



# Committee Planning Guide 2024

## Welcome

### ***Taking Steps for Your Health for over 20 years!***

Thank you for your commitment to bring this special event to your community. You are now part of a grassroots awareness and fundraising movement to support obesity treatment and prevention. Since 2003, the *Walk from Obesity* has been the only national walkathon for the disease of obesity.

### ***The ASMBS Foundation is now the TREO Foundation!***

**TREO Foundation** (Treatment, Research, & Education, to end Obesity). TREO will still be the fundraising partner of the ASMBS (society), raising funds for important work such as research, education, and access to treatment.

**Now let's get started on your event planning!** This guide will help you throughout the planning process, but please feel free to contact us anytime. We are always available and eager to help anyway possible.

Thanks again for your commitment to help us end the obesity epidemic and promote a healthier future!

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## About the *Walk from Obesity*

The Treo Foundation's *Walk from Obesity* is the nation's largest walkathon that draws attention to obesity as a disease and obesity treatment options. This program is a fundraiser for the Treo Foundation, as well as an awareness event for local communities.

*Walk from Obesity* events are generally held in the fall and spring in cities across the nation. Cities are designated based on responses from volunteers wishing to host a Walk in their area.

Walk participants include individuals wanting to treat the disease of obesity, family members and friends of those affected by obesity, individuals who are currently working with a healthcare provider to treat their obesity, physicians, bariatric surgeons, integrated health professionals, and community members.

Participants will walk to raise obesity awareness and raise funds for education, research, and access to treatment of obesity. Funds are raised through various means such as: registration fees, general donations, National Sponsorships, and Local Sponsorships.

### Two Types of Events:

The planning committee will have the option of hosting a traditional *Walk from Obesity* event or a *Walk from Obesity + Fun Run* event. Procedural guidelines will be the same for each type of event.

Hosting a traditional *Walk from Obesity* will focus solely on "walking" and will be promoted as such. Participants may continue to choose to walk, jog, or run at these events based on the venue and track available. Hosting a *Walk from Obesity + Fitness Fun Run* event will bring "running" into the focus of the event, along with "walking" and will be promoted as such. This will help to attract participants that may be interested in a Run versus just a Walk.

Events that include the Fun Run option should maintain that it is just that; a Fun Run is a noncompetitive run and there should never be any type of race or placement involved in the run. Both types of events must be considered a non-competitive, "set your own pace" event, and should allow participants to walk/run as much or as little as they want. Both types should never be longer than a 5K (3.1 miles).

The biggest difference between the two types of events may be the choice of venue. If you choose to host a Walk that includes an official Fun Run, you will need a venue/site that will work for this type of event. It would be ideal to have a different route for runners. However, in a case where that may not be possible and walkers and runners will use the same route, runners should be asked to start first at the starting line.

Your event's online registration page will reflect which type of event you are hosting, as well as other graphics. Please choose which type of event you wish to host when you submit your Event Details Form. This can be changed after the form is submitted but will need to be finalized before your event goes "live" on the Walk website.



## History of the Walk from Obesity

In 2003, Bryan G. Woodward, conceived and directed the first and sole TREO Foundation's annual walk-a-thon called Walk from Obesity. Today, in major cities across the United States, the Walk continues to bring national attention to this disease, with over 745 Walks being held since it's inception.

The TREO Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization developed to raise funds for conducting research and education, increasing public and scientific awareness and understanding, and improving access to quality care and treatment of obesity and morbid obesity. To learn more about the TREO Foundation please visit [www.TREOfoundation.org](http://www.TREOfoundation.org)

## How Funds are Utilized

The TREO Foundation is dedicated to keeping overhead expenses low to allow for the maximum use of donations received for the purpose of supporting it's mission and programs. We expect the Walk from Obesity to continue on its path of success and provide support toward our efforts focused on research, education, and access to treatment of obesity.

Financial revenues raised by the Walk from Obesity are utilized to support the mission of the TREO Foundation by:

- Funding Research Grants through the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS).
- Increasing and Improving Education
- Raising Awareness of Obesity and Available Treatments
- Conducting Advocacy through the ASMBS
- Supporting Community Initiatives through the Bryan Woodward Community Grant program

For more information please visit: [www.TREOfoundation.org](http://www.TREOfoundation.org)

# Forming a Committee / Policies and Guidelines

## Basic Event Planning Timeline:

### 4 Months Before Event:

- Form a planning committee
- Schedule first committee meeting
- Find a location/venue for the Walk
- Test and confirm Walk route
- Obtain license or permit for Walk site
- Submit event details to the TREO Foundation office for online event page (registration page)
- Request Certificate of Insurance (if needed)
- Begin soliciting local companies for local sponsorship

### 3 Months Before Event:

- Schedule committee meeting(s) and identify event needs
- Recruit individuals to become team captains and form Walk teams
- Solicit for local sponsorships
- Develop a PR and marketing strategy
- Distribute promotional materials (flyers, letters, emails, social media, company website, company newsletter) to current and past patients, outside physician and bariatric practices, hospitals, support groups, community bulletins, schools, etc.

### 2 Months Before Event:

- Schedule committee meeting(s) as needed
- Begin planning for other event activities (stretch/warm-up, kids area, guest speakers etc.)
- Solicit for local sponsorships
- Determine equipment/furniture and sound equipment needs, locate rental companies, request quotes from companies
- Recruit volunteers to assist with marketing material distribution.

### 1 Month Before Event:

- Schedule committee meetings as needed
- Make an event day checklist
- Distribute promotional materials
- Reserve equipment/furniture for event from the best quote
- Determine refreshment needs (water, fruit, etc.) and establish local distributors for donations
- Submit news releases to local media outlets (a template will be provided from the TREO Foundation office upon request)
- Approve artwork for shirts in a timely manner. (approximately 3 weeks before event date)

### 1-2 Weeks Before Event:

- Send final pre-event press release
- Arrange for pick-up of t-shirts, refreshments and signage
- Schedule delivery of furniture/equipment, and other materials
- Plan the sequence of events and confirm speakers
- Assemble volunteers and confirm duties for day-of activities
- Plan for event set-up

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- Plan for clean-up (post event)
- Form a plan on how to recognize sponsors at the event
- Send final emails and/or social media alerts
- Communicate time to check-in to all volunteers, local sponsors, and vendors
- Determine rules and plan for coloring contest (include prizes for winner(s))

### **Post Event:**

- Final accounting due at least 30 days after the date of your event
- Send wrap-up press release
- Provide event pictures to the TREO Foundation office
- Provide feedback to the TREO Foundation office about your experience
- Send post-event thank you's to sponsors, participants, and volunteers

### **Forming a Committee:**

Forming a committee is essential to the success of your Walk. Committees are a great way to divide the work and also get the community, current and former patients, support group members, physicians, bariatric surgeons, integrated health professionals and hospital staff involved at the grass roots level.

