

Out of the Darkness Overnight Walk Training Walk Leader Guide



For more information visit www.theovernight.org
Or call us at 1-888-THE-OVERNIGHT (1-888-843-6837)

Thank you for volunteering your time to the Out of the Darkness Overnight Walk!

Whether you're a Training Walk Leader alumni or this is your first time leading a walk, thank you for your interest in becoming a Training Walk Leader. We cannot do this without you.

Training helps to build teams and create a community well before the walk itself. When you become a Training Walk Leader you not only help to support your fellow Walkers' training efforts, but you also help to raise awareness about suicide prevention in your community.

This guide will provide you with all of the information you will need to organize, prepare for, and implement your Training Walk. From choosing your location to safety tips, we are here to support you every step of the way. If you find you have a question that is not addressed in this guide, please let me know.

Thank you and Happy Training,

Your Walks Team
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
199 Water Street, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10038
coaches@theovernight.org
Phone: 888-843-6837



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Choosing Your Location

The first step when planning your Training Walk is to decide on a location to meet and to begin walking from. Be sure that this is a location that can be input into a GPS/Google Maps so that others can easily find it. If you plan to meet at “the coffee shop at the center of town,” do not assume that anyone knows that that means. What coffee shop? What cross streets? What town?

Where do I start?

Consider choosing a public location that will be easy and convenient for other Walkers to locate. Parks can be great venues because they provide scenic walking routes, restroom facilities, and parking. You can host your Training Walk anywhere really; just be sure to consider scenery, parking, and restroom breaks when planning.

What about parking?

Parking is an important aspect of your preparatory planning. If you decide to host a walk in your neighborhood, consider street parking availability or if you're comfortable with other Walkers parking near your house. Parking fees are another important factor to consider. Although \$5 for parking may not seem expensive to you, it could be for someone else. If possible, try and find a venue with free parking.

What if it rains?

It's always wise to have an indoor training venue in mind just in case of inclement weather. An indoor track or indoor shopping mall are good options to consider.

What if my location changes or I have to cancel?

If your Training Walk location changes, please email coaches@theovernight.org. If your walk is taking place on a Saturday or Sunday please be sure to contact me by 5pm EST the Friday before your walk so that we can update the information online accordingly.

As a Training Walk Leader you are the point of contact for your fellow Walkers. Have a plan in place to update your Walkers on any changes to dates, times, etc. Once you have provided me with all of the necessary information for your Training Walk, we will post the event under the [Training section of our website](#). You may want to add a disclaimer such as:

“Should it rain or storm on Saturday, May 20th, the rain date will be Sunday, May 21st at 9 am. If you RSVP'd to attend this walk, be sure to check your email the Friday night prior to the scheduled date for updates and/or cancellations.”

Planning Your Route

Thoughtfully planning your Training Walk route is key. We suggest that you create a circular route, beginning and ending at the same point. This will ensure everyone is able to locate their car or be conveniently picked up at the same location where they were dropped off.

How long should the route be?

If this is your first time leading a Training Walk, we recommend you start out with a 3-5 mile walk. If you have led a Training Walk before or have already begun training/are in good physical shape, you can consider starting at a greater mileage. Keep in mind that while you may consider a 3-5 mile walk a warm up, another person might consider this at the top of their initial fitness level. You can start small at 3-5 miles and gradually increase your mileage from one Training Walk to the next.

How fast should I walk?

We suggest maintaining a pace of 3 mph, which means that a 3-5 mile walk will take between 1-2 hours. If Walkers in your Training Walk group are maintaining a slower pace, please encourage them to try a pace of 3 mph, so no Walker is left behind. If other Walkers are walking at a faster pace, let them walk as fast as they would like to.

What time and day of the week is best?

The time and day of your Training Walk is based on your availability and when you believe participants will be able to attend. Try to choose a time that not only works for you, but also seems reasonable for other Walkers who may want to join. Although you may love walking between 5am-6am, that timing may not work for all interested Walkers.

Does the terrain I choose matter?

The terrain you choose will impact the difficulty of your walk. Since The Overnight will take place in an urban setting, try walking through a park or local neighborhood. Since The Overnight is a **Sidewalk Only** event, it is best to train on sidewalks. As the route is between 16 and 18 miles long and encounters varying types of terrain, you want to be prepared for both hills and flat stretches of land come event day.

Can I bring my pet or child?

