



Organizer's Guide

What is a MAZON Walk To End Hunger?

Step-by-Step Guide for Walk Organizers

1. Build Your Leadership Team
2. Choose Date/Location/Route
3. Decide Whether or Not to Run
4. Set Up Online Registration and Fundraising Pages
5. Draft Your Budget
6. Recruit Participants, Publicize the Walk
7. Motivate Walkers with Fundraising Ideas and Stories of Families Facing Hunger
8. Plan for the Walk Day Program
9. Engage Walk Day Volunteers
10. Find Corporate Sponsors
11. Post-Walk: Evaluate and Celebrate!

Suggested Timeline



What is a MAZON Walk To End Hunger?

A MAZON Walk To End Hunger is a great way to raise awareness about hunger in your community as well as raise much needed funds to support the work of MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger. We hope it will be a rewarding experience for you and your whole community. Everyone here at MAZON is so grateful for your efforts!

This Organizer's Guide provides the information you need to get started, but you can also count on us to be here for you every step of the way. For information or help planning your Walk, visit mazon.org/walk or email us at walk@mazon.org.

Step-by-Step Guide for Walk Organizers

1. Build Your Leadership Team

Hosting a Walk to End Hunger is a big project, and so you will want help with the planning (and implementation!) of your Walk. We suggest you enlist at least four to six people to share leadership responsibility. If you choose to partner with other synagogues or organizations in the area to increase participation, it would be wise to include representatives from each of these communities as part of the Leadership Team to increase their investment in the project. Also consider including both lay leaders and professional synagogue staff on your team, as they will have access to different resources.

To Do:

Hold a Leadership Team meeting to determine roles and make decisions about your Walk (see steps 2 and 3 for more on those decisions). You can make copies of this Step-by-Step Guide and Timeline, as well as the resources available on the website. These can guide and inform your discussion.

At this initial meeting, decide who will fill the following roles:

- Logistics Coordinator (Liaise with city, synagogues, vendors as needed)
- Communication Coordinator (Send Save-the-Dates/invitations to register as needed; email updates/fundraising tips to registered participants; send PR materials to community, local media, etc.)
- Volunteer Coordinator (Create list of volunteer tasks and recruit/manage volunteers for Walk Day)



- Walk Day Program Coordinator (Plan Program for before/after the Walk)
- Finance Coordinator (Contact local businesses and gain corporate sponsorship)
- Unassigned (Members of the Leadership Team without a specific role are responsible for recruiting participants, publicizing the Walk, and other tasks that arise during your planning – from calling a school teacher to help their class register to picking up donated water bottles from a local grocery store.)

Set meeting dates for future Leadership Team meetings so that the Team can check in on everyone's progress and work together to ensure the Walk's success. Depending on how far out you pull together your Leadership Team, there may be a lull in activity after the initial planning and calendaring. That's fine! Just be sure to pull the team together again with enough breathing room before the Walk. Check out the Timeline at the end of this packet for suggested scheduling.

2. Choose Date/Location/Route

One of the most important steps you will take in this process is to choose a **date**, so arm yourself with as much information as possible! Make sure to check local calendars for community events and be mindful of holidays, school breaks, cultural events and time changes. If you are working with the religious or day school at your synagogue or other local synagogues, check in with a few educators to see where the Walk could best fit into their curriculum. Often, their calendars are made far in advance, so adding a commitment for their students can be difficult – best to loop them in early! Once you have selected a date, make sure to get it on all of the local community calendars ASAP.

Choosing your location and **walk route** is next. Typically, this type of walk covers a route that is 3 miles long, which is about the length of a 5K. The start and end points of the walk need not be the same location, but doing it that way makes setup, the start and finish of the walk, and any opening and closing programs infinitely easier to manage. Keep in mind that you will need a large gathering place for pre- and post-walk activities. The synagogue is the obvious first choice, but often a park, local high school, or large parking lot can work well for this. You can even structure the walk around the track field of the local high school or college.