Committee members must be willing to volunteer several hours over a 3-4 month time period. Connect with your network of community members to determine who has experience with event planning or knows someone who can contribute goods and services. You'll be amazed at the resources available just by asking.

We recommend that the leadership responsibilities change periodically for each Walk location. This is to ensure that different individuals are trained to help host a Walk and that the level of enthusiasm remains consistent each year. We recommend that you develop a succession plan wherein; there is a Committee Chair, and Incoming Chair and an Immediate Past Chair serving on the local Walk Committee. This will create consistency and allow for easy transitions from year to year.

### **Setting Committee Goals:**

It is important that the Walk Committee Chair (Event Leader), along with the committee, set goals for the event. Each time you meet as a committee, look at these goals and evaluate if you are on your way to accomplishing them. Ideas for goals to set include:

- Number of participants to attract to your Walk
- Number of Walk teams to start
- Number of media outlets at your event
- Number of sponsors/vendors attending the event
- Number of sponsorship dollars to raise
- Overall fundraising goal

### **Walk Committee Tips:**

- Meet regularly. We recommend that you meet monthly. As the event nears, you may need to meet with greater frequency
- Create and use an Event Committee email distribution list so that you can communicate details frequently with one another
- Hold conference calls so that you and your committee members maximize time in your office and hours in your day
- Make sure committee members are given tasks and/or are assigned to areas where they can offer their talents/time best



- Each member should familiarize themselves with the Walk Planning Guide and all guidelines and policies
- Don't forget the TREO Foundation Staff is here to help!

### **Suggested Committee Member Roles:**

The following is a list of suggested committee members and a breakdown of their areas of responsibility.

**Please Note:** *These are suggested roles and responsibilities for each. Some responsibilities may need to be shared depending on the number of committee members.*

#### **Committee Chair (Event Leader):**

- Contact local weight loss programs, bariatric programs, hospitals, community groups, support groups, local businesses etc. to find Walk Committee members
- Establish a diverse committee which includes at least one representative from each of the groups listed above (when possible)
- Organize, schedule, and host committee meetings
- Create and send out contact list of all committee members to the entire committee
- Ensure all guidelines and policies are being followed
- Oversee local sponsorship and other responsibilities of committee members and assist where needed
- Set a budget and other goals for the committee. Oversee financial accountability.
- Contact National Sponsor reps and invite them to the Walk
- Find and secure a venue to host the Walk
- Make an event day checklist
- Work closely with the National Office and communicate all info to the Walk Committee members

#### **Walk Site/Event Location Committee Member:**

- Test and confirm walk/run route (walk routes should be one mile to three miles in length)
- Obtain permits, licenses, and request Certificate of Insurance, if applicable
- Find a rental company for event day items if they are not available or donated (tables, chairs, sound equipment, etc.)
- Have a first aid plan in place for the day of the event
- Recruit volunteers for setup and breakdown the day of the event
- Ensure water and/or food stations are made available at the event

#### **Sponsorships, Fundraising, and Teams Committee Member:**

- Form a list potential Local Sponsors from industry partners and local businesses
- Secure sponsorships.
- Enlist support from other surgeons and physicians who are related to your program
- Recruit health food stores and/or fitness centers to sponsor, attend, and pass out free product samples/trial memberships
- Assist Foundation staff with local sponsor logo collection if needed
- Find team captains or invite organizations to form a team and recruit participants if they cannot become a sponsor
- Work with the National Office to encourage participants to fundraise
- Find other ways to fundraise (raffles, auctions, etc.)
- Invite National Sponsors to attend the event (no cost)

Don't forget to utilize the Local Sponsorship Prospectus that will be created by the TREO Foundation specifically for your Walk.

### PR/Media and Marketing Committee Member:

- Contact past patients to recruit support and participation
- Organize distribution of marketing materials (recruit volunteers if needed)
- Find free community announcements to publicize the Walk in
- Find a local celebrity to host and MC the event (radio stations)
- Invite local politicians/mayor/ representatives, etc. to attend the event
- Host any media at the event
- Coordinate with all presenting sponsor companies to market the Walk (social media, etc.)

Need Marketing help? Contact us for assistance.

**Please Note:** *if not pre-registered online, all MC's and Speakers are required to fill out an on-site registration form and sign and date the waiver/release of liability.*

### Recruiting Volunteers:

Once a local Walk Committee is established, the committee should begin recruiting, training and organizing volunteers. Volunteers may also be sought out for a specific task. Seek individuals through the support group networks in your area as well as friends and family members. You may also choose to create a flyer/signup form to distribute in physicians' offices, hospitals and at support group meetings.

### Volunteer Tasks:

From the early planning stages to the final clean-up, volunteers will donate several hours of much needed services. Much of the success of any event comes from creating excitement and a "buzz" in and among potential participants. Here are a few suggestions for volunteer duties:

- Promoting the Walk by distributing flyers, etc.
- Soliciting for Local Sponsorships
- Making support group announcements
- Sending group emails and social media posting leading up to the event
- Setting up tables and chairs
- Manning water stations
- Helping with on-site registration
- Handing out t-shirts
- Taking photographs
- Helping to cleanup after the event

**Please Note:** *Volunteers should be encouraged to become a paid registered participant of the Walk. If not pre-registered online, all volunteers are required to fill out an on-site registration form and sign and date the waiver/release of liability. There is no fee when completing the form on-site. If you plan to have more than (10) volunteers register on-site, please contact our office for further instructions.*

### Create a Budget for the Walk:

Expenses for the Walk should be kept to a minimum. Reimbursements will only be given for items that are necessary for the event to take place (see list of approved and not-approved items). Set a fundraising goal for your event and plan to only use a percentage of that goal. **Local expenses should never be higher than 15% of what you plan to raise.** If you have a fundraising goal of \$10,000 then your budget for local expenses should not be higher than \$1,500. If you plan to raise \$20,000, then your budget for expenses should not exceed \$3,000.



Try to get as many items donated as you can (water, tables, sound equipment etc.). Keep in mind t-shirts, banners, brochures, prizes, liability coverage, and bags do not need to be added into your local budget as these items will be provided by the TREO Foundation office.

