



VOLUNTEER PLANNING COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

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Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support



Threads of Life

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OVERVIEW

Thank you for your interest in organizing a **Steps for Life – Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy** fundraising event in your community. Threads of Life recognizes that this is a significant commitment from you and all of our volunteers. We are a small charity with limited resources – and we could not do this without you.

The Why?

Every working day, more than three Canadian workers die of a work-related injury or illness¹. These people leave behind families, friends and co-workers devastated by this tragic loss. Thousands more are living with the reality of a life-altering injury or occupational disease. Threads of Life and its partners believe that workplace injuries, occupational illnesses and deaths are preventable.



Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support

The *Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support* (operating as Threads of Life) is a Canadian registered charity founded to provide support for families living in the aftermath of a workplace fatality, life-altering injury or occupational disease. Threads of Life is dedicated to helping these families along their journey of healing.

All proceeds from Steps for Life events support the Threads of Life's Family Support Program. Canadian families affected by a workplace tragedy have free access to:

- **Peer support** from trained Threads of Life family members (Volunteer Family Guides) who offer one-on-one support to family members affected by a workplace tragedy,
- Annual **regional family forums** and/or **Family Connects** developed by Threads of Life staff and advisors; to learn healthy coping strategies/skills and network with other Threads of Life family members from their region,
- Links to **community resources**, and
- Our quarterly newsletter, ***Threads***.

¹ Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada (AWCBC), Summary Tables of Accepted Time-Loss Injuries/Diseases and Fatalities by Jurisdiction (National Work Injury Statistics Program), Table 22, Number of Fatalities, by Jurisdiction, 1993-2014, Available online: awcbc.org. Average taken from total annual fatalities 2005-2014. Interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the AWCBC or its Workers' Compensation Boards or Commissions.

Additionally, proceeds support our national **Speakers Bureau**. Threads of Life trains interested family members to present their personal testimony on the reality of living in the aftermath of a workplace tragedy to raise awareness of the impact of an unsafe workplace. Our speakers have shared their personal stories with more than 100,000 people at conferences, schools and workplace safety training events. Each speaker's story powerfully conveys that *every* workplace tragedy is *one too many*.

We offer these services to our member families at no cost. We are able to provide these services through various grants, sponsorships, and fundraising efforts.

As our signature fundraising event, the success of Steps for Life is key to ensuring the continued availability of our services to families affected by a workplace tragedy.



To learn more about the family support programs and services offered by Threads of Life, visit our website at threadsoflife.ca.

YOUR COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose:

- As outlined in the Steps for Life Planning Guidelines to follow.

Responsibilities/Goals/Deliverables:

- As outlined in the Steps for Life Planning Guidelines with further details available via the online Resource Centre.

Authority:

- All committee developed event messaging/branding or unique budget items require prior approval of their Regional Development Coordinator.
- Lottery licensing requirements for liquor & gaming agencies, etc. may require prior approval.
- Safety issues and liability associated with event day attractions (eg. balloons, bounce castles, etc.) require prior approval of their Regional Development Coordinator.
- Threads of Life does have a Gift Acceptance Policy. Committees and Sponsor Leads should have an awareness of the source of all donations (consider corporate safety history, etc.)

Scope or Jurisdiction

- Committees are encouraged to promote Steps for Life and Threads of Life beyond the walk planning season, including but not limited to third party events, trade shows, etc. Additional event opportunities can be shared with your Regional Development Coordinator.

Composition:

- The minimum number of members on a planning committee is three (3), with the optimal number of members ranging from 5-6.
- The Steps for Life Planning Committee may include but are not limited to representatives from local Regional Safety Committees, CSSE chapter members, corporate community members, Threads of Life Family Members, Health & Safety professionals, or any community member.
- The Chair should be willing to accept a term of no less than 1 year, with an optimal commitment time frame of 2 years. A Co-Chair is strongly encouraged to be appointed to support with the intent to move into the role of Chair upon term expiration of the current Chair.