The site or route of the walk also can be used to convey a message about the organizers or the issue – by starting and ending at the synagogue or a local food bank or passing through areas of the community hit hard by hunger, you can highlight the issue of hunger in your route planning.



If you expect a few hundred people or less, you can probably walk on sidewalks, which saves you from the extra logistics that closing streets would entail and offers the added bonus of visibility from passing traffic. Volunteers and/or local traffic officers will likely be needed to ensure your walkers' safety (making sure they don't stray into the street if the sidewalk gets congested, keeping traffic moving and safe at intersections, and so forth).

Bear in mind that if your walk is large enough that you have to close streets, those streets will no longer have traffic flowing on them – which means you don't have a "captive audience" for your walk. However, this can be mitigated by various means: closing half the street if permitted, assigning volunteers to cheer along the route, and/or retaining local news coverage.

A Note About Permits

Local cities and counties have specific rules, regulations and procedures for securing permits for events. There are permits regarding the use of public spaces such as parks that you may use for the initial gathering and ending of the walk. There are permits needed for using streets and sidewalks, and there are traffic control measures that need to be implemented, including the use of traffic control officers.

The use of walks and runs as fundraising tools for charity has become fairly commonplace, so virtually all cities and towns will have experience with such efforts. Many may even have designated offices or staff to assist you in obtaining the requisite permits. Often a good starting point is the local government official who represents the area in which you would like to walk – their staff may be able to tell you to which department to apply, who to contact, etc.

Some cities and other locations that you use for the start and finish of the walk may require that you obtain insurance; be sure to find out if this is the case. You may be able to add the Walk to your synagogue's liability insurance policy.

For a complete FAQ on Permits, Traffic and Law Enforcement considerations, visit mazon.org/walk.

3. Decide Whether or Not to Run

If you choose to conduct a timed run with the walk, it requires a bit more planning. There are commercial companies that help to measure the route more precisely and which provide timers, bibs, etc. for runners and walkers. It may prove to be a great tool for securing greater participation since runners are often looking for



opportunities to participate in such events. However, for most of them the concern is running, not the charitable cause, so they are not as likely to raise funds. Many organizers simply compensate for this by charging a higher registration fee for runners, something they are quite used to expecting. This is a decision the Leadership Team should make at the beginning of the planning process.

4. Set Up Online Registration and Fundraising Pages

To make things easy, MAZON will create a website for your specific walk so that individuals and teams will be able to register and create fundraising pages. As the Walk organizer, you will be able to post walk details, monitor participant registration and track fundraising progress.

Event registration fees are the first step in your walkers' fundraising efforts—getting them invested in the cause and event from the get go! Below is the breakdown of registration fees for each participant:

- Adults (18+) – \$18
- Children/Students (ages 5-17) – \$10
- Children under 4 – free

*Each *paid* participant will receive a MAZON Walk to End Hunger t-shirt, subject to availability. Get in touch with MAZON to discuss t-shirt delivery ahead of time, and together we'll institute a cut-off registration date for a guaranteed shirt accordingly.

To Do:

Just let us know when you are ready and we will work with you to set up your walk's main page. Contact us at walk@mazon.org.

5. Draft Your Budget

Now that you've thought about money coming in, you should also consider money going out. In creating your budget, you'll want to review possible expenses including permits, printing, Walk day snacks and water bottles, transportation for teams (e.g. a religious school class is gathering at their synagogue and needs a bus to the walk location), rentals, and more. Some of these may end up being unnecessary – perhaps your synagogue has tables so you don't have to rent them, or you decide to limit programming and thus reduce costs. Perhaps you'll find sponsors to underwrite some of the expenses (more on that later). Either way, try to think through what you'll need as thoroughly as possible. It may be helpful to check in with people in your synagogue,



whether lay leaders or staff, that run other big programs, from Hanukkah fairs to Purim festivals; they will likely have a good idea on where to start.

As MAZON's partner in ending hunger, we are (quite literally!) invested in your success. To help get your budgeting off on the right foot, we are happy to offer assistance to help subsidize the program costs of the Walk. Contact walk@mazon.org to learn more.

