



NATIONAL KIDNEY  
FOUNDATION®

of Illinois

Walk for  
Kidneys

## Team Captain Playbook

Your guide to recruitment and fundraising success!



# Welcome to the Walk for Kidneys!

You have taken the first *lifesaving* step to help fight kidney disease and raise awareness about organ donation. We greatly appreciate your support in serving as a Team Captain for the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois' Walk for Kidneys, and are excited for you to join us this walk season!

This guide exists to walk you through the A-B-C's of being a Team Captain for Walk for Kidneys, including fundraising tips and tricks, information about the event itself, and a little background about the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois.

## **Walk for Kidneys Staff:**

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## **About the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois**

### **Our Mission**

The National Kidney Foundation of Illinois improves the health and well-being of people at risk for or affected by kidney disease through prevention, education, and empowerment.

### **Public Education & Health Screenings**

Our Community Health & Patient Education department provides crucial services and programs throughout the year to individuals affected by or at risk for kidney disease. Services offered range from community education events and awareness initiatives to one-on-one phone support.

As an advocate for prevention, we address the disease in its early stages by offering free comprehensive health screenings for kidney disease and its two leading causes: uncontrolled diabetes and high blood pressure. Our [KidneyMobile® screening program](#) travels throughout Illinois, focusing on medically underserved communities and individuals considered most at risk.

### **Professional Programs**

Hundreds of healthcare professionals in Illinois belong to our Professional Advisory Board and professional councils. These groups develop educational programs for their members and work with us to ensure patient education and programs are relevant, valuable, and impactful. Teaming up with healthcare providers allows us to share the latest information in kidney disease prevention and treatment.

# Get Ready for Walk Day!



**When:** Sunday, June 7, 2026

**Where:** Lincoln Harbor – Diversey Event Space

**Time:** Walker Check-In: 9:00 am | Walk Step-Off: 10:00 am

**Walk Distance:** 5K (3.1 miles)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: How long is the walk?**

A: The Walk for Kidneys is a 5K so around 3.1 miles. There is plenty to do on the day of the event and not everyone is required to walk.

### **Q: How many people can I have on my team?**

A: There is no minimum or maximum amount of people you can have on your team! Invite your family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors!

### **Q: Can I turn in donations on the day of the walk?**

A: Yes, you can turn them in at Check-In. Walker Envelopes will be available at the Registration tent.

# Team Captain Checklist

**Customize** both your team and your personal fundraising pages by adding a photo, your fundraising goal, and your team's story.

**Use** social media, email, phone calls, letter writing, and in-person asks to recruit team members and fundraise for your team.

**Host** a fundraiser and ask all team members to invite their family, friends and coworkers. Work with a local restaurant or bar to host a night where a percentage of their proceeds benefit the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois.

**Ask** your supervisor or boss to sponsor your team, match your donations, or help rally a company team.

**Add** your fundraising webpage link to the signature line of your emails. Every time you send an email you will also be asking for support.

**Recruit** family members, friends, colleagues, and neighbors to join your team – the more, the merrier!

**Email** your co-workers and ask them to join your team or form their own team. Make sure to explain to them why Walk for Kidneys is such an important event to you. There are templates available when you login to your fundraising page.

**Involve** your company or employer. Does your company have a matching gift policy? Or, would they be willing to host a dress-down/jeans day for all employees in exchange for a donation to your team fundraising?

**Place** posters and brochures in your community in order to recruit more team members and raise awareness. Call the NKFI office to get some.

**Reach** out to team members regularly to answer questions and check on their progress.

**Have fun and encourage all your teammates to do the same!**

# Fundraising 101

You are participating in Walk for Kidneys because kidney disease has touched your life. Your personal connection to the cause is your **best** fundraising tool. Take some time to think about your reason for walking, and use your story (or the story of a teammate) to fundraise through emails, letters, phone calls, and in-person conversations.

## **Kick off your fundraising using the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois' Fundraising Tips:**

1. **Set a fundraising goal:** Set a goal and set it high! A fundraising goal encourages your donors to give the most they feel comfortable giving.
2. **Personalize your fundraising page:** Let the world know why you are participating in Walk for Kidneys, and why the cause is so important to you. Potential donors are much more likely to help you reach your goal if they understand the powerful reasons behind your decision to be a part of Walk for Kidneys.
3. **Explore your network – it is bigger than you think:** Make sure you are asking everyone you know for support, not just close friends and family. Think about all the people you interact with on a regular basis who might be willing to support your fundraising.
4. **Time your ask:** Make sure you give all of your potential donors a time frame in which to support you. With everyone's hectic schedules it can be easy to forget to make a donation. By giving potential donors a deadline (and following up), you make it easier for donors to remember to give to such an amazing cause.
5. **Ask, ask, ask:** Ask early and ask often for the support of your entire network. With 1 in 3 Americans at risk for kidney disease, and 1 in 9 Americans living with kidney disease, you will be surprised at how many people are connected to the cause and will be excited to help you reach your fundraising goal!
6. **Post on social media:** Data shows that people who fundraise online raise 3x more than people who don't. Post a status or email your friends! The participant center has tons of tools for you to use!

### **Earn your T-Shirt:**

- **You can't ask someone to do something you wouldn't do yourself! Make a \$25 gift to your fundraiser**
- **Ask one friend for \$25**
- **Ask one relative for \$25**
- **Ask twenty-five co-workers for \$1 each**

**You did it! \$100**

**Need more fundraising ideas? Want to talk about growing your team? Have questions? Need fundraising materials?**

**Contact Allie Widmer at [walk@nkfi.org](mailto:walk@nkfi.org) (312) 321-1500**