



Tip-A-Cop Handbook

Raising funds and awareness for Special Olympics MA athletes and teams through community restaurant partnerships

“Tip-A-Cop” for Special Olympics MA

- What:** A fundraising event organized by *The Law Enforcement Torch Run*[®] (LETR) for *Special Olympics MA (SOMA)* and a local restaurant in which Law Enforcement officers volunteer their time as “celebrity waiters” in restaurants and receive tips to raise funds for Special Olympics. SOMA athletes and teams are encouraged to also volunteer as door greeters, to meet and greet with the customers etc...
- When:** Anytime that is mutually agreeable between LETR organizers and the restaurant manager.
- Where:** Any restaurant throughout the community that values giving back and supports their Law Enforcement.
- How:**
1. Contact the Owner/Manager at your local, preferred restaurant or work with already existing SOMA partnerships.
 2. Pick dates and shifts (e.g., lunch/dinner) that are mutually agreeable
 3. Recruit 6 - 10 officers to volunteer for each shift
 4. Law Enforcement “Celebrity Waiter” is introduced at each table by the food servers and the officers assist the servers with water service, setting tables, etc.
 5. Restaurant staff and law enforcement volunteers explain “Tip-A-Cop” and ask customers to support the event by placing a special “tip” for Special Olympics in the envelope on their table (cash, check or credit card are accepted).
- Why:** “Tip-A-Cop” generates tremendous community goodwill and public awareness for Special Olympics and the Law Enforcement Communities. It allows LETR volunteers to involve their families and colleagues in a fundraiser for Special Olympics and their local athletes and teams.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEER “SERVERS”

- Begin recruitment of Law Enforcement “celebrity waiters” as soon as the event dates are determined. You will need 6 to 10 officers for each shift, but recruit one or two extra in case someone is unable to attend.
- Keep in mind when recruiting that this is a great opportunity to involve retired officers and to recruit officers who do not participate in the Torch Run because they “do not run.” Think of the nearby agencies and departments too.
- Identify a police officer at each restaurant location to be responsible for all necessary “Tip-A-Cop” components, including volunteers, shift assignments, liaison with the restaurant management and the Special Olympics office, handling media, counting money. The designated officer in charge can delegate out these duties if need be.

RECRUITING CUSTOMERS

- Ask your local restaurant to advertise the upcoming “Tip-A-Cop” event on the reader boards (if they have them) in front of the restaurant. Advertise the event on the bulletin boards and newsletters around town.
- Contact your Public Information Officer in advance and explain the event to ensure maximum media exposure including through your social media outlets.

BRINGING IN THE BUCKS – RECRUITMENT IDEAS

- Some programs had success playing up the law enforcement angle. For example, a department mascot such as “McGruff the Crime Dog” could greet customers. One department did fingerprinting on site. Badges, handcuffs, uniforms, police cars, and other law enforcement items add to the gimmick and keep customers’ interest.
- The officers should be prepared to explain the “Tip-A-Cop” program and answer any questions about the Torch Run or Special Olympics. We have included a “script” for the officers as a guideline.

OTHER EVENT LOGISTICS

- You will be provided flyers, envelopes and receipt slips. Designate one person to collect all donations and keep in a secure location throughout the shift. Officers can wear department shirts or Special Olympics can provide “Tip-A-Cop” t-shirts.
- Each officer will be paired up with a server. The officers will present written information about Special Olympics and an envelope for a “Tip-A-Cop” donation to Special Olympics; however, it must be stressed that the “Tip-A-Cop” donation is *in addition to* the “real” server’s tip. The envelopes will be used for cash, check or credit card donations.
- At the end of the evening, have the officer in charge and an additional officer count the donations and complete a deposit statement. Connect with your SOMA representative for drop off/pick-up/deposit information.



Sample Script & Sequence of Events for Law Enforcement “Celebrity Waiters”



OFFICER SAMPLE SCRIPT: “Hello, I’m (name) and this is (server’s name). I will be assisting (server’s name) as part of the Tip-A-Cop program. The law enforcement community supports Special Olympics all over the world through the Law Enforcement Torch Run. Tip-A-Cop is a program we do in conjunction with this restaurant to raise money for Special Olympics. The general idea is that you are going to be so pleased with the service you receive today because of the assistance I am giving (server’s name), you will leave an extra tip for Special Olympics.”

- The order is taken by the server and the officer assists server with the water/bread/salad service. This is a good opportunity for chit-chat with the customers and to answer any questions they may have and/or introduce any Special Olympics athletes if available.
- Once the customer is finished with the meal, about the time they would order dessert/coffee if they are having any, the officer returns and gives the envelope and asks for a donation. The officer thanks the guests.

ATHLETE GREETER: Greet guests as they arrive, tell them that you are a Special Olympics athlete and explain that local law enforcement and the restaurant servers are working together to benefit Special Olympics.

SAMPLE SCRIPT: “Welcome, I’m (name) and I am a Special Olympics athlete from (town/county). I am proud to welcome you the Tip-A-Cop event for Special Olympics. Tonight you’re in for a real treat. The servers will be assisted by our local law enforcement from (Sheriff’s Office/Police Department) all to benefit Special Olympics!”

