

Autoimmune Association

# HOPE

JOURNEY  
WALK

## 2025 INDIVIDUAL FUNDRAISING GUIDE





# YOUR GUIDE TO RAISING HOPE

— ON THE —

Autoimmune Association



Dear friend,

Thank you for taking steps to give hope on the autoimmune journey and leading the fight against autoimmune disease! The Autoimmune Association's Hope Journey Walk relies on friends like you to make a difference in every step of the journey.

Every time we tie our shoelaces, we're lacing together the common thread of our stories, our strength, and our commitment. Each step forward is a reminder that we walk the autoimmune journey together, creating hope, support, and a brighter future.

As a participant and fundraiser, you build excitement, raise awareness, and make a difference. Most importantly, you give hope to over 50 million people affected by autoimmune disease. Thank you!

## STEP 1 **GET STARTED**

Register! First select **Register** to join us for the Hope Journey Walk either in-person or virtually. When proceeding, you will be asked **How would you like to register?** Please select **As an Individual**.

From here, you will select whether you are registering to join us in-person at our walk site in Washington, D.C. or registering to walk virtually from wherever you are. Once you select your registration type, proceed by clicking **Register**. A fundraising page will be created for each registrant.



Be on the lookout for a follow-up email from us containing details on how to manage your fundraising page.

STEP 2

## **SET UP YOUR INDIVIDUAL FUNDRAISING PAGE**

After you complete your registration, you will receive an email receipt which will contain a link to your fundraising page. From here you can personalize your page by adding a profile picture and sharing your story.



STEP 3  
**SET GOALS**

Keep in mind as you're setting your fundraising goal, each individual fundraiser who meets \$100, \$500, or \$1000 in fundraised dollars will receive exclusive Hope Journey Swag!

*\*Registration cost does not count towards fundraising incentives*

\$100–\$499	Shoelaces
\$500–\$999	Water bottle
\$1,000+	Hat

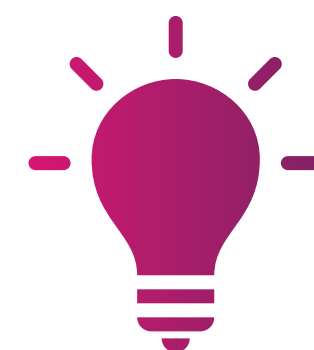


## STEP 4

# FUNDRAISE

Now that you're registered for the Hope Journey Walk and personalized your fundraising page, you're ready to start raising hope!

Share your page on social media, through email, or text, and call on your network to join you in making a difference through a donation! You'll have the opportunity to thank your donors personally and share updates on your journey to raise hope and make a difference.



Looking for inspiration? [Check out our fundraising toolkit here](#), where you can find sample text and graphics you can use when sharing your Hope Journey Walk fundraiser!



STEP 5  
**WALK!**




On October 12, 2025, we're collectively walking the Hope Journey to raise funds and awareness for the more than 50 million people living with an autoimmune disease, and countless more who are impacted.



Every step taken and each dollar raised fuels research, advocacy, and support programs—creating real hope.

# IN-PERSON REGISTRANTS

If you're registered to attend the Autoimmune Association's Hope Journey Walk in-person at the Smithsonian National Zoo in Washington D.C., the walk begins at 10 AM EDT. Be sure to arrive early (the park opens at 8 AM), check-in (check-in begins at 8:30 AM), and join us for the Opening Ceremony (the Opening Ceremony begins at 9:30 AM)!

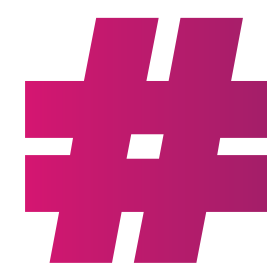
	8:00 AM EDT	Park Opens
	8:30	Check-in Begins
	9:30	Opening Ceremony
	10:00	The Hope Journey Walk begins



## VIRTUAL REGISTRANTS

If you're registered to attend the Autoimmune Association's Hope Journey Walk virtually, plan to walk at place of your preference — on your treadmill, in your local park, or even at your local zoo. Wherever you are, you're part of our movement.

Don't forget to wear your printed bib and take pictures of your journey! Printable bibs will be emailed to all virtual walk registrants a few days before the event.



We encourage you to take pictures and post them on social media — tag us and use the hashtag **#HopeJourneyWalk**! Share why you are walking and ask others to join you by donating.

## **DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT WITH A MATCHING GIFT.**

Many employers sponsor matching gift programs and will provide matching charitable contributions for donations made by their employees.

A matching gift is an easy way to double your donation to the Autoimmune Association, making an even bigger impact on the fight against autoimmune disease.



Contact your payroll or human resources department and ask if your company offers a workplace giving campaign.



# FUNDRAISING FAQs

**WHY SHOULD I  
FUNDRAISE AROUND  
MY HOPE JOURNEY  
WALK ATTENDANCE?**

Every dollar raised helps fund necessary programs that provide support, resources, advocacy, and research for the over 100 autoimmune diseases that affect so many. We can't continue this important work without you!

**DOES MY  
REGISTRATION FEE  
COUNT TOWARD MY  
TOTAL FUNDRAISING  
AMOUNT?**

Your registration fee does not count toward your total fundraising amount.



## **WHAT DOES THE REGISTRATION FEE INCLUDE?**



If you're joining the Hope Journey Walk virtually, your registration fee includes a printable bib that will be emailed to you, your very own fundraising page, and raises hope for millions impacted by autoimmune disease.

If you're joining the Hope Journey Walk in-person at the Smithsonian National Zoo, your registration fee includes a printed bib, Hope Journey Walk T-shirt, and Autoimmune Association tote bag that will be given to you at check-in. For this reason, only a portion of your registration cost will be considered tax-deductible. Please reference your registration confirmation email for details.

**CAN I REGISTER ON  
THE DAY OF THE  
EVENT?**

You may register for the Hope Journey Walk on the day of the event, but we highly encourage you to register in advance. If you're joining us on-site at the Smithsonian National Zoo, please register in advance to guarantee your t-shirt size.

**IS THERE A  
REQUIRED DISTANCE  
TO WALK?**

No, everyone's journey is different! You may choose to walk a distance of your choosing or be a part of the movement while not walking at all. If you're joining us in person, you can choose between a 1-mile or 3-mile route- you may walk as much or as little as you'd like!



## WHAT IF I REGISTER AS AN INDIVIDUAL, BUT THEN I WANT TO START OR JOIN A TEAM?



If you register as an individual but would like to start or join a fundraising team, please log in to your individual fundraising page.

Once you're logged in, visit the **Overview** tab at the bottom of the page.

Once you're on the **Overview** tab, scroll towards the bottom of the page. You will see your individual fundraising page listed, and next to it a tab for **Team Fundraising**.

Select the **Team Fundraising** tab and you will be given the option to join or create a team.

If you're joining a team, please select **Join or Create a Team** and you will be given the option to search for the team's name to join.

**ARE DONATIONS  
MADE THROUGH  
MY FUNDRAISING  
PAGE TAX  
DEDUCTIBLE?**

Individuals who make a gift through your fundraising page will receive a donation receipt. The Autoimmune Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation and donations may be tax deductible to the extent provided by the law.

**WHO CAN I REACH  
OUT TO WITH  
QUESTIONS?**

If you have any additional questions, please reach out to us directly at [hello@autoimmune.org](mailto:hello@autoimmune.org). We're here for you every step of the way!