribute maps and schedules in advance and confirm that all involved parties have the information. In many cases, destination, safe hand-off locations, time factor,s or safety considerations limit route selection.

Suggestions for route selection:

- Run from a significant location (sponsor location, police department, government building, etc.)
- Choose a route that allows for a large ceremonial kick-off
- Know what law enforcement agencies participate in your surrounding areas; so that the torch transfer can be coordinated (this information can be obtained from your Torch Run Liaison)
- Consider routes that allow high visibility for your runners, Special Olympics, and large sponsors
- Consider incorporating a stop at any point of interest along the way

Plan ahead to ensure that the route for a particular day can be completed during daylight hours. Confirm there are no hazards such as construction zones or roadwork occurring on your chosen route. To help ensure safety, never run at night or along narrow, winding roads.

Torch Relay Risk Management and Safety

The following information provides suggested guidelines in setting up safe Torch Run relays:

Recruiting Runners

1. Use experienced runners for long stretches.
2. Schedule 10-12 minutes per mile for the entire leg.
3. Do not assume celebrity runners are experienced at running very long distances. Ask them exactly how far they would like to run.
4. Ask Special Olympics Georgia athletes from the local program to participate in the event.

Safety and Security

1. All areas selected for the start and stop points for a relay should be off the road in a secure area and clear of all traffic.
2. Proper parking should be arranged in an area away from where the runners are warming up.
3. Media coverage areas should be arranged so that the media has access to everything.
4. Arrangements should be made to cover intersections until all runners are safely through.
5. Any incident involving injury should be reported to the Torch Run Liaison and appropriate emergency personnel. All law enforcement runners and other registered volunteers are covered under Special Olympics Georgia accident medical insurance in excess of any other collectible insurance while taking part in a SOGA event.
6. Place escort vehicles in a position to maximize runner safety.
7. **All runners should sign a general waiver and a COVId-19 waiver prior to the start of the relay.**
8. **Do not allow SOGA athletes to walk/run with a lit torch.**

Emergency Preparedness

1. Each support or escort vehicle should carry a basic first aid kit.
2. Each support vehicle should have two-way radio capabilities.
3. Organizers should be aware of potential medical problems inherent in running and recognize symptoms of distress.
4. Be prepared to deal with weather (extreme heat, rain, etc.).
5. Have sunscreen available.
6. Leg organizer should have an emergency plan ready to implement in case one occurs.
7. Make sure plenty of liquids (water) are available for all runners.

The Day of the Torch Relay

1. The entourage should consist of one to two support vehicles and two escort vehicles (local law enforcement or Highway Patrol).
2. Runners should stay to the side of the road as much as possible or on the shoulder if it is not too rough.
3. The escort vehicle should follow the runners with emergency lights on. The driver should be provided refreshments and relieved if escorting a long distance.
4. The actual exchange of the torch should be made in an area that is safely away from traffic.
5. During the exchange, the support vehicle should park out of the way of traffic and wait until the exchange is made. When using one support vehicle, it should move ahead of the runner and escort vehicle to the next exchange point after it has picked up the previous runner.
6. If two support vehicles are available, one can leave runners off and proceed ahead. The second vehicle can stay behind and pick up runners as they finish.

What if an emergency occurs?

In the event of an emergency such as an illness, accident or death, the situation must be dealt with in a calm manner. The following steps should be used in dealing with emergency situations.

- Prior to any event, the Leg Leader should assemble a complete list of participant's names, who to contact in case of an emergency and officials to contact to handle an emergency.

If an incident occurs, the Leg Leader should…

1. Get medical help for the injured person(s).
2. Notify the Torch Run liaison, Conner King, at 770-414-9390 ext. 1142 and SOGA Chief Operating Officer, Robert Yost, at 229-834-3434.
3. The CEO should handle all questions regarding the incident.
4. If questioned by the media, it is important to not give information at that time. Simply state that SOGA will be making an official statement at a later time.

Run Safety

The runner's safety is of the utmost importance during the run. Please watch for tired runners and direct them off the running surface or into a trail vehicle. The pace must be maintained at approximately 11 minutes per mile.

1) No children or children in strollers will be allowed to run **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

2) No participants will be allowed to use roller blades.

3) Walkers cannot be accommodated during the run.

4) **Runners must maintain approximately an eleven (11) minute mile pace to ensure the proper coordination and timing of the Torch Run**.

5) Tired runners must get into a support vehicle provided by the local department.

6) Runners must never run ahead of the lead escort vehicle nor should they fall behind the trail vehicle.

7) If tired and unable to maintain pace, runners must move off the roadway onto the sideway or similar surface. Runners can complete the run but must do so out of harm's way. Motorcade will continue maintaining pace.

8) **NO ALCOHOL** or intoxicated persons will be allowed to be part of the Torch Run.

