



# RACE DIRECTOR MANUAL AND GUIDE

[www.gulfwinds.org](http://www.gulfwinds.org)

## PREFACE

Gulf Winds Track Club (GWTC) is committed to encouraging health and fitness through running, jogging, walking, etc. Participating in races is one of many ways to encourage people to pursue these opportunities and to further their love of the sport. Directing a road race can be a fun and challenging experience. With effective planning and good organization, a race can be made a successful reality. However, without those ingredients, it can quickly become a nightmare.

This manual provides helpful guidelines for organizing a quality race. It is not, however, a replacement for experience. It is strongly recommended that you attend and observe other races prior to your race, volunteer with a race director on an existing race, and/or get an experienced race director to work with you the first time you direct a race. You will find many of GWTC's race directors willing to offer ideas and answer questions; helpful information is also posted on the Club's website. The Club also has a position known as the Director of Race Directors (DRD) who can help answer your questions. Periodically, the Club offers a race director's clinic. GWTC does not, however, take on the task of directing or partnering with other organizations to put on races that are not Club races.

A calendar of races is listed in the Club's newsletter each month and on the Club's website and Facebook page. This calendar is a good place to start getting the word out about your race or to get contact information for other race directors. HOWEVER, GWTC does not rate, organize or accept responsibility for races other than its own Club races. Each race remains the responsibility of the person or organization putting on the event.

NOTE: The list of current GWTC officers and the name of the GWTC Director of Race Directors is located under the business tab on the GWTC website at [www.gulfwinds.org](http://www.gulfwinds.org). If you have questions or suggestions about this publication, you may email David Yon at [david@radeylaw.com](mailto:david@radeylaw.com) or Mary Jean Yon at [maryjeanyon@comcast.net](mailto:maryjeanyon@comcast.net).

## PLANNING FOR A RACE – A (BAKER'S) DOZEN HOT TIPS

1. Start by clearly identifying the person who will serve as the race director. You must have someone in charge who is willing to put in the effort necessary to put on a quality race and who will serve as the primary point of contact for the race. It is recommended that this person develop a written plan that demonstrates how the event will be effectively executed.



2. Select a race date that allows sufficient time for planning and matches up with the resources of your organization. Successful first-time races should allow at least six months to plan. Also, make sure your race date is convenient for you, your organization, the director (if not you) and your target audience. Check the GWTC race calendar to determine which races are scheduled on the day you want to hold your event (<https://www.gulfwinds.org/Calendar/Calendar.asp> ). To minimize conflicts, try not to schedule your race for dates that already have races planned, especially large traditional ones. Once you select a date, send the name of the race, the date and time, any website or Facebook address that supports the race, registration information, and contact information to david@radeylaw.com (David Yon) and peggriff91@gmail.com (Peg Griffin) for listing in the GWTC web page race calendar and to [fleetfoot@gulfwinds.org](mailto:fleetfoot@gulfwinds.org) for the GWTC Newsletter race calendar. You may also purchase advertising space in the Newsletter.
3. Choose a location and a course for the race. Many factors go into this decision. Do you want a flat course? A challenging one? How difficult is it to monitor the traffic? Can you obtain a permit? When choosing a race site, look for an area where there is adequate parking and plenty of room for registration, the start, a finish line, awards presentation, and an area for runners to warm up. Restroom facilities, either permanent or portable, must be available for participants. In addition, consider electrical needs and availability of water within close proximity to the site. Finally, make sure the course can be accurately and clearly marked.
4. Determine what permits are necessary. Generally, you should check with the police department, the City of Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs (city locations), the Department of Management Services (state locations), the local Sheriff's Office (county locations) and FSU/FAMU/TSC police (campus locations). Depending on where your race is held, there may be other permitting requirements as well.
5. Make a checklist in advance of your event to avoid "forgetting" something on race day. The list should include all the equipment necessary to put on the race, the number of volunteers and where they will be located on race day, procedures that must be performed to score runners as they finish and procedures necessary to register runners on race day and take care of pre-registered runners.
6. Develop a budget for the event that includes all race expenses, such as equipment rental, advertising, permit costs, insurance costs, awards, shirts, medals, law enforcement (if necessary), emergency medical care and more. You may be surprised how many expenses there are and how quickly they can add up. The budget should identify the sources of revenue and estimate the totals accurately. Generally, there are only two revenue sources – race entry fees and sponsor support. Estimate each of these using realistic methods. Share your budget with the entity responsible for organizing the race (all race directors for GWTC races must present their budgets to the GWTC Board of Directors for approval prior to the race).



- This will help ensure there is accountability and that everyone understands the financial impact of the event.
7. Decide how much the entry fee for participants will be. In determining how much to charge for race entries consider what other similar races are charging. One way to gather this information is by looking at the information on the GWTC race calendar. Presently, for a 5K to 10K race, \$12-\$20 for preregistration and \$25-\$35 on race day are typical amounts. Most races offer a "no t-shirt option" for a reduced entry fee. Some races charge more, