



Frequently Asked Questions

About Fundraising:

Q: Why should I fundraise? Isn't walking in an Optimism Walk enough? Awareness is important.

A: You are correct, awareness IS important. But it is the funds raised at Optimism Walks that keep the doors open for the support groups and service programs for people with Parkinson's and their families. Those funds also help researchers continue their work. *These funds are critical.* The more funds we raise, the more people we can help and this is why it is important for all Optimism Walk participants to fundraise.

Q: How can I ask my friends for donations? I've never fundraised before. It's awkward.

A: Fundraising can seem daunting if you've never done it before, but it's a LOT easier (and fun) than you think! And we give you some great tools to make it even easier for you to become a fantastic fundraiser – your own fundraising webpage, email templates, social media posts, and more! Remember, you are not asking them to give YOU money, you are asking them to support a very important cause (that you care about a lot) and you're giving them an opportunity to easily get involved. And remember, the more funds we raise, the more people we can help.

Q: Where does the money raised go?

A: Funds raised by Optimism Walks go towards APDA's mission help everyone impacted by Parkinson's disease live life to the fullest, especially those in your local communities. The money you raise will help fund local education, referrals, support, and public awareness programs that can improve quality of life for families, care partners, and all those impacted by the disease. The funds also allow us to invest in cutting-edge research that is searching for a cure.

Q: What is a matching gift and why does it make a difference?

A: A matching gift is when an employer will match an employee's charitable contribution. For example, if your friend donates \$50 to your Optimism Walk, if her employer has a matching gift program, they will also donate \$50 to your Optimism Walk. In some cases, they might even double or triple the donation! (Details vary by company.) So remind your donors to check with their company's Finance or Human Resources departments to find out if they have a matching gifts program – it could significantly increase your fundraising!

Q: How does team fundraising work*? What's the difference between my fundraising goal and the team goal?

A: Every participant, whether on a team or not, gets a personal fundraising page and sets a personal fundraising goal. This is YOUR individual goal that you're hoping to raise through donations you receive from your friends, family, etc. As you receive donations, you'll see your personal fundraising total grow (which is a lot of fun and exciting to see!). If you are on a team, the Team Captain will set an overall TEAM fundraising goal – the amount he/she hopes the team will collectively raise together. If you are on a team, your individual fundraising will feed into the team's fundraising total. In addition to individual team members raising funds that contribute to the team total, people can also make a general donation to your team as a whole which will add to the team total. Also, if any team fundraising efforts were done (i.e., did you all host a car wash together to raise funds?) the team captain can put those funds raised into the general team total, or allocate it among the team members to help you each reach your personal fundraising goals.

**Team fundraising is not available at all events.*

About Registering:

Q: If I have registered for the Walk in the past, do I have to register again?

A: Yes, you must register for the Walk every year you participate. This helps us keep an accurate record of who will be attending the walk. Walkers age 18 and over must also agree to the waiver in the registration process each year. If you've registered for a previous Walk, you will have the opportunity to login to your existing account during Step 3 of the registration process. Enter your e-mail address and password and then you won't have to enter your address information again. Be sure to review your information to make sure it is current/correct. *Note:* All participants under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian agree to the waiver on their behalf.

Q: What if I can't remember my password?

A: Just click the *Forgot Password* after you Login to your account and you will be sent an email with a link to reset your password.

About Donations:

Q: How do people receive receipts for their donations?

A: Whenever an online donation is made, an email thank you/receipt will automatically be sent to the email address they provided. They should print this to use for their charitable tax deduction. Donations made by check of \$50 or more will receive a thank you letter/receipt after the Walk is over.

Q: I mailed in my offline donations, but they are not appearing on my personal/team page.

A: APDA works hard to make sure your offline donations are added to the website in a timely manner. If you are concerned that a gift you sent in is not appearing on your page, please email apda@apdaparkinson.org with your name, the event you are participating in, and your contact info, and we'll work to resolve any issue.

Q: How can I send a thank you email to those who made a donation for me?

A: Thanking your donors is an important part of fundraising! Login and go to the *Dashboard* icon at the top of the page. Go to the menu on the right side of the page and under *Your Fundraising*, click on *View Donations Received*. Click the box next to each donation and then click on *Send Thank You* button just under *Total Received*.

General Questions:

Q: Can I form a team for the Optimism Walk?

A: Absolutely! Forming a team is a great way to have fun and fundraise. When you register, you can start your own team or join an existing team.

Q: What is a personal/team page?

A: A personal/team page is an online tool for you to use when soliciting support for the APDA Optimism Walk from your friends and family. From here, you will be able to ask family, friends, and co-workers to join you or your team at the Walk, and to support you by donating.

Once you sign up for the Walk online, by default, a personal page will be created for you. If you are registered as a team captain, you will also have a team page created for you. You will then have the option of personalizing these pages (which we highly recommend) by going to the *Dashboard* icon at the top of the page. Go to the menu on the right side of the page and under *Your Fundraising*, click on *Edit Your Page*. (Or you can use the standard copy we provide for you.)

Q: Do I have to change my personal/team page?

A: Once you register for the event, you will automatically have a personal page created for you. This page will have suggested content and a photo that you are free to leave as is. However, we highly recommend personalizing your fundraising page to *let people know why you're walking and why you are passionate about supporting APDA*. Your personal story will inspire people to support you with a donation.

To personalize your page after you login go to *Dashboard* icon at the top of the page. Go to the menu on the right side of the page and under *Your Fundraising*, click on *Edit Your Page*. Be sure to click *Save Changes* at the bottom of the page.

Q: What happens if the weather is bad on the event day?

A: Optimism Walks take place rain or shine! The only reason the Walk would be postponed is if the weather is dangerous (i.e. lightening), in which case event organizers would notify you as soon as possible. If inclement weather is predicted, be sure to dress accordingly for the weather (i.e., baseball cap, rain jacket, dry socks and shoes for the ride home).

Q: Is there someone I can talk to who can help me when I have a problem with my fundraising page or registration process?

A: If you can't find your answers in the FAQ, contact your local APDA Optimism Walk representative or send an email to apda@apdaparkinson.org, with your name, the event you are registered for, an explanation of your issue/question, and the best way to contact you. Every effort will be made to help you as soon as possible!

Q: What about COVID-19? The status of the virus and local restrictions keep changing. Do I need to be concerned about this?

A: Your safety (and that of our staff and volunteers) is a priority. Since the COVID-19 virus began we have been monitoring the situation and keeping the PD community updated. At the time of your event, the local APDA event organizers will follow the guidelines of local health and government officials and make sure any recommended and required safety measures are in place. In addition, your personal doctor can make recommendations for you based on your health situation.

Thank you so very *much* for participating in the APDA Optimism Walk!

We're here for you if you have any questions!