Since you are the Training Walk Leader, this is completely up to you. Use your best judgement to declare whether or not the route you have chosen is safe for pets and children. If your route is particularly long and accompanied with high temperatures or difficult obstacles, this may not be safe for pets and children.

Please note: pets and children under the age of 14 years old are not able to participate in The Overnight. If any child is 14 years or older, they will need to register, have a registered guardian, and meet their individual fundraising minimum of \$700.

What tools are there to help plan the route?

In addition to Google Maps, the following websites/apps will assist you in mapping the route:

- MapMyRun.com & MapMyWalk.com: First, create an account, its free! Click "Routes" and select "Find Routes" from the drop-down menu and it will bring you to a section of the webpage which contains paths that others have created. *Both websites are also available as apps for Android and iPhone.*
- RunMyRoute.com: Similar to MapMyRun.com, under the "Review and Search Routes" option this website offers routes that others have already created and followed.
- TrailLink.com: You can search trails by activity when you scroll to the bottom of the screen or enter a location in the "Search Trails" engine at the top of the screen. *TrailLink apps are also*

available for Android and iPhone.

Other free apps include: *Runkeeper* for Android and iPhone, *Easyrun* for Android, and *Footpath* for iPhone.

Submitting Your Walk

The easiest way to submit your Training Walk is to [fill out our Training Walk Submission Form](#). Please include as much information as possible when submitting this form and submit your walk at least 10 days before your walk so that there is ample time to get it posted. Please note that your walk will not automatically post to our [Training Page](#), We will review all of the details before posting.

Date:

Start Time:

Start Location: *Please use an address that can be used in a GPS - Street /City, State/Zip code*

Start Location Details:

Route Description:

Terrain/Level:

Distance (in miles):

Notes:

Training Walk Leader Name:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Please be sure to be as detailed as possible, kindly see my example below:

Date: Saturday, June 10th 2020

Start Time: 9:00am

Start Location: 199 Water Street, New York, New York, 10038

Start Location Details: We will meet at the fountain in front of the entrance on Wall Street

Route Description: We will north walk along the East River to the Brooklyn Bridge and across it to Brooklyn Bridge Park. We will then circle back and return to our starting location.

Terrain/Level: Flat, concrete, incline on the bridge.

Distance (in miles): A little over 4 miles in total

Notes: I will be wearing a bright blue Overnight t-shirt. I will have my cell phone on so please call or text if you are running late.

Training Walk Leader Name: Samantha

Phone Number: 888-843-6837

Email Address: coaches@theovernight.org

What if I want to host more than one Training Walk?

We absolutely recommend scheduling recurring Training Walks if you can. This will help both you and your attendees' fitness levels improve as you train.

If you would like to submit multiple dates/walks, please indicate this is in the "Notes" section of the [Training Walk Submission Form](#).



Reaching out to Fellow Walkers

Your walk has been posted to our [Training Page](#) and everything is in order! What is next?

How will I know when someone wants to attend my Training Walk?

Interested Walkers must RSVP directly to you via the email address and/or phone number that you provide. Please note that this information will only be posted on our website with your permission. If you are not comfortable with your information being posted, you may want to create an alternative email address specifically for your Overnight Training Walks.

How will others know about my Training Walk?

The best place to view all upcoming Training Walks is our [Training Page on TheOvernight.org](#). Here, you will see all Training walks listed in a calendar view, map view, as well as by state.

Can I advertise my walk?

You are welcome to invite friends, friends, donors, fellow Walkers, etc. to your Training Walk and let others know you are leading a walk. However, please note that depending on your location, larger groups may require a permit for gathering. If you find that a large number of Walkers RSVP to your walk, please check the city/park's website for more information.

Can you help me reach out to Walkers nearby?

Of course! We will send out an email to Walkers in your area the week of your Training Walk. The details of your walk will also be included in our Weekly E-Training Guide which is sent out every Monday to those who have signed-up.

No one came to my walk, what should I do?

Don't worry if your Training Walk has low attendance. Just keep training and keep hosting your Training Walks.

We encourage all Walkers who want to RSVP for your walk to contact you by your preferred contact method so you will have an idea of how many people plan to attend. Keep in mind, there may also be Walkers who show-up the day of your Training Walk who have not RSVP'd.