To Do:

Draft your budget, and ask your Leadership Team to approach their synagogues/organizations and determine if there are any programming or discretionary funds that can be used for Walk expenses. Contact MAZON with your proposal as well to discuss any assistance you may need to get your Walk off the ground.

6. Recruit Participants, Publicize the Walk

What's a walk without walkers? Each member of the Leadership Team should actively work to recruit participants from their communities. The more people that know about your walk, the more successful it will be! Spread the word throughout your congregations, community, and local press.

To Do:

- Post flyers;
- Speak one-on-one with key constituency members to ensure they will mobilize people by whatever means available (school director, rabbi, Sisterhood president, etc.);
- Share ads in your synagogue's (and other partners') bulletins;
- Share social ads throughout social channels and email;
- Send out press release to local media.

7. Motivate Walkers with Fundraising Ideas and Stories of Families Facing Hunger

Fundraising doesn't come naturally to most people. To help your walkers meet their fundraising goals, you should plan to send periodic emails to motivate them. For many of us, stories are often more moving than statistics. You can share stories from MAZON's [This Is Hunger](#) initiative featuring individuals struggling with hunger around the United States. Remind them that the more money they raise, the closer we are to



ending hunger for the millions of men, women, and children in our country who don't have enough to eat.

Don't forget to make it fun! You may want to create goals and prizes for those who raise certain amounts of money, or offer recognition at the walk for those who have the largest teams or raise the most money – such competitions often inspire people to build teams or solicit more donations. It's amazing what people will do to earn bragging rights!

You can offer participants additional fundraising ideas such as:

- Ask one person each day to sponsor you;
- Sponsor yourself;
- Check to see if/what teams already exist or create your own team of 10 or more so you can work towards a goal together;
- Make the Walk your Bar/Bat Mitzvah project;
- Maximize pledges with a Matching Gifts Program;
- Walk with friends, family and your havurah or youth group;
- Even if you can't walk that day, you can participate by making a contribution;
- For more Fundraising Tips to share with walkers, visit mazon.org/walk.

To Do:

Create an email schedule, mapping out what information/stories/tips/mini-competitions you want to share with your walkers and when. This doesn't have to be a formal exercise, but it can prove helpful. Next, choose how you will contact them. As the Walk Organizer, you will have access to the contact information for participants who have registered for your Walk through your walk website. You can use these contacts to send email from your personal account, or ask your synagogue if you can have access to their email marketing tool (e.g. Mailchimp, Constant Contact). You can also send email directly to your registered walkers from the website.

8. Plan for the Walk Day Program

At a minimum, you will need to have announcements about the start of the walk, but creating an atmosphere of enthusiasm and camaraderie will leave a lasting impression. Music, speakers, games, and activities can help to foster this. You may also want to boost fundraising by holding a silent auction at the walk site.

The walk is also an important opportunity to raise awareness about the issue of hunger.



- Set up a “Take Action Tent” with materials on anti-hunger organizations and ways to get involved.
- Encourage people to make colorful signs with hunger statistics to carry with them on the walk to educate the community.
- Check out MAZON’s website for ways to engage walk participants in meaningful advocacy actions such as signing a petition or writing a postcard to a Member of Congress.
- Print a MAZON Walk to End Hunger banner to carry so that people in the community know why you are walking. You’ll also get a great photo from this to share with local media!

Including education and advocacy in your walk deepens the impact and helps participants connect to the overall goal of ending hunger.

To Do:

After you have done the fun part of planning your program, don’t forget to get rolling on all of the logistics! Speakers need A/V systems, activities may need tents and tables, and so forth. Be sure to check in with leadership of your synagogue and other partner organizations to make sure that they are available to participate in your program.

The route itself may need to be marked with appropriate signage, bathroom access or porta-potties may need to be arranged for (both on the route and at the walk program site), and various water stations set up. Also, plan your t-shirt distribution and team registration, and be sure to communicate those plans to your walkers and team captains for a smooth walk day!

Note: If you are also holding a 5K run, remember that runners must be timed and must start before the walkers.

9. Engage Volunteers for Walk Day

To Do:

Compile a list of all Walk-Day volunteer tasks.