**New Walk Location:**

New Walks may have some difficulty in preparing their first budget due to lack of experience with the income and expenses of running a Walk. However, a basic budget should be developed by anticipating Walk income and expenses. Future year budgets will be easier once a financial history is developed. If you need assistance, someone from the TREO Foundation office will be happy to help you.

**Previous Walk Location:**

Planning the Walks budget should begin by analyzing income and expenses for the previous year and honestly assessing if those numbers are repeatable or if they should be increased or decreased. Also, any changes or additions to the Walk will need to be included by estimating the income and expense of such changes. Below, please find a basic budget:

<b>Income</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Registration Fees (Online and On-site)	\$2,500
Contributions/Pledges Collected by Participants	\$5,000
Sponsorship	\$7,500
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Venus Charge and/or Permits	\$500
Signage	\$200
Rental Fees (Tables, Chairs, Table Skirts, Sound Equipment)	\$700
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$1,400</b>
<b>Income Over Expenses</b>	<b>\$13,600</b>

*Please Note: This is a very basic budget. You may have more income and expenses. If you need assistance with your budget, please contact our office.*



## Policies and Guidelines

As the *Walk from Obesity* is a charitable event, there are several policies and guidelines that must be maintained. The *Walk from Obesity* policies ensure that Committee Chairs and committees across the country have clear rules to follow in protecting the ethical standards and reputation of the TREO Foundation and the *Walk from Obesity* brand. Committee Chairs and sponsors will agree to adhere to the following policies when they complete their event registration application.

### Protect the *Walk from Obesity* Brand

- The official name of the event for use in any type of promotion or documentation shall be “*Walk from Obesity*” OR “*Walk from Obesity Fun Run*”
- The TREO Foundation has sole jurisdiction over the use of the *Walk from Obesity* name and logo designed to support *Walk from Obesity* events. The logo may be used to promote the *Walk from Obesity* on flyers, posters, signage and for news articles, however **any materials NOT created by the Foundation must be approved before distribution or use.**
- The *Walk from Obesity* logo may not be used on marketing materials that promote one group, practice, or hospital, without approval from the TREO Foundation office. The logo will only be provided to Local Sponsors that sponsor at a level of \$5,000 or higher and a proof of the item **MUST** be provided for approval by the Foundation Staff. **The official logo may not be used on team shirts.**
- The *Walk from Obesity* event must be a stand-alone event and cannot be held in conjunction with other health fairs, staff parties, etc. All funds collected must be paid to "TREO Foundation." No funds may be collected for any other organization, individual, or nonprofit through or at the *Walk from Obesity* event or under the *Walk from Obesity* name.

### Maintain the Highest Ethical and Safety Standards

- *Walk from Obesity* Insurance: the TREO Foundation will provide a basic liability insurance for each event. A request form must be submitted to the insurance company in order to obtain the Certificate of Insurance.
- All participants and volunteers must sign a waiver form before participating in the event, whether online or by paper.
- Events must be well supervised with proper safety procedures in place to ensure the well-being of participants and volunteers. Please follow all safety guidelines set forth by the venue.
- For safety reasons, dogs will not be allowed at the event in most cases. (Please follow venue policy)
- The TREO Foundation does not require EMS or security/police for Walk events, however all requirements or suggestions set forth by the venue must and should be followed.
- Bounce houses, dunk-tanks, and similar items are not allowed! (Contact us for further details)

### Be Financially Accountable

- All local event start-up costs are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization and Committee Chair who signed the initial agreement/application (Presenting Sponsor Donation). All events will be financially self-sufficient, working within the community to raise funds and garner donated items to cover event costs. All funds raised will be forwarded to the TREO Foundation to cover the event costs. Funds raised **MAY NOT** be used for expenditures that are not approved by the Foundation.
- The Committee Chair holds sole responsibility of ensuring that all monies collected during the event are handled accordingly; to the security protocols established as part of the event operations.
- **Any expense of \$250 or higher must be pre-approved** by the Foundation office to guarantee payment or reimbursement for the expense.

### Appropriate Use of Sponsorship Funds

We must maintain the highest level of confidence from National and Local Sponsors that monies donated are appropriately utilized and used for items that would be considered a necessary event expense.

Items that are considered appropriate and inappropriate to purchase for the event with TREO Foundation funding are listed below: **Any expenses of \$250+ must be preapproved by the Foundation office before you commit to the expense.**

Appropriate Items (The TREO Foundation will cover the cost of these items as needed):

- Table, table skirts, and chair rentals (Including delivery fees)
- Permits
- Venue charge
- Event signage and printing
- Sound equipment rental (Or DJ/MC)
- Generator rentals
- Portable toilet rentals
- Coloring contest supplies
- Other items deemed a necessity that is approved by an Foundation staff member

Inappropriate Items (The TREO Foundation does **NOT** cover the cost of these items):

- Participant giveaways or raffle prizes (these items should be donated as in-kind)
- Office equipment (computers, cameras)
- Entertainment
- Professional photographers
- Third-party event planners or marketing staff
- Alcohol
- Advertising (paid advertising)
- Additional activities (bounce house, games, etc.)
- Tents (sponsors may bring their own tent if the venue allows it)
- Team t-shirts
- Decorations (balloon arch, inflatable starting line etc.)
- Food - lunch, breakfast (healthy snacks should be donated as in-kind)
- Guest speaker fees or travel expenses

If you have a special circumstance or request, please forward your request to the TREO Foundation for review.

### Financial Reporting

Financial reporting for the *Walk from Obesity* must be taken seriously and performed with great accuracy for maintaining non-profit status in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) . The following information will guide you and your committee as you develop your event. Please understand these processes may change, as tax laws and non-profit rules change frequently.

We strongly encourage all Walks to be financially self-sufficient, working with the community to receive donated items to cover needed event items. In some situations this is not always possible and the TREO Foundation will help to pay approved expenses if considered necessary. **Any expenditure (or contract requiring an expenditure) of \$250 or more must be preapproved by the Foundation office before an invoice or reimbursement request will be paid.**



### **Monies Collected**

All funds raised from the Walk from Obesity will be deposited into the TREO Foundation bank account. Each Walk is separated into a "class" and will contain a current total of income and expenses within the Foundation's accounting system. If you have questions or need assistance regarding accounting for your Walk please call the Foundation office. Ask donors and sponsors to make checks payable to "TREO Foundation." All monies/donations not made online, should be mailed with a Deposit Detail Form to the TREO Foundation office.