After the Walk

Congratulations and thank you! You have gone above and beyond and Overnight Staff sincerely appreciates all of your help. Just a few things to take care of:

- Be sure to email/fax/mail me the "Waiver of Negligence and Complete Release of Liability" Form.
- Please reach out with any questions that may have come up during your walk that you couldn't answer!
- Host another walk! Many Training Walk Leaders find that recurring walks are a great way to prepare for The Overnight and to gain a strong sense of the community well before the walk.

Safety Tips

Your safety along with the safety of your Training Walk attendees is our first priority. Please have all Training Walk participants read and sign the “Waiver of Negligence and Complete Release of Liability” Form which you will find on the next page. Adhering to the guidelines below will help you remain injury-free and prepare you to walk safely through the night:

- Be aware of your surroundings, especially traffic flow, bicycles and your fellow pedestrians. We suggest that you wear reflective clothing so that your presence on the road is known.
- Headphones will not be permitted at The Overnight, in order to ensure that you can hear a car horn, an emergency vehicle, or any other distress signal. Please discourage their use during your Training Walk.
- Talking on a cell phone while walking will not be permitted at The Overnight. Talking on a cell phone heightens your vulnerability to injury and can also be distracting. We ask that you please discourage cell phone use on your Training Walk as well.
- We do recommend that you carry a cell phone, a small amount of cash, and identification as you walk. If you need to make a call, you can step aside to a safe place that is visible to oncoming traffic.
- Please be conscious of the weather and other environmental factors. Apply sunscreen and bring or wear rain gear/additional socks in case of inclement weather.

Please also consider the importance of your physical health. The Overnight is a 16-18 journey, which will include you walking for several hours straight at a time.

- Remember to *stretch frequently* throughout your training. If you are feeling too sore or sense a possible injury, please stop training until you are recovered. If an injury intensifies over the course of a few days, seek medical attention. Walking through an injury will most likely worsen the condition. Reaching a goal in your training plan should never be accomplished at the expense of your health.
- Blisters are the most common foot problem seen among long distance walkers. Consider carrying a “blister pack” with you containing the following: Band-Aids/alcohol pads/blister pads/gauze pads.
- *Replenish, replenish, replenish!* Replenishing your body with nutrients and water will help your blood sugar remain balanced and also prevent dehydration. Be sure to eat a snack (like an energy bar or banana) about an hour before your walk. For longer walks, you’ll want to carry a snack with you. Do not walk when you are hungry.
- *Stay hydrated!* Be on the lookout for signs of dehydration which can include any of the following: thirst, weakness, headache, weakness, nausea, and/or vomiting. You should be drinking water every 15-30 minutes. We also recommend drinking electrolyte replacement drinks (Gatorade, Powerade, etc.) to account for the salt you lose when sweating.

WAIVER OF NEGLIGENCE AND COMPLETE RELEASE OF LIABILITY

Training Walk Leader Name: _____

Date: _____ Location: _____

I wish to participate in today's group training exercise (the "Training Walk") organized as preparation for the Out of the Darkness Overnight, benefiting the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. I understand that during the Training Walk I will be using public streets and other public and private facilities where hazards may exist. I voluntarily agree to accept all risks associated with the Training Walk including falls, effects of weather, and traffic accidents that may result in serious injury or death.

In consideration for my being permitted to participate in this Training Walk, I for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release, in advance, any and all claims for injuries and damages I may have against the Out of the Darkness Overnight, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, OP3, Inc., all sponsors, hosting communities and all persons employed by or acting on their behalf which may hereafter accrue to me as a result of my participation in this Training Walk even though liability may arise from negligence on the part of the persons or entities being released or because of their possible liability without fault.

I understand and agree that this Waiver and Release is binding on my heirs, assigns and legal representatives.

I understand the organizers of this walk are relying on my assurance to them that I am physically capable of completing these events.

If I am aware of or under treatment for any physical infirmity, ailment or illness, my medical care provider knows of and has approved my participation in these events. If injured, I consent to receive emergency medical treatment.

I have carefully read this Waiver and Release and fully understand its contents. By signing below, I agree to all of its terms and conditions, and also agree to abide by the state vehicle code and the staff's and/or Training Walk leader's instructions. Signature of accompanying parent or guardian is required if the participant is under 18 years of age.

This is a legal document. Please carefully read the text before signing below. Contact coaches@theovernight.org with any questions regarding this document. Please return all completed forms via mail/fax/email.

WAIVER OF NEGLIGENCE AND COMPLETE RELEASE OF LIABILITY

1.	Print Name	Signature	Phone Number	Email Address	Registered?
1.					
2.					
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