9) Remember, the safety of the runners is of the utmost importance to ensure a successful Torch Run.

10) Special Olympics Athletes cannot hold the hand torch when running or walking the route.

Introduction

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Georgia has grown tremendously during the past decade. In fact, it is our largest fundraiser. SOGA event organizers would like to share some basic risk management techniques to ensure a safer environment for runners and special events.

Special Olympics Georgia has a corporate insurance policy that protects all of our athletes and registered volunteers from claims of bodily injury, property damage or personal injury due to their alleged negligence during the conduct of SOGA activities. In order for there to be an obligation to pay a claimant, negligence must be proven.

All ***registered*** Torch Run participants are considered Special Olympics Georgia volunteers for the purposes of our insurance coverage. Use **on-site volunteer registration form** to sign-in runners.

Unrelated to the Torch Run is the issue of liability insurance coverage for police coverage at Special Olympics Georgia events. We do not provide Police Professional Liability insurance coverage for police officers (on or off duty) for regular duties of a police officer, such as crowd control, directing traffic or monitoring fund raising activities where alcoholic beverages are served.

If an organization would like to see written proof of Special Olympics Georgia insurance, call the SOGA Office to request documentation. (229) 834-8277

Special Olympics Georgia Sponsorship or Co-Sponsorship of a Torch Run Event

It is important to note that for the Special Olympics Georgia Corporate Insurance Policy to provide coverage for the Torch Run and Torch Run-related events, we must sponsor or co-sponsor all events. As long as organizers inform Special Olympics Georgia in advance about any events being planned (through the Event Notification Form) and can ensure that all risk management guidelines are being followed, we can most likely meet this obligation.

The **Event Notification Form** should be used for each event being planned so that Special Olympics Georgia will know about it (See form in appendix or available for download online). The event notification form serves several purposes:

1. It notifies the State Office of the event and seeks approval.
2. It certifies or obtains necessary insurance coverage.
3. It provides necessary information to post on the SOGA website to help publicize your event.
4. It allows the State Office to answer any questions if we receive phone calls about the event.

This form should be completed **at least four weeks** in advance of the event or sooner if the information is available.

Torch Run Special Event Risk Management and Safety

Special events**,** such as fundraisers, sponsored or co-sponsored by, or held for Special Olympics Georgia bring unique risk exposures in addition to those that may already be present. When planning special events on behalf of the Torch Run for SOGA, several risk reduction techniques should be used to manage these risks.

It is not Special Olympics Georgia's intention to have volunteers with the Torch Run explaining our corporate insurance program to groups/individuals involved with Torch Run special events. Refer any questions or concerns about insurance coverage to SOGA.

Special Events Situations

- **Runners, in a road race** that is a special event fundraiser, are not considered volunteers for Special Olympics Georgia or the Torch Run. Therefore, SOGA has a waiver of release from liability form for participants in a road race to sign. An example of the release is available from the Torch Run Liaison.

- **Special Olympics Georgia <u>does not</u> have liquor liability coverage.** Special coverage must be arranged for events where alcoholic beverages are served. SOGA should assist in determining the appropriate way to handle this insurance coverage. Regardless of the special event, as long as it is associated with the Torch Run, we must be notified when alcoholic beverages will be served.

- **Special Olympics Georgia has limited coverage for property of others for a SOGA event.**
  i.e. golf carts, sports equipment, tables, chairs, etc. We must have proof of insurance from the property owner. If this is unavailable, please advise us. SOGA will review the contract/agreement to make sure our coverage applies. If not, alternative arrangements will be necessary.

All athletes, coaches, volunteers, and family members must sign the SOGA COVID-19 Code of Conduct & Risk Assessment form and submit to the Local Coordinator prior to the first gathering. The LETR Liaison must keep all documents in a file for reference in case a participant develops COVID-19.

Passing the Torch & Banner

When it comes time to run the Flame of Hope from agency to agency, we need to make sure that all the materials are passed along so that everybody has what they need for a successful run.

Here are the items that you should pick up when your department is handed the torch:

1. A torch
2. Make sure the hand torch has a wick
3. A Torch Run Banner
4. Some lighter fluid and matches or lighter
5. A Snuffer Cup

How to light the torch:

1. Soak wick in Lighter Fluid
2. Place on top of the torch
3. Wick will stay lit for roughly 20-30 minutes
4. When fire is getting weak, extinguish flame with a snuff cup and reapply lighter fluid (it can be applied while wick is on the torch)
5. Extinguish fire by using the snuffer cup.

Note: It is not mandatory to keep the flame lit the entire time that you are running, however, remember that the media prefers to use pictures where there is a **visible flame.** Our recommendation is to make sure that the flame is lit when any pictures are being taken or whenever there are many spectators. You can then let the flame die out once the media is gone. Make sure you carry a lot of lighter fluid and don't count on it being passed from the department that handed you the torch. Also, do not forget a lighter and/or matches. (Remember athletes may not hold a lit torch while walking or running).