Please include a Deposit Detail Form with your checks for your records as well as the Foundation's. It is recommended that you not accept cash donations, but if it is necessary that you do, please obtain a money order or cashier's check in that amount and forward it to the Foundation with a Deposit Detail Form.

After your deposit has been received, you receive an automated email confirmation and the amount of your deposit will be accredited to your Walk fund (online event page) . It is very important that the TREO Foundation receive all checks for deposit so that donors can be entered into the Walk from Obesity database and receive appropriate recognition. It is also important for income tax reporting as a charitable tax-deductible donation. The Foundation will be glad to reimburse you for deposit mailing expenses, if requested.

### **Check /Expense Reimbursement Request Policy**

The Check/Expense Reimbursement Request Form is used to request the TREO Foundation to directly pay for a Walk expense or to request reimbursement for expenses paid personally by the Committee Chair or Presenting Sponsor. This form may be emailed or mailed to the TREO Foundation. The request will not be completed unless this form is filled out in its entirety.

When using this form, include a copy of the invoice and/or paid receipt with the request. If you would like the check mailed directly to the vendor, include the mailing address for the vendor. The purpose of the check must be described in detail and the amount must agree with the vendor's invoice. The check request must be approved by: the Committee Chair, and an TREO Foundation staff member and/or the Executive Director. If the payment is to an individual for services, the information on the bottom of the request form must be completed. If the payment is to a corporation, this information does not need to be completed. Reimbursements will not be issued after December 31st of the event date year.

### **Deposit Detail Policy**

The Deposit Detail Form is available for download in the Event Leader Portal and is necessary to provide accurate information about your deposits. The first section is for registration and is combined to account for multiple deposits of the same type. Please describe any miscellaneous amounts in detail to help with the accounting of these items.

In-kind contributions (such as bottles of water, free advertising, donation of services, providing needed equipment such as tables) need to be documented at the bottom of the form. The amount of the non-cash contribution must be determined and provided by the donor/sponsor. Please include the mailing address of the donor/sponsor for any cash or non-cash contributions or sponsorships of more than \$250. Please mail all deposits to the TREO Foundation office.

### **Deposit Detail Form**

- All donations, sponsorships, and registrations submitted to the TREO Foundation must include a deposit detail form.
- All donations, sponsorships, and registration checks must be made payable to "TREO Foundation." Walks are not permitted to open their own bank accounts. All funds collected must be sent to the Foundation office.



### **Check/Expense Reimbursement Request Form**

- All expenditures (and contracts requiring expenditures) of \$250 or more must be pre-approved by the TREO Foundation.
- Please complete all Check/Expense Reimbursement Request Forms in full by including who the check should be made payable to and who the check should be mailed to including address for mailing (see bottom of form).
- All check/reimbursement requests must include a receipt of payment or an invoice for payment.

### **Online Reports and Access:**

The Committee Chair for your event will be provided with your Walk's financial reporting. A report of registered participants and all donations (including sponsors) will be provided when online registration closes. These reports will be used to check-in participants, determine prize distribution, and should be kept for your records.

Reports can also be provided anytime leading up to the Walk date by submitting a request to the TREO Foundation office. The reports will include any transaction (registrations and donations) that was completed online or entered by the Foundation office (checks received by mail). If you need assistance with this, please contact the TREO Foundation office.

### **Other Reporting:**

TREO Foundation must be informed of all activities involving the Walk from Obesity, if requested. Please keep proper records of the following in case this information is requested from you. This may include:

- A list of National Sponsors that attended
- An outline of donated items such as water, raffle prizes, and other services
- Any exhibitors at the event (all exhibitors must be approved through the local sponsorship process)
- Other activities being provided at the event (games, guest speakers, warm-up, etc)
- A list of volunteers (volunteers should be registered online or by paper at no charge)
- Committee members and their contact details

## Event Location

### Event Location and Site Logistics

One of the first tasks to complete is to select your event location/venue. This responsibility falls on the Committee Chair in addition to the Walk Committee. Event location ideas include:

- State/city parks
- Shopping malls
- Hospitals
- School tracks and athletic fields

When determining the site and route for your Walk, the following factors need to be considered:

- The location should be large enough to accommodate walkers, volunteers, a registration area and allow sponsor/exhibitor tables (nothing shall be sold at the Walk).
- Locations should preferably have restrooms already available and free parking.
- Ideally, the site should be centrally located to your metropolitan area and easy to find.
- Select several locations to consider.
- A free venue is strongly suggested, but may not always be possible. Any fee over \$250 must be preapproved by the TREO Foundation office, so if your venue cost will exceed this amount, please contact the Foundation office for approval before making a commitment.
- Obtain permission to use the venue, keeping in mind that possible site use fees can be negotiated, if required.
- Choose an area where traffic can be restricted if needed or in an area that has a low or no traffic density.
- Utilize a route that is safe, simple and as flat as possible.
- Make an accurate map that includes parking, gathering area, course route, beverage and bathroom facilities and distance.
- Obtain course approval from appropriate law enforcement officials if public roads will need to be blocked or traffic disturbed. (Courses that require this are not preferred)

### Walk Routes

Walk the route to ensure the course is appropriate. The route can be deceptively easy when traversed in a vehicle. If the route is scenic, this adds to the enjoyment for the participants. One to three miles is recommended and should be measured with an accurate step counter or a measuring “wheel.” A “loop” route is preferred so that walkers can start and stop at the same location. A route that requires several loops will allow participants to easily pick their number of laps/distance walked. We recommend a route of 1-3 miles. The Walk route should never exceed more than a 5K (3.1 miles).

Use trail markers for direction and distance traveled. **If the Walk is longer than one mile, signage for shorter turnaround points should be marked.** If a route is longer than one mile, having a vehicle circle the Walk to assist those who may not be able to walk the entire route is advisable. **Never have the Walk traverse through an area that would not be accessible for emergency personnel or vehicles.**

**Please Note: If you will be hosting a Walk from Obesity + Fun Run event, please keep in mind you will need a location that allows the option for participants to run which may require additional permits.**

### Permits

Some venues may require that permits be acquired. Please check with your Walk venue for information about required permits. Please contact our office if you need assistance with permit applications or payments.



## **Emergency Preparedness**

On-site emergency vehicles/personnel are suggested but are not required by the TREO Foundation. However, the venue may require that you have emergency services on-site. Please check with your venue regarding their policy. Having a first aid kit at the Walk is also strongly encouraged.