Recruit volunteers from all organizations involved until each job is filled. This is a great opportunity for high school students who may be looking for extra community service hours – offer to provide letters confirming their participation as volunteers.



Consider if volunteers will need to be trained, and whether or not that can happen on the day of the walk. Plan accordingly.

10. Find Corporate Sponsors

To Do:

Reach out to local businesses and ask them to support the Walk. Suggest the following:

- Provide matching grants for employee walkers and donors;
- Sponsor community groups or teams participating in the Walk;
- Provide in-kind gifts such as printing banners or providing water or refreshments for walkers;
- Underwrite the Walk which allows the Leadership Team to pay for programming, publicity, or printing costs.
 - NOTE: As a perk, you can offer to work with a local vendor to customize the Walk to End Hunger t-shirts with a list of sponsors on the back.

Visit mazon.org/walk for more information about sponsorships.

11. Post-Walk: Evaluate and Celebrate!

To Do:

Immediately after the Walk, send a press release to local media outlets with photos from the Walk, highlights from the Walk program (pull quotes from noted speakers, elected officials, clergy etc.) and fundraising totals.

A few weeks after the Walk, gather the Leadership Team for a post-Walk debrief meeting to reflect on the Walk experience and offer feedback. Discuss what worked and what didn't and share any ideas for improving the Walk for next year.

- Thank key people for their time and effort – walk volunteers, donors, clergy, speakers, corporate sponsors, local media, etc.
- Send MAZON photos and any press coverage from the Walk to walk@mazon.org.
- Share fundraising results with the Leadership Team and thank everyone for their outstanding commitment and contribution to the Walk's success!



Suggested Timeline for MAZON Walk to End Hunger Leadership Team

(Adjust as needed)

- 12 months before** Recruit members of the Leadership Team (LT); send LT contact info to MAZON; set Walk date and route; share Walk date with community calendars (esp. schools and synagogues); investigate process to secure location/permits, and mark down key dates accordingly.
- 6 months before** LT Meeting – Review Step-by-Step Guide to Organizing a Walk, set future meeting dates.
- 5 months before** Set up your specific Walk page on MAZON’s website; send Save the Date notifications to the community.
- 12 weeks before** Send press release to local media; include ads in local synagogue bulletins/newsletters; ask businesses to underwrite t-shirts, banner, posters, etc.
- 10 weeks before** Arrange rest stops and refreshments for Walk day (ask businesses for in-kind donations of water and snacks); promote your Walk on social media; send email with fundraising ideas to all registered walkers; request town proclamation for MAZON Walk to End Hunger; ask businesses to encourage and match employees who walk.
- 8 weeks before** Continue recruiting walkers and sharing the online registration link; enlist Walk-day volunteers for registration and rest stops; plan Walk-day program: speakers? Entertainment? Food trucks? Advocacy Tent?
- 6 weeks before** LT Meeting – Share updates/reports re: numbers of registered walkers, PR, corporate sponsorships, Walk day program, and volunteers.
- 3 weeks before** Communicate weekly with LT and ask LT Coordinators for frequent progress reports; confirm rest stops and volunteers for



Walk day; continue to promote fundraising by registered walkers; contact local media for coverage of the Walk.

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| 1 week before | Confirm logistical arrangements re: police, registration, signage, etc; send letters/certificates of appreciation to businesses for their support; send email to all registered walkers about what to expect on walk day. |
| DAY OF WALK | Set up and facilitate the Walk and pre-Walk/post-Walk programs; organize volunteers; set up registration; post signs; set up Take Action Tent; take pictures; thank businesses for their support. |
| Day after Walk | Send Press Release with fundraising total, photos and highlights from the Walk. |
| 2 weeks after | Thank the LT; send thank you's to volunteers, supporters; send press release with number of walkers and funds raised. |
| 2-4 weeks after | LT Post-Walk Evaluation Meeting – Discuss successes and challenges; share # of walkers and total \$ raised; send photos and press coverage to MAZON; set date and identify leaders for next year's Walk. |