Make sure you have a fire extinguisher in case of an emergency!

The banner:

1. Make sure you remember to get the banner when the torch is passed on to you.
2. Use rope to tie the banner to the lead vehicle or the back of the trail vehicle. Some departments prefer to put the banner on the side. Have your own rope on hand.
3. Remember to give the banner to the next department along with the torch.
4. Roll the banner instead of folding it and return.

In many cases, the Torch will need to be passed along to another participating agency, or if multiple agencies from one county are participating, then all agencies would do a combined relay together. At the conclusion of your relay, the route coordinator will have instructions as to where the torch needs to be delivered to next. This will either be done via UPS or personal delivery. Instructions will be included in your torch box and it is of EXTREME IMPORTANCE that you follow the instructions ASAP and include all materials (such as banners, torch, snuff cup, gloves, etc) in your package to the next agency. Remember if they do not get it on time, then they will be left without a torch or proper banners – and it doesn't make for a good torch relay with the torch! Any concerns should be immediately addressed with the Torch Run Liaison at the SOGA office.

2025 Corporate Sponsors

The 2026 Georgia Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics is proud to partner with generous corporate sponsors. A corporate sponsor is defined as a business or corporation that gives a cash donation or in-kind donation at or above a specific level to SOGA or a participating organization. If you have any questions or would like a sponsorship proposal, please feel free to contact Conner King, at 770-414-9390 ext 1142.

The 2025 Law Enforcement Torch Run sponsors:

Title Sponsor:

We are pleased and proud to have Publix aboard again this year as our Title Sponsor. During the month of January, local Publix Super Markets sell torch icons at the register for $1, $3, $5, or $10. In 2023, this promotion helped raise over **$1,200,000 of the $1.6 million raised.**

Publix is featured on the back of the 2025 LETR shirt, brochures, newsletters, website, programs, handbooks, invitations, and posters.

2025 Sponsors Continued

Special Olympics Georgia

Guardians of the Flame For Special Olympics Georgia

Top 5 Fundraising Agencies

Johns Creek Police Department
Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Kennesaw Police Department
Columbus Police Department
Brookhaven Police Department

Other Top Fundraising Agencies

Acworth Police Department
Dalton Police Department
Roswell Police Department
Suwannee Police Department
Gwinnett County Police Department
Cobb County Sheriff's Office
Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice
Cherokee County Schools Police
Warner Robins Police Department
Georgia Department of Community Supervision
Lilburn Police Department

Presenting Sponsor

Publix®
WHERE SHOPPING IS A PLEASURE®

Gold Sponsors

DUNKIN'® Arrow Screenprinting Southwire™
Cumming, GA beaver TOYOTA We're here to WOW ya!
RALLY POINT HARLEY-DAVIDSON
RESURGENS™ ORTHOPAEDICS FOR ALL THAT MOVES YOU

Silver Sponsors

Acworth Parks & Recreation ~ All Pro Automotive ~ Country Financial ~ Idealease ~ Injected Engineering
Jim Ellis Kia & Volkswagen ~ Miller Zell ~ Northside Hospital ~ PMV Inc. ~ Primus Builders, Inc.
St. Peter Chanel 5k ~ State Farm - Agent Ryan Murchland

Statewide Sponsors - Premier

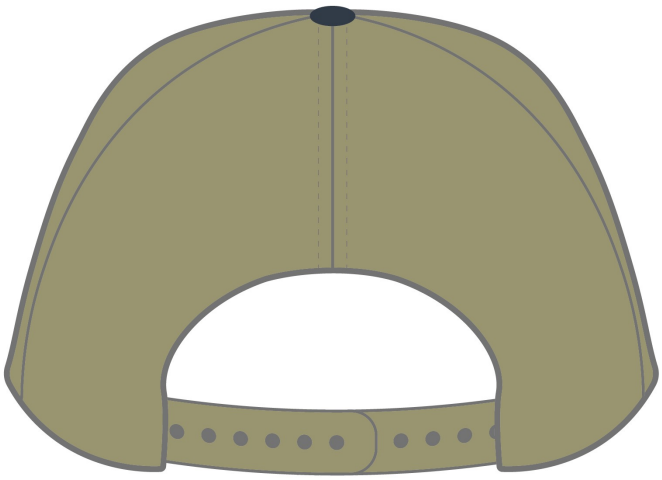
Publix ~ Dunwoody County Club

Statewide Sponsors - Platinum

The Coca-Cola Company ~ Knights of Columbus ~ Marlow's Tavern ~ Winter Construction

Local Sponsorships

You can also get local sponsors for your Torch Run. Any sponsor that gives $5,000 or more will get their logo on next year's official Torch Run T-shirt. At $2,500 a sponsor will get their company name listed on the back of next year's official Torch Run T-Shirt. If you need a proposal or any assistance with a potential sponsor in your area, please contact your Torch Run Liaison at the Special Olympics Georgia Office. Your department will, of course, be credited with that donation. Below is an example of the 2026 LETR shirt and what sponsor placement might look like.