Will any part of your Walk be held on streets, roads, or avenues with vehicles? Most Walks can be conducted using city streets and existing traffic control devices without special road closures. Volunteer crossing guards should be used to help walkers with particularly busy or difficult intersections. A course/route that does not require street crossings is preferred.

## **In the Event of Rain**

The Walk is a rain or shine event, which means all funds collected are nonrefundable if the event is canceled due to weather issues. Have a contingency plan in case of inclement weather, and if possible, a backup "inside" location. The Walk Committee and Foundation Office will decide if the Walk should be canceled or postponed due to inclement weather where safety is of concern. Contributions to the Walk should not be contingent on the participant physically walking or the Walk being held. Because this is a fundraising event, the pledges and sponsorships should still be able to be collected and/or considered nonrefundable. If the event cannot be rescheduled, a virtual Walk can be orchestrated or a t-shirt pickup can be scheduled at the Presenting Sponsors facility. The Foundation Office will work with you in these cases.

## **Liability Insurance**

The TREO Foundation will provide liability insurance for each Walk site. To request a Certificate of Insurance for your event, please download and print the request form from the Event Leader portal on our website. Complete the form and fax to our insurance company. Do not send the form to our office. Be sure to note any special requirements on the request form that may be required by your Walk site/venue. Insurance provides basic coverage for a Walk-a-thon type event. Examples of things NOT covered under our insurance: dogs or animals, alcohol, rock climbing walls, ball pits, bounce houses, etc. For questions, please contact our office. If you require a Certificate of Insurance for your Walk site, please request the certificate within 30 days of your Walk date.

## **Site Logistics and Event Setup**

Develop a plan for securing/renting tables and chairs, route markers, parking signs, portable restrooms, sound equipment and water stations. Try to get as many of these items donated as possible. If these items are not donated, please follow all expense guidelines when seeking a rental agreement or purchase for these items.

Utilize your Walk volunteers for table setup, registration, distribution of materials, walk route and course management (monitor walkers progress; assist those in need) and more as needed. Be sure to setup tables so that your participants can access each vendor easily. National Sponsors and higher leveled Local Sponsors should have a prominent table location at the Walk.

The Walk banner provided by the Foundation should also be displayed in a prominent location for all participants to see. Please make sure you have the proper tools or equipment available to hang or display the banner.

Direction signage is also important at your Walk. You may need to place signage for the following:

- Where to enter the venue from the street and where to park
- Where to check-in or register
- Where the restrooms are located
- Where the starting and finish line is with directional signage on the walking path
- Other signage you deem necessary

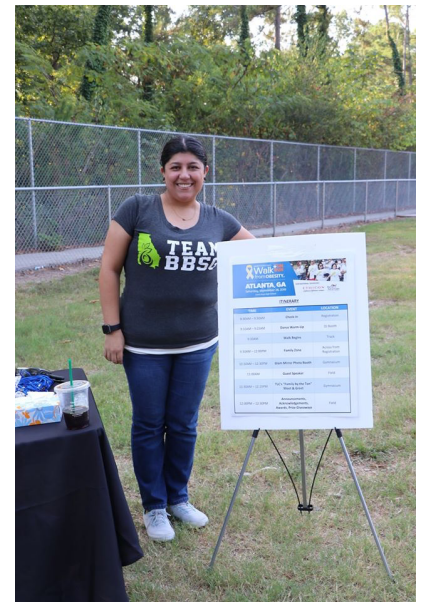
Restrooms should be easily accessible in the main event area. Keep in mind most participants may also need the restroom to change into their *Walk from Obesity* t-shirt.

It is the sole responsibility of the Walk Committee and Presenting Sponsor to make sure all venue rules are followed and a proper clean-up of the venue is completed after the Walk. **The TREO Foundation will not cover fees associated with the venue space not being properly cleaned after the Walk.** Please make sure clean-up requirements are met after the event.

### On-site Registration

There will need to be a registration area/table at the event. Place registration/check-in in an area that can be easily accessed when participants arrive. Participants that registered online will need to check-in, pick up their t-shirt and other items, and turn in any donations they may have collected offline. A list of online registrations will be emailed to the committee chair before the Walk.

On-site registration will also need to be made available. Checks, cash, or money order should be accepted. All participants registering on-site must complete the paper registration form provided by the TREO Foundation and pay the full registration price of \$35.



## Sponsorship, Fundraising, and Registration

The Walk raises funds for prevention, education, research, and access to treatment of obesity. The Walk generates funds through these primary sources:

- Sponsorships (Presenting, Local, and National)
- In-kind Donations
- Participants (Registration and Donations)

### Presenting Sponsorship

Presenting Sponsors of the Walk are the companies that applied to host and paid the Presenting Sponsor Donation (PSD). These companies are different from a Local Sponsor, as they are not only making a contribution to the event, but are also responsible for the planning of the event. The Committee Chair should be a representative from one of the listed Presenting Sponsors. Presenting sponsors will receive most of the highest level of incentives that a Local Sponsor would receive, but at a much lower donation amount. The amount is lower due to the Presenting Sponsor putting a lot more time into the planning of the event. The Presenting Sponsor will be recognized on items such as shirts and online registration pages above all levels of local sponsorship.

### Local Sponsorship

***Please note: It is a requirement to solicit local companies for paid sponsorship and is the responsibility of the local Walk Committee. You should reach out to no less than 20 companies, hospitals, or private practices that would be a good fit for your Walk.***

Local sponsors are a vital part of having a successful fundraising event. We provide several levels of local sponsorship that should allow anyone to become a paid local sponsor. The levels range from \$175 to \$5,000. Though we would like sponsors to support the Walk based solely on supporting our cause, most sponsors would like to see a return for their contribution and some may even view it as an investment. With that being said, you may have to work as a salesperson to bring potential sponsors on. To help you with the process, we provide you with an electronic Local Sponsorship Prospectus. The prospectus will be event specific and list deadlines and contact information for the local Committee Chair/Event Leader.

#### Some good “selling” points to make to potential sponsors are:

- All levels (except Product Distribution) of sponsorship include a vendor table and two chairs at the event. This will allow sponsors to have “one-on-one” contact with all participants, handout marketing materials or samples from their business, and have a “presence” at the event.
- All levels of sponsorship include mention by the MC during announcements at the event.
- Sponsorship levels of \$1,000 or higher will include company logo be printed on the official Walk from Obesity t-shirt for the event, which every participant will receive, and the banner.
- Some sponsorship levels will include promo codes for free Walk registrations. This will allow them to start a company team, provide their customers or staff with free registrations, or donate them back to the event.
- The sooner a company commits, the sooner we will start to recognize them as a sponsor. All sponsorships of \$750 or more include either their logo or company name being listed on the online registration page.
- Paid sponsorship will be supporting a great cause and all paid sponsorships are 100% tax-deductible as allowed by law.