Meetings:

- As outlined in the Steps for Life Planning Guidelines to follow.

Reporting:

- Committees should at minimum provide monthly meeting minutes to their Regional Development Coordinators and consider including them on a regular basis in their committee meetings. Regional Development Coordinators can support committees throughout the planning process.

Resources and budget:

- As outlined in the Steps for Life Planning Guidelines to follow.

Enabling or Constraining Factors:

- A committee's work might also be constrained by external laws and standards such as Imagine Canada's ethical fundraising and financial accountability code considering Threads of Life is accredited by Imagine Canada.
- Threads of Life follows CRA guidelines related to the issuance of tax receipts for donations received. For more information: Review our [receipting tip sheet](#) found on the Committee Resource Centre.

TOR Review:

- Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis by Threads of Life.

WHAT IS STEPS FOR LIFE?

Steps for Life is an annual fundraising and awareness walk in support of families of workplace fatalities, life-altering injury or occupational disease. This event offers families an opportunity to take positive action as part of their healing process by walking to raise community awareness of workplace injury prevention as well as to raise funds to support programs for families of workplace tragedy. It also raises the profile of corporate partners committed to injury prevention; they can become an event sponsor or register a team that will walk side by side with families. Victims of workplace tragedy go beyond the family: they include co-workers, supervisors and managers who deal with the aftermath of a tragedy in their workplace.

Threads of Life's **Regional Development Coordinators** work closely with local planning committees who organize these walks in their communities. A current listing of Steps for Life walks is available at stepsforlife.ca. If a Steps for Life walk is not currently being planned for your community, you can contact us to discuss bringing Steps for Life to your community and other potential community fundraising events.

THREADS OF LIFE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Threads of Life will:

1. Connect a **Regional Development Coordinator** who will provide ongoing support and guidance for you and your committee as you plan your walk, such as:
 - establish your community page on the Steps for Life website,
 - provide support to identify and engage with local sponsors,
 - book Threads of Life's teleconference line or Zoom line for your planning committee meetings (Note: advance notice is required and is subject to availability),
 - attend committee meetings when requested,
 - provide regular updates on upcoming deadlines and activities,
 - arrange an insurance certificate for your walk event,
 - provide guidance in applying for all required permits and arrange for payment of associated fees, and
 - provide planning committee with a Steps for Life media kit, including a customized media advisory (if requested).
2. Solicit national sponsorship.
3. Implement a marketing and communications strategy for the walks across Canada through various channels and media including:
 - the stepsforlife.ca website (the primary portal to walk registration, activities and community sharing pages),

- promotion of Steps for Life in *Threads* newsletters
 - promotional email messages leading up to Steps for Life,
 - provision of promotional materials (printed brochures and posters, electronic files),
 - promotion through various social media channels, and
 - links to partners websites and other partnership strategies.
4. Implement a national media relations plan and provide:
- support to local communities and their own media contacts within the community,
 - identify a Family Spokesperson to speak at your event, where possible, and
 - a customized press release for media distribution prior to your event.
5. Provide:
- t-shirts for participants,
 - onsite signage, including sponsor recognition pieces, and memory lane signs, and
 - expertise, materials, and training on how to organize, execute, and report on on-site registration and the collection of funds.

ESTABLISHING YOUR PLANNING COMMITTEE

Many hands make light work! This is especially true in event planning. For most communities, a group of 5 or 6 dedicated volunteers should be able to plan and implement a Steps for Life event without any one person taking on too much. Remember that more volunteers will be needed on the day of the walk! **A minimum of three (3) planning committee members is required to organize a Steps for Life walk.**

COMMITTEE ROLES

As with any team, your Planning Committee will operate most efficiently where each committee member clearly understands their role within the committee, and what is expected of them. Based on our experience, we highly recommend the following roles be filled/assigned on your committee to ensure a successful and fun event.

Key Planning Areas for your Committee

It is best to decide early who will take the leadership role for **Key Planning Areas** of Steps for Life. All members of the committee should be aware of what fellow members are working on and what still needs to be accomplished, so that they can help each other out where possible. Once a lead has been established for each of the key roles, the leads can request input and/or assistance from fellow committee members by forming a **sub-committee**. Sub-committees may be only one person or may be a small group. Your committee may also choose to combine one or more sub-committees.

NOTE: Further role details can be found in the Volunteer Planning Committee Lead Roles & Responsibilities Package found on the [Committee Resource Centre](#).



Important! This guide provides some suggestions about how to organize the key planning areas within your committee. However, depending on the number of volunteers you have and the expected size of your community's walk, the organization of your planning and sub-committees may be different.

Committee Leads

Event planning is most successful (and the most fun!) when you're working with a great team. Clearly defining roles and responsibilities helps to ensure that your walk planning stays on track and that nothing important is missed. Please ensure at least one committee member takes the lead on each function below. Where assistance is required, the lead can form a sub-committee of two or more individuals to assist with larger tasks.

- **Chair / Co-Chairs**

Coordinates and organizes meetings, leads coordination of planning activities and acts as the primary contact with Threads of Life.

- **Sponsorships**

Commits to approaching local businesses and individuals for financial sponsorship and requesting in-kind donations to help offset the hard costs of hosting the walk.

- **Registration**

Responsible for developing a plan for registration set-up, managing the registration/check-in process for the day of the walk, and training the volunteers working at registration to accept registration fees and pledges/donations, reconcile funds, and ensure Threads of Life's money handling procedures are followed.

The Registration Lead will also be responsible for ensuring required forms have been copied, and that all of the required tools (i.e. pens, calculators, etc.) are available for the registration team.

- **Square Lead**

Is responsible for and co-ordinates the use of the Square device on event day to accept credit card transactions. The Square Lead is member of the onsite registration team and trained as such.

- **Social Media**

Responsible for creating content to promote your local walk on Facebook, or other social media channels, to develop the online community supporting your event. Previous experience in social media communications and marketing is an asset, but not a necessity. If you have a keen interest in social media and familiarity from your own personal use, we can show you the ropes!

- **Local Promotion/Media**

Commits to developing/implementing a plan to promote the walk locally – through local media and other available channels – to recruit walkers.

- **Logistics (Location & Venue, Food & Beverage, Entertainment, Signage)**

Commits to organizing the details for the day of the walk, including setting a date, time, location, route and ensuring volunteers' and participants' safety. Organizes set-up and tear down, food, entertainment, and signage.

- **Volunteer Recruitment**

Commits to recruiting and coordinating volunteers for the day of the walk and thanks volunteers for their time and effort.

WALK DETAILS

Choosing a Date

Steps for Life is traditionally held on the first weekend in May. This date has been chosen so that the walk can 'kick off' **Health and Safety Week**².

If the first weekend of May will not work for your community, the most preferable dates are the beginning and ending weekends of Health and Safety Week. Your **Regional Development Coordinator** will work with you to determine a suitable date.

Please Note: *Both Easter and Mother's Day are holidays that may coincide with a date you're considering. Please verify the April and May holidays before booking a venue.*

² Health and Safety Week is recognized and celebrated in Canada, the United States and Mexico, to focus employers, employees, partners and the public on the importance of preventing injury and illness in the workplace, at home and in the community. It is always held during the first week of May. To learn more about Health and Safety Week, and events planned in your community, visit <https://www.ccohs.ca/events/safety-and-health-week/>.

Time

Each committee will determine a start and finish time that works for their community. In the past, most walks have started registration at 10:00 a.m. with speeches and opening ceremonies at 11:00 a.m. to allow walkers to enjoy refreshments and family activities at the walk. This allows for the event to be completely finished by about 2:00 p.m.

Location

Generally, walks are held in outdoor public settings off of main roads on well-known pathways, usually in parks. The pathway needs to be accessible to everyone including those in wheelchairs. If an accessible route is not possible, this must be discussed with your Regional Development Coordinator. Adequate parking needs to be available as well as washroom facilities. If dogs are allowed at your location, be sure to remind owners that dogs must be on a leash at all times and are the responsibility of the owner.