Awards & Incentives

While we all realize that you are doing this for Special Olympics athletes, incentives are just a small way to give recognition to those who go above and beyond the call of duty.

Individual Officer/Official Recognition

Individuals who are directly responsible for raising a pre-determined amount will be eligible for incentives that will be announced later this year. **The department coordinator must fill out the donation forms and tracking of this throughout the year, and/or the awards/evaluation report form listing officers' name, amounts raised and sizes needed in order to receive incentive rewards**. **Recognition is for individuals only.**

For example: a department that raises $6,000 may have 6 people who each raised $500 and 3 people who raised $1,000. Nine people would receive the incentive awards and one of those may or not be the department's coordinator for the Torch Run. The total amount of incentives given out cannot exceed the department's fundraising grand total for the year.

Departmental Recognition

$2,500	Bronze Medal Plaque
$5,000	Silver Medal Plaque, department name on the back of the Torch Run T-shirt
$9,500	Gold Medal Plaque, each additional $9,500 raised will enable another representative from that respective department to be sent to Conference. *The top 20 fundraising agencies will be recognized on the back of the 2027 Torch Run T-shirt.*

Annual International Torch Run Conference Incentive

SOGA offers an incentive for agencies to qualify for sending an active member from the money-raising agency as a representative to the International Torch Run Conference from their agency.

$9,500: Department is eligible to send one representative from the fundraising agency to the International Torch Run Conference for every $9,500 raised. **All conference expenses will be paid by SOGA** including airfare, hotel room (based on double occupancy), and conference registration.

Funds raised through local agency events, Publix visits, Polar Plunge, Cops on Donut Shops, and merchandise sales will be counted towards reaching this incentive on an annual **August 16, 2025– August 17, 2026,** basis**.**

Awards & Incentives

Opening Ceremony Recognition

The **top five** fundraising departments will be recognized at the Final Leg Reception at State Summer Games. Representatives from these departments will have the honor of accompanying Special Olympics Georgia Athletes as they carry the "Flame of Hope" into the Opening Ceremony for the Summer Games in May at Emory University Campus.

Georgia Awards

At the conclusion of each Torch Run Fiscal Year, which is August 17th, end-of-the-year evaluations will be sent to all Department Coordinators. Included in this is a nomination process for the following awards offered through the Georgia Torch Run program:

Rookie of the Year
Department of the Year

Company/Sponsor Recognition

Amount	Receive
$1,500	Bronze Law Enforcement Torch Run sponsor plaque
$2,500	Company name on Torch Run shirt and Silver level sponsor plaque
$5,000	Company logo on Torch Run shirt and Gold level sponsor plaque

The above levels of recognition are for sponsors who donate money to your department without receiving the merchandise in return. Companies or Sponsors who receive something in exchange for their donation are not eligible.

Inter-Department Competitions

Departments are encouraged to develop their own internal competitions between precincts or areas. Special Olympics will be glad to send a representative to statewide meetings to recognize top fundraisers, for example, the branch of the DNR that raises the most money.

Remember to publicize competitions. Suggestions:

1. Create a competition between groups within a given county such as the police departments, the county sheriff's and the correctional institute. Offer plaque or in-kind* incentive as recognition.
2. Offer plaque or in-kind reward for unit/platoon, which raises most money within same agency.
3. Include names in department newsletter and media releases of top fundraisers. Let top fundraisers carry the Torch while media is covering the event.

**SOGA liaison can help with suggestions or acquiring in-kind donations.*

Thanking Corporate/Individual Donors

A thank you note from you or someone in your department is a nice touch for corporations or individuals who give "sponsor" donations. Perhaps you'd like to pick up the certificate and deliver it personally to the donor instead of SOGA mailing it to the business. This personal attention, whether in the form of a letter or a visit from you, will go a long way in making sure that donors will want to contribute for years to come.

Media Relations

The media is an excellent tool to promote your cause, raise funds, and increase awareness about SOGA & Law Enforcement Torch Run. Check with your department to see if they have a Public Information Officer or someone who already has media contacts. If not, call the newspapers, radio stations, and television stations in your area and let them know about the Law Enforcement Torch Run and any special events you have planned. Be sure to inform the media in advance in order for them to plan coverage for your event.