## Types of businesses that are a great place to start recruiting local sponsors:

- Companies your organization already has a working relationship with (best place to start)
- Gyms
- Hospitals
- Restaurants
- Smoothie Companies
- Weight-loss Services (Weight Watchers, etc.),
- Retail Stores
- Sporting-Goods Stores
- Private Practices (all areas of healthcare)
- Health-food Stores
- Supermarkets
- Newspapers
- Schools
- Radio Stations
- And much more!

### In-kind Sponsorships (Donations)

Some sponsors may be hesitant to become a paid sponsor and would prefer to simply make an in-kind donation (provide water, gift certificates, etc.). Though we welcome in-kind donations, it is important to push for paid sponsorship first. In-kind donations should only be requested if the potential sponsor is unable to become a paid sponsor at this time. **Those that donate in-kind should NOT be given the same incentives as a paid sponsor or be considered a sponsor.** In-kind donations should be considered just that, a donation. Please contact the Foundation office if you have questions about in-kind donations or would like to recognize these donations as sponsorships.

Note: Items for participant bags or giveaways, such as samples, coupons, etc. are NOT in-kind donations and will fall under our Product Distribution level which requires a financial contribution of \$150.

### National Sponsorship

The TREO Foundation staff has spent numerous hours cultivating positive relationships with the companies that have agreed to become National Sponsors and we must live up to the promises made to these generous donors. Please familiarize yourself with whom our National Sponsors are. **National Sponsors should NOT be asked to contribute financially at the local level.** The National Sponsors will be provided contact information and instructed to contact your Committee Chair if they plan to attend your Walk. If anyone from your committee knows a local rep from any of these companies, you are encouraged to contact them and invite them to the event. You do not have to wait for them to contact you first.

Here are a few things to remember, when handling National Sponsors:

- **Size and Placement of Logos.** National Sponsor logos are to be of equal or greater in size when compared to Local Sponsor logos.
- **Giveaways.** Goods (i.e. water bottles) or other products donated by National Sponsors must be distributed at the event to participants in a manner acceptable to the sponsoring company.
- **Exhibitor's Table.** All National Sponsors are to be provided by your event a minimum of one 6- foot table and two chairs for their display use. If you are providing canopy coverage for your Local Sponsors, you must provide this comfort to all National Sponsors, if requested.  
*Canopy coverage for any sponsor is not mandatory and is not a covered expense.*

- **Registration.** Your event is to provide each National Sponsor with free registrations if representatives are in attendance.
- **Recognition.** It is crucial that National Sponsors are recognized and thanked at the event, by the MC, even if a representative is not in attendance.

*Please Note: if not pre-registered online, all sponsors are required to fill out an on-site registration form and sign and date the waiver/release of liability.*

## Registration, Fundraising, and Prizes

Participants of the Walk are also key fundraisers for the event. The registration fee/donation (\$35 on-site, \$30 online) is considered a donation from the participant. All participants should be encouraged to also raise funds for the event through their peer to peer fundraising efforts. Early Bird Registration will be provided for \$20-25 with use of a promo code. The amount and time-frame of this promotion may vary for each Walk location.

### Online Registration

The only way for a participant to register prior to the Walk is through the online registration system (online event page). Each participant will be required to pay their donation fee with a credit card and an active email address is required as that will be their username for the online system. Only one person may be registered per email address and a password will need to be created for each user. If a person does not have an email address, we recommend they sign up for one through one of the many sites that provide them for free.

When a participant registers they will have the option to do so as an individual, start a team, or join a team. All required fields must be completed during the online process and a liability agreement will be required. Each participant should register themselves online to ensure they are aware of and agree to our Release of Liability policy. **Any person that is not willing to sign (agree to) said agreement will not be permitted to participate in the event.**

All participants that register online will be asked to set a fundraising goal. There is no longer a minimum goal requirement. All participants will receive encouraging email communications leading up to the Walk about meeting the goal they have set. If they choose to set a goal of \$0, emails will encourage them to reconsider setting a goal. They can easily update their goal in the Dashboard by logging into their account.

**Please note:** No other form of pre-registration will be allowed. Participants that wish to register for the event prior to the event date **MUST** use the Foundation's online registration system. You may not register participants by paper or through any other means of online registration. Participants that are unable to register through the Foundation's online registration system should register at the event for the regular fee of \$35. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

### Early Bird Registration (EBR)

The Foundation will be offering a promotion that allows participants to register at a discounted rate if they register early. Early Bird Registration (EBR) is **ONLY** available online with the use of the EBR promo code. The code will be provided on the online event page for all participants to access. The time frame in which EBR will be offered will be determined by Foundation staff. The EBR promo will not be extended past the deadline that is provided.

Through this promotion, we hope to increase attendance at events, as well increase fundraising efforts. More information will be provided on Early Bird Registration by email.

## Child Registration

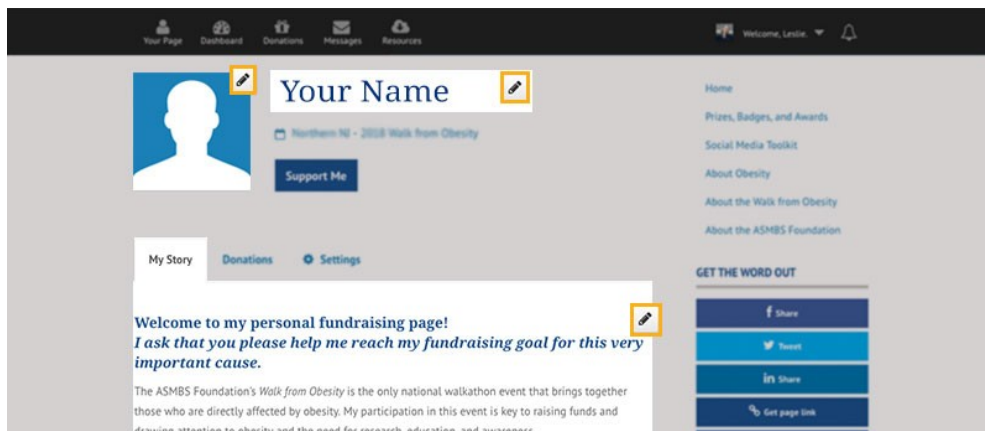
Children under the age of 12 may participate in the Walk at no charge with a paid parent or guardian.