Registration Fees

Effective 2021, there will be no registration fee. Participants are asked to raise pledges/donations. While there is no minimum amount that participants are required to raise, we do encourage walkers to fundraise! We continue to strive for paperless walks – to do this, the focus is online giving and registration. All funds raised through donations and sponsorships will be allocated to our family support programs. This is for both community and virtual based events. We do encourage paperless walks – to do this, the focus is online giving and registration.

All qualifying donations will receive a business or charitable receipt.

- **For cash and cheque donations:**

Threads of Life will issue a charitable tax receipt for a personal donation or a business receipt for a corporate donation of \$20 or more.

- **For credit card donations made online:**

A link to a printable PDF tax receipt will be included in the confirmation email sent immediately following an online donation of any amount.

Note: Many employers offer corporate matching donation programs that will match employees' charitable donation dollar for dollar. Ask your RDC for more information.

STAYING ON TRACK

Meetings

Most committees meet monthly from October through March, then more frequently during April, leading up to the May event. Each committee establishes its own system for meetings – depending on what works best for the members.

Meeting Options

1. Meeting in-person: Works well for committee members who live or work in close proximity,
2. Via telephone: Works well when schedules or geography make meeting in person difficult.
 - Threads of Life has a teleconference line that your committee can use; however, it must be booked in advance through your coordinator
 - Another option for meetings is video conferencing, such as zoom.

Committee Resource Centre

You will find the [Steps for Life Planning Calendar](#) on the Committee Resource Centre; as well as many templates and tip sheets to help with you planning process.

Updates

Each sub-committee or position lead should report in at every meeting. If a representative is unable to attend the meeting, they should provide a written or verbal report to the Chair or Co-chair in advance.

Meeting notes (i.e. minutes) will need to be prepared for each meeting and distributed to:

- committee members, and
- your Regional Development Coordinator.

Additional Note: It is important to have regular communication with your Regional Development Coordinator.

Creating a Budget

Threads of Life strongly recommends that your committee prepare a budget in the fall and monitor and revise the budget at each meeting to reflect costs incurred and sponsorships received. Sample budget outline can be found on the Committee Resource. Your Regional Development Coordinator is also available to review your budget with you and your committee.

The prior approval of your Regional Development Coordinator is required for any expense or bill of \$250 or more.

Tracking Volunteer Time

Volunteer time is valuable! Threads of Life tracks the contributions committee members and other volunteers make to our walks. We know your time is valuable and we appreciate that you donate it to us.

Why is this so important? Many of our grant funders require reporting on the number of in-kind hours donated by volunteers. This can determine the amount of a grant that is awarded to Threads of Life. *Essentially, tracking volunteer time helps us to demonstrate our responsibility and effectiveness as a charity and can affect the grant amounts we receive.*



It is suggested you assign one committee member to track all committee members' time working on organizing this event as well as any additional volunteers' time and other in-kind contributions. Make this an agenda item at each meeting so everyone can report the time that they have contributed to the walk since the last meeting. Be sure to include the time spent in committee meetings as well. An In-Kind Contribution form will be supplied. Tallied hours can be submitted monthly using the online form or using the In-Kind Donation form.

Both can be found on the website at stepsforlife.ca/volunteer/submitmyhours.

Other Community Fundraising Events

If there will not be a Steps for Life walk in your community this year, please feel free call to us at 1-888-567-9490 to discuss other fundraising events or opportunities you may want to consider instead of a walk to support Threads of Life's Family Support Program and Services. For more information, contact your Regional Development Coordinator or the Director, Fundraising and Partnerships to discuss a potential community fundraising event.

We look forward to working with you to raise community awareness about the importance of injury prevention, while helping families affected by workplace tragedy.

CONTACT US

Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support – Threads of Life

Toll-Free: 1-888-567-9490; or 519-685-4276

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