Here is who to ask for:

- Newspaper- local columnists, sports editor, community calendar editor or news editor
- Television- assignment desk, public service desk, producers or talk shows, community relations
- Radio- PSA desk or public service director, community calendar, news editor, talk show host

Build a relationship by offering to meet for coffee or lunch. Provide them with the Law Enforcement Torch Run Fact Sheet. Be familiar with the handouts so you can answer questions with confidence. SOGA will provide you with a PSA (public service announcement) two weeks before the actual Torch relay. SOGA can provide you with Torch Run letterhead if needed or use your department letterhead.

If sending a letter or flyer announcing a special event remember to include the five W's:

Who **What** **When** **Where** **Why**

Media often like to send their own photographer but will sometimes use a picture you provide them. The SOGA office may be able to provide you with a 30-second PSA, which the television station may run in your area before the Summer Games. SOGA can also provide you with other State and World Games videos.

Suggestions for photographs or video recording:

Wear or show a Torch Run Shirt & include a back view for the sponsors' sake!
Include athletes in your pictures if available.
Have your torch lit- if included in the picture.

Be familiar with the Language Guidelines in order to use correct terms in statements. (Included in beginning of this handbook)

Coverage of Your Event

Call your media contacts three to five days prior to the route or event to inform them of any changes (such as starting times) and to make sure your event is on their coverage calendar. Don't expect the media to come to your event. The purpose of your call is simply to make sure you're on the coverage calendar and to give them any last-minute changes that would affect their coverage.

Radio Promotions Involvement

To get better coverage out of your local radio stations, you might want to contact the station's promotions director to ask them to provide live coverage during the actual relay. If the promotions director is not interested in your request, call the station's news director to see if the news department will get involved.
To get a radio station involved, you should make your request at least 12 weeks before your event. The earlier you make your request the better! After you make your first call to the station to see who is interested, you'll probably be asked to send the station a written request.

Media Relations

Returning Phone Calls...

If you need help in providing information to the media, call your Torch Liaison at the SOGA office. They will be glad to assist you in providing accurate information about the Torch Run.

Photos

Special Olympics Georgia receives many calls from the media requesting photos to use in their articles. The following are the types of photos they are looking for:

- **Close-up shots of officers with athletes**.
  - Officer(s) in uniform or a Torch Run shirt
  - Athlete(s) preferably wearing athletic clothing or a Torch Run shirt
  - If someone is holding a torch, then **the torch needs to be lit**

- Group running photos
  - The runner carrying the torch is in front and you can see his/her face clearly
  - All runners wearing the Torch Run shirt
  - The torch has a **visible flame**

SOGA would like to use your photos to give to the media. **Please send copies of any photos that meet the above criteria to Conner King. We want more photos from around the state, so send in any that you feel represent your area.**

Conner King
Special Olympics Georgia
6046 Financial Drive
Norcross, GA 30071
770-414-9390 ext 1142
Conner.King@SpecialOlympicsGA.org

2026 Important Dates

January 10th – 19th:	Publix Icon Sales, in all Publix Supermarkets in Georgia
January 31st – February 1st:	State indoor Winter Games, Cobb County
February 22nd:	Polar Plunge, Acworth Beach
May 16th – 18th:	State Summer Games, Emory University Campus
June 6th:	Dunkin' Donuts Cops on Donut Shops
August 11th – 15th:	Unsold merchandise due back to SOGA
October 17th – 18th:	State Fall Games, Valdosta
October 15th-19th	LETR Conference, Minneapolis, MN

Forms Appendix

Materials Order Form
**to be used to order new merchandise*
Materials Return Form
**to be used whenever you return any unsold merchandise*
Donation Form
**to be used whenever you turn in money to the SOGA State office*
Event Notification Form
**to be used whenever your department is planning an event*
Receipt of Donation/Credit Card Donation
**to be used when a donor requests a receipt or wishes to pay via credit card*
Torch Relay Waiver
**to be signed by all runners participating in the actual torch relay in May. Must be signed and turned into SOGA prior to the relay. Special Olympics Georgia athletes cannot hold the hand torch when participating in events*
Cuffed for a Cause Interest Form
**to be used if your department wishes to host a Cuffed for a Cause treadmill walk*
Runner Pledge Form
**if any of your runners wishes to collect monies for participating in the Torch Relay, they can use this form*
Sample Budget Worksheet
**turn in form when you are planning an event where SOGA will be invoiced for any expenses*
COVID-19 Waiver
**All participants must sign a waiver if participating in an LETR event.*

2026 Law Enforcement Torch Run Materials Order Form

This form should be used to order items for LETR

Department: _____

Coordinator/Contact Name: _____

Street Address (**No P.O. Boxes**): _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email:_____ ID# (Official Use Only): _____

MERCHANDISE (use in exchange for donations to SOGA)