Children under the age of 12 should not be registered online unless they plan to fundraise and utilize online fundraising tools. In which case, the child should register and pay the registration donation. A paper registration form (child) will be accessible to participants in their Dashboard after they register. Participants should print the form and complete it before the Walk. The form should then be turned in at check-in/on-site registration with the paid parent or guardian and child. The form should be completely filled out and SIGNED by the parent or guardian.

We also provide an optional coloring contest on the Child Registration form. Please have a small prize available for the winner of the contest. How the winner is determined is left up to the local Walk Committee. Please have a plan in place before the Walk.

## Online Fundraising and Dashboard

Participants are provided their very own online fundraising page (Participant Dashboard) with tools to assist them in meeting their fundraising goal. Through the Dashboard they can send emails to ask for donations, recruit participants to join the Walk, link to social media accounts and more! Even though content is provided, each fundraising page is customizable so that every participant can have their own unique page or tell their story. If the participant is a team captain, they will manage their individual page as well as their team's page.



Other items such as PDF forms and social media graphics will also be provided under “Resources” in the Dashboard. A printable pledge form is provided so that they may collect and track donations that they collect in person, as well as a paper Child Registration Form and your event's flyer.

## Incentive Prizes

Each year we offer participants prizes for their fundraising efforts as a small token of “thanks.” Prizes are only awarded based on individual fundraising efforts and not team totals. The prizes will be shipped to you approximately one week before your Walk. Prizes should then be awarded to participants based on the total they have raised as of the Walk date. Prizes will not be awarded after the Walk date if the participant collects funds after the Walk. Details about what prizes will be provided to you by email. Participants are also informed of prizes by email and on your events online registration page.

Other items, such as trophies, to recognize your Walk's top individual and top team fundraisers may also be provided. More information will be emailed to you about these items.

## T-shirts

**T-shirts are provided to every Walk participant on a first-come-first-serve basis and while supplies last.** The number of t-shirts that will be shipped to your Walk will be determined by the TREO Foundation office and will be based on the number of participants in past events and current registration numbers at the time the order is placed (Approximately 3 weeks before the Walk).

The t-shirts are a great way to recognize National Sponsors, and the Presenting and Local Sponsors. Since most companies will want to be recognized on the t-shirt, it is a great selling point when soliciting for local sponsorships. Please review the Local Sponsorship Prospectus provided by the Foundation office for information on which levels of sponsorship include recognition on the t-shirt.

The printing of local logos will be provided by the Foundation's printer. A Foundation staff member will handle the collection of logos from your local sponsors. An art mock-up will be provided to you for approval before the shirts go to print, however if an approval is not given within the time-frame provided the artwork will be sent "as is" based on the information the staff member has.

**Shirts are typically delivered 4-5 days before your event date.**

Children that are registered for free using the paper form should not be provided a shirt. Extra shirts after registration closes may be distributed as you see fit.

\*In-kind donations should **never** be recognized on the t-shirt as a Local Sponsor unless approved by TREO Foundation.

## Participant Bags

You will also receive bags for your event participants. The bags will arrive the week of your event (2-4 days before your event date). Each participant should receive a bag with their t-shirt when they check-in and bags are available on a first-come-first-serve basis and while supplies last. Children may receive a bag if you feel you will have enough for paid participants and will have extra.

If you have Product Distribution level Local Sponsors, their item should already be placed in the bag when participants pick them up. If not, items should be displayed close to the registration area so participants may pick them up. This rule also applies if any National Sponsors that provided you items for distribution.



## Marketing and Public Relations

### Marketing Flyer

The TREO Foundation will provide each Event Leader (Committee Chair) with the materials needed to market and promote their local Walk from Obesity event.

The promotional materials will include a two-sided event flyer PDF, which will be emailed to you. **Both sides of the flyer should be printed and utilized.** We suggest asking local gyms, hospitals, private practices, super markets, community bulletin boards, etc. to post information about your local Walk by displaying the Walk flyer for people to pickup. The flyer will also be available on the online event page for participants to download and print for distribution.

The two sided flyer will combine the event flyer and brochure provided in years past. One side of the flyer will be event specific, providing details about the local event. The other side will act as the WFO/TREO brochure, providing information about the Foundation and how funds raised at the event are utilized.

Each event will have the option to print the flyers locally (if you have access to a print-shop) or the Foundation will order the flyers through an online printer and have them delivered to you. The Foundation will create the flyer and no changes shall be made at the local level. The Event Leader will approve the file provided by the Foundation before print. It is important to review the file very carefully. Reprint charges may not be covered by the Foundation due to change requests made after the approval.

**Creating your own marketing materials?** *The TREO Foundation must preapprove any additional promotional or marketing materials not generated by our office before use. Please contact our office for guidance or questions on creating appropriate Walk materials.*

Each Walk from Obesity event will also have a unique web page on the official Walk from Obesity fundraising/registration website. We encourage you to use this URL when promoting the event online, if possible. If not, you may use the URL [www.walkfromobesity.com](http://www.walkfromobesity.com) as a general URL.

### Social Media

The TREO Foundation promotes each Walk online through the official Walk from Obesity Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts. Each Walk/Run will have its own event page on the official Walk from Obesity Facebook page where users can share and invite their friends to join, or interact with other participants. The Foundation staff will manage the page for you. Please feel free to post information about your event and engage with participants in the Facebook Event Page. We ask that you “share” this event on your own social media (personal or business account) and DO NOT create your own Facebook event.

The Foundation will also “boost” a targeted post (paid ad) for each Walk/Run leading up to the event. “Boosting” a post will increase the number of times the post is viewed by individuals in your area, and hopefully increasing the number of registrations.

We ask that you do not create any additional Facebook Page or Event Pages for the Walk. These pages can lead to confusion and sometimes misleading information about the TREO Foundation’s Walk from Obesity. This ensures all users and participants are utilizing the same page and receiving the same information. If your business account manager would like to help manage the Facebook event, we can add them as an admin.



## Public Relations

As the *Walk from Obesity* continues to grow each year, interest from the general public and the media increases. It is important to generate media attention for your Walk if possible. Media attention will result in free advertising, encourage participation, help bring obesity to the forefront of the healthcare community and provide great opportunities for you to explain the event and its purpose.

The following information is designed to assist you when working with the media in support of your local *Walk from Obesity* event.

### Media Outreach Guidelines:

The following are some guidelines to keep in mind when conducting media outreach:

- **Materials:** Only official *Walk from Obesity* marketing materials that have been approved by the TREO Foundation should be disseminated to local media.
- **Local Contact(s):** Establish yourself, or another appropriate representative from your local team, as the key contact for media inquiries regarding your local *Walk from Obesity* event. This person should work closely with TREO Foundation staff before conducting any interviews, etc.
- **Facilitating Media Interviews at the Walk:** Provide a sign-in sheet for media representatives who show up at the Walk so you can get their name, affiliation and contact information for follow-up calls.

**Please Note:** if not pre-registered online, all media personnel are required to fill out an on-site registration form and sign and date the waiver/release of liability

### Media Inquiries:

If contacted by a local reporter seeking more information regarding your event be prepared to answer their questions. If you do not feel comfortable answering their questions, please contact the TREO Foundation office for guidance. Typical questions may include:

- Where is the Walk located?
- What is your anticipated participation number?
- Why do people attend the Walk?
- Are there any special guests at the Walk?
- What are your goals or why are you hosting this Walk?

Also, be sure to get the following information from the reporter:

- Contact Information (Name, phone/fax number, email address, etc.)
- Media affiliation (newspaper, TV, or radio station name.)
- Determine if there is a deadline for the reporter's story.
- Ask if he/she plans to attend the Walk and provide him/her with an on-site location and/or phone number so you can facilitate interviews and logistics. Encourage them to attend to see first-hand the impact of the Walk.
- Ask if they plan to interview a Walk participant or spokesperson. From there determine when to hold the interview and offer to facilitate by coordinating time and location. Note: Be sure to advise those individual(s) who are to be interviewed before and so they are prepared.

We suggest following-up with the reporter to confirm they have everything they need to finalize their story. Reporters often operate under a deadline. Not providing them with what they need in a timely fashion may result in your event not being covered.

**If you need assistance with media inquiries please contact the TREO Foundation at 352-332-9100**

### How to Generate Local Media Interest:

We suggest contacting your local media outlets (TV, radio, newspapers, etc.) to find out if they would be interested in covering your local *Walk from Obesity* event. The *Walk from Obesity* has several characteristics of an appealing media story:

- A nationwide event involving your city
- A collaborated effort between individuals affected by obesity, healthcare professionals, and the public to raise awareness and funds to fight obesity
- Local citizens with personal experience supporting the effort

Providing local statistics and information can also spark interest:

- How does your city/state rank in number of individuals affected by excess weight or obesity?
- Has the number of individuals affected by obesity in your city/state increased throughout the past 5-10 years? If so, by how much?
- Is there anything happening on the state or local legislative level in an effort to fight obesity?

I.E., ban on vending machines in schools, government-sponsored exercise programs, etc.

### Select the Right Spokesperson(s):

A good spokesperson(s) will communicate the key messages about the *Walk from Obesity* in a simple and positive way. Encourage them to speak about the effects weight-loss has had in their life, such as the number of medications decreased, improved physical, emotional and social well-being, etc. Look to identify a spokesperson that is:

- Passionate about the cause of obesity
- Compelling
- Articulate
- Concise and to the point
- Not shy about sharing his/her experience

### Setting-up Interviews:

Organizing an interview with an individual and/or Healthcare Professional to discuss his/her experience with obesity can also attract media coverage.

Confirm the following when identifying an individual:

- He/she is comfortable being recorded
- His/her experience was positive and inspiring
- He/she is open about their experience before and after their weight-loss
- When he/she is available to talk to the media
- Record their contact information and remind them in advance to contact the reporter

Confirm the following when identifying a Healthcare Professional:

- Has he/she participated in media interviews?
- How does he/she feel about the media?
- What is their availability?
- Is he/she familiar with the goals of the *TREO Foundation and Walk from Obesity*?
- Can he/she discuss the impact of obesity on your local population?

### Talking Points:

The following are primary talking points that you and/or your spokesperson(s) can refer to in all interaction with media (including newspapers, tv, and radio stations). Always feel free to contact the TREO Foundation to request assistance when working with the media.

#### Talking Points

The TREO Foundation's *Walk from Obesity* campaign raises awareness of the obesity epidemic in the United States. Obesity related illness accounts for more than hundreds of thousands of deaths each year and we want to take the lead in changing this at the community level.

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) nearly 42% of all U.S. adults have obesity, and the rate of adults with obesity in the U.S. nearly tripled since 1960.
- Obesity-related conditions include heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer. Obesity is the leading cause of preventable, premature death.
- The World Health Organization (W.H.O.), along with National and International medical and scientific societies, now recognize obesity as a chronic progressive *disease* resulting from multiple environmental and genetic factors.
- A study by Society of Actuaries showed obesity costs the U.S. economy \$270 billion per year.
- According to the CDC, Medical costs for adults who had obesity were \$1,861 higher than medical costs for people with healthy weight, annually.



- Obesity is a disease treated through a combination of methods that may include behavioral modification, nutritional guidance, exercise, and/or medication, or bariatric surgery.
- For those affected by 100 pounds or more overweight, weight-loss surgery may be an effective treatment option. Individuals need to consult with a healthcare professional to help determine which methods are appropriate for them.
- The TREO Foundation has connected with individuals affected by obesity, healthcare professionals, the healthcare industry, and concerned citizens in many cities throughout the U.S. for the annual *Walk from Obesity* since 2003.
- Local and national volunteers for the Walk include individuals affected by obesity, obesity specialists, nurses, community workers, healthcare professionals and many more.
- The *Walk from Obesity* raises money to continue research and education that is a vital part of improving or finding new obesity treatments. All local citizens can get involved in a local Walk by walking or sponsoring someone who walks. More information can be found by visiting [www.walkfromobesity.com](http://www.walkfromobesity.com).
- The TREO Foundation plays an integral role in fighting obesity by funding research, providing educational resources, and advocating for treatment coverage on behalf of the more than 100+ million Americans affected by obesity.

## **Walk from Obesity Forms**

Forms can be accessed through the Walk website under Resources, through the Event Leader portal. A password is required to access the portal. If you need access, please contact Randy Slade at [randy@treofoundation.org](mailto:randy@treofoundation.org).

### **Forms include:**

- Adult Registration
- Child Registration
- Deposit Form
- Insurance Request Form
- Pledge Form
- Check/Expense Request Form