SHIRTS ($25) **HAT ($25)**

XXXL _____ Hat _____

XXL _____

XL _____

L _____

M _____

S _____ **Grand Total Ordered $_____**

I, _____ as Torch Run Coordinator for my department, accept responsibility for the Torch Run merchandise ordered. I understand that Special Olympics Georgia must receive a $25 donation for Shirts and a $25 donation for hats. I will be responsible for turning in all funds via the Donation Form before placing an additional order as soon as possible and will return any extra merchandise to SOGA. **I also understand that I cannot receive more merchandise until an equal amount of money has been turned into the SOGA State Office.** ***All funds and left-over merchandise are due back to SOGA by August 17th, 2026.***

** Orders will be filled on a first come, first serve basis and may be limited based on supplies available. **

Fax or email this order to:
Conner King
Special Olympics Georgia

Phone:770-414-9390 ext 1103 **Fax:** 404-393-2929 **Email:** Conner.King@SpecialOlympicsGA.org

For Official Use Only
ID# _____
Date Rec: _____
Date Mailed: _____

2026 Law Enforcement Torch Run Merchandise Return Form

Include this sheet when you return any unused merchandise

Please be as accurate as possible!

ID# (*Official Use Only*): _____ Value: $_____

Department: _____

Coordinator/Contact Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

MERCHANDISE RETURNED (amount to be deducted from total due to SOGA)

SHIRTS

XXXL _____

XXL _____

XL _____

L _____

M _____

S _____

HAT

Hat _____

Grand Total Returned $_____

If for some unforeseen reason, it is necessary to return merchandise to Special Olympics Georgia, please complete this form and include it with the merchandise.

Include this form and return to:

Conner King
Conner.King@SpecialOlympicsGA.org
LETR - Special Olympics Georgia
6046 Financial Drive
Norcross, GA, 30071

2026 Law Enforcement Torch Run Donation Form

Use this form when turning in money to the Special Olympics Georgia office

Department: _____

Coordinator/Contact: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email Address: _____

Total Amount Enclosed: _____Date: _____
ID# (Official Use) _____

Please indicate the amount of money raised in each category:
If you have sponsorship money that you would like to put towards merchandise please make note of this below.

General/Misc	Merchandise	Special Events
Checks $	$	$
Cash $	$	$

Although, the state office does not maintain records based on individual performance, Torch Run officers are eligible for incentive items based on the amount of money they raise. Please maintain a copy for **your** records for use at the end of the year.

Officer Name	*Department*	*Address (if different from Department)*	*Amount Raised/Donated*
			$
			$
			$
			$
			$
		Total Amount	$

Questions? Email or call Conner King at Conner.King@SpecialOlympicsGA.org
770-414-9390 ext 1103

Receipt of Donation/Credit Card Donation

Name of Donor_____ Amount Donating: $_____

Billing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Date: _____

Circle One: **Cash** **Check # _____Visa** **MasterCard** **American Express**

Credit Card # _____Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Person Receiving Donation: _____ Department: _____

Receipt of Donation/Credit Card Donation

Name of Donor_____ Amount Donating: $_____

Billing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Date: _____

Circle One: **Cash** **Check # _____Visa** **MasterCard** **American Express**

Credit Card # _____Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Person Receiving Donation: _____ Department: _____

2026 Georgia Law Enforcement Torch Run
Runner Registration Form

Name: _____ Agency: _____

City: _____ Phone (w): _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Special Olympics Georgia, Inc.
Release and Waiver of Liability, Assumption of Risk, and Indemnity
2026 Georgia Law Enforcement Torch Run

In consideration of participating in the 2026 Georgia Law Enforcement Torch Run, I represent that I understand the nature of the event and that I am qualified, in good health, and in proper physical condition to participate in such event. I acknowledge that if on the event the conditions are unsafe, I will immediately discontinue participation in the event.

I fully understand the event involves risks of serious injury, including permanent disability, paralysis and death, which may be caused by my own actions, or inactions, those of others participating in the event, the conditions in which the event takes place, or the negligence of the releases named below; and that there may be other risks either not known to me or not readily foreseeable at this time; and I fully understand and assume all such risks and all responsibility for losses, cost, and damages I incur as a result of my participation in the event.

I also understand that there are certain risks with the use of the hand torch and agree to the following:

- Special Olympics is not being compensated for the use of this torch and does not manufacture this torch.
- I accept full responsibility for the open flame and its safe use while the official Special Olympics hand torch is in my possession. I am accepting personal responsibility for the safe use of the torch and am singing this form on my own behalf.

I hereby release, discharge, and covenant not to sue the Special Olympics, their respective administrators, directors, agents, officers, volunteers, and employees, other participants, any sponsors, advertisers, and if applicable, owners and lessors of premises on which the activity takes place, (each considered one of the Release herein) from all liability, claims, demands, losses, or damages on my account caused or alleged to be caused in whole or in part by the negligence of the releasees or otherwise, including negligent rescue operations due to participating in the torch relay or the use of the hand torch; and I further agree that if, despite the release, waiver of liability, and assumption of risk I, or anyone on my behalf, makes claim against any of the releasees, I will indemnify, save, and hold harmless each of the releasees from any loss, liability, damage, or cost which may occur as the result of such claim. I have read this release and waiver of liability, assumption of risk, and indemnity and fully understand it.

_____ _____
Printed Name of Participant Signature of Participant

_____ Date

_____
Runners Name

_____
Agency or Department

_____
Address

_____
City/State/Zip

_____
Work Phone

_____
Email

2026 Law Enforcement Torch Run
Runner Pledges

Instructions:

1. **Fill out form with your information**
2. **Solicit and collect pledges using this pledge form**
3. **Turn in pledge form and monies to your Department Coordinator before the Run**

Thank you for going the extra mile for Special Olympics Georgia athletes!

Sponsor's Name	Address	City/State	Amount Pledged	Amount Paid	Payment Method

2026 Law Enforcement Torch Run Event Budget

Use this form when planning an event where SOGA will receive invoices

Department: _____

Coordinator/Contact:_____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Name of event:_____

Type of Event:_____

Fill out the below worksheet to the best of your knowledge to get an idea on the success of your upcoming event. Keep in mind that your expenses should not exceed 30% of your gross total.

Expenses	***Amount***	***Revenue***	***Amount***
Charge Per Person x number of expected people		Sponsorships	
Food and Beverage		Registration/Ticket Sales	
Awards		Merchandise	
Equipment Rentals		Silent Auction	
Facility Charges		Donations	
Misc.		Misc.	
Total:		**Total:**	

Gross Revenue	Expenses	Net Revenue (Gross – Expenses)
$	$	$

Gross Revenue x .25

2026 Law Enforcement Torch Run Registration Form

Date:_____

Department/Agency: _____

LETR Department Coordinator: (Including Title) _____

Secondary Contact Name: _____

Mailing Address (NO PO BOXES): _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Fax: _____
**REQUIRED*

Department Coordinator Email:_____
**REQUIRED*

Secondary Contact Email:_____
**SUGGESTED*

Comments:_____
_____
_____
_____

Send the returned form to Conner King at
Conner.King@SpecialOlympicsGA.org

For Official Use Only
Kickoff: _____
ID# _____
Date Rec: _____
Date Entered: _____
Initials: _____

Law Enforcement Torch Run – (LETR) for Special Olympics Georgia

Event Notification Form

Approval to conduct any fundraiser project to benefit Special Olympics Georgia Law Enforcement Torch Run in the State of Georgia must be requested **at least 30 days prior** to the projects start date. Special Olympics Georgia is not responsible for paying any up-front event logistics costs. Event expenses must be 33% less than the projected revenue for the fundraiser to be approved.

Important: Before any solicitations in your community can start or any publicity announcing your event begins, approval must be granted by Special Olympics Georgia State Office, even if you have completed this form for the same event in past years, you must fill out for the current year. Thank you for what you do.

Name of person submitting form: _____

Law Enforcement Agency: _____

Address:_____

Email: _____ Phone #:_____

Date of Event:_____ # of Participants:_____

Projected Gross Revenue:_____ Projected Expenses:_____

*Reminder: **Special Olympics Georgia is not a co-sponsor but the beneficiary**

Items/Assistance needed from State Office (this includes listing on the SOGA website if desired):_____

_____

Please mail or Email/ FAX this form at least **30 days prior** to the event to Conner King:
Conner.King@SpecialOlympicsGA.org or 770-414-9390 ext 1103 or mail it to:
Special Olympics Georgia
Attn: LETR
6046 Financial Drive
Norcross, GA, 30071

Proposed Budget

Please place all expenses and revenues on the provided budget sheet below. Please remember that SOGA does have the right to refuse payment of expenses that are not authorized prior to the event, leaving the department liable for those expenses.

Revenues

Description	$
Total	**$**

Expenses

Description	$
Total	**$**

Special Olympics Georgia Communicable Diseases Waiver & Special Olympics Georgia's COVID-19 Code of Conduct

WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASES ("Agreement") for SPECIAL OLYMPICS

In consideration of being allowed to participate in any way in Special Olympics sports training, competition or fundraising activities, the undersigned acknowledges, appreciates, and agrees that:

1. Participation includes possible exposure to and illness from infectious and/or communicable diseases including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, and COVID-19. While particular rules and personal discipline may reduce this risk, the risk of serious illness and death does exist; and,
2. I KNOWINGLY AND FREELY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, both known and unknown, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES or others, and assume full responsibility for my participation; and,
3. I willingly agree to comply with the stated and customary terms and conditions for participation as regards protection against infectious diseases. If, however, I observe and any unusual or significant hazard during my presence or participation, I will remove myself from participation and bring such to the attention of the nearest official immediately; and,
4. I, for myself and on behalf of my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, HEREBY RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS Special Olympics, Inc, Special Olympics Georgia their officers, officials, agents, and/or employees, other participants, sponsoring agencies, sponsors, advertisers, and if applicable, owners and lessors of premises used to conduct the event ("RELEASEES"), WITH RESPECT TO ANY AND ALL ILLNESS, DISABILITY, DEATH, or loss or damage to person or property, WHETHER ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE, to the fullest extent permitted by law. I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT, AND SIGN IF FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT. Name of Participant: _____ Participant Signature: _____ Date signed: _____

FOR PARTICIPANTS OF MINORITY AGE (UNDER AGE 18 AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION)
This is to certify that I, as parent/guardian, with legal responsibility for this participant, have read and explained the provisions in this waiver/release to my child/ward including the risks of presence and participation and his/her personal responsibilities for adhering to the rules and regulations for protection against communicable diseases. Furthermore, my child/ward understands and accepts these risks and responsibilities. I for myself, my spouse, and child/ward do consent and agree to his/her release provided above for all the Releasees and myself, my spouse, and child/ward do release and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Releasees for any and all liabilities incident to my minor child's/ward's presence or participation in these activities as provided above, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THEIR NEGLIGENCE, to the fullest extent provided by law. Name of parent/guardian: _____ Parent guardian/signature: _____ Date signed: _____

Special Olympics Georgia Participant Code of Conduct I understand I could get Coronavirus through sports, training, competition and/or any group activity at Special Olympics. I am choosing to participate in sports, competition and/or other Special Olympics activities at my own risk. During the time these precautions are needed, I agree to the following to help keep me and my fellow participants safe:

☐ I confirm that I do not have symptoms of COVID-19 and have not been in contact with anyone that has tested positive for COVID 19 symptoms in past 14 days (cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell) ☐ If I have COVID-19 symptoms, I will stay at home and NOT go to any activities until 14 days after all of my symptoms are over. If I am exposed to COVID-19 and have no symptoms, I can return 14 days after exposure. ☐ If I get or have had COVID, I will not go to any in-person Special Olympics Georgia events until 14 days after my symptoms end. I will go to my doctor and get written clearance before returning to any sport or fitness activities. ☐ I will have my temperature checked prior to leaving home to attend any training, competition and/or group activity. ☐ I will have my temperature checked upon arrival to any training, competition and/or group activity. If a fever exists, I will immediately depart to go home, this will include anyone I traveled with to this competition. ☐ Special Olympics Georgia provided me the education on Special Olympics rules for COVID-19 and who is at high risk. ☐ I know that if I have a high-risk condition, I have more risk that I could get sick or die from COVID-19. If I have a high-risk condition, I should not go to Special Olympics Georgia events in person, until there is little or no

Coronavirus in my community. ☐ I will keep at least 6 feet from all participants at all times. This includes bathrooms, delegation sitting area during competition, picking up food or snacks, Olympic Town, and seating during Opening Ceremony. I will not engage in hugging, hand shaking, or high fives. ☐ I will wear a mask at all times while at Special Olympics Georgia activities. I may or not have to wear it during active exercise, warm ups, or during competition. ☐ I will wash my hands for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer before any activities. I will wash my hands any time I sneeze, cough, go to the bathroom or get my hands dirty. ☐ I will avoid touching my face. I will cover my mouth when I cough or sneeze and immediately wash my hands after. ☐ I will not share drinking bottles or towels with other people. ☐ I understand that no spectators are allowed at any training, competition, or group activity. ☐I will only share equipment when instructed to. If equipment must be shared, I will only touch the equipment if it is disinfected first. If equipment must be shared, the appropriate cleaning supplies must be used to wipe down before the next athlete uses for competition or warmups. ☐ I agree to contactless pickups. Special Olympics Georgia will provide certain materials, HOD packets, t-shirts, snacks, water, etc. and understand that there will be no direct contact in picking up these items. ☐ I will only enter, leave, or move around the check-in and competition areas that my agency is assigned. I will continue practicing social distancing while in these areas. ☐ I will abide by Special Olympics Georgia's housing policy. Only the same gender will be allowed in each room. 1 person assigned to a dorm room. I will abide by the 10pm curfew. ☐ I understand that if I do not follow all of these rules, I may not be allowed to participate in Special Olympics Georgia activities during this time. ☐ I understand that any medical services needed for sickness or illness while participating at any Special Olympics Georgia event will not be covered by the Special Olympics Georgia insurance carrier, but instead will be covered by the insurance provider of the individual participant. I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT, AND SIGN IF FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT. Name of Participant: _____ Participant Signature: _____ Date signed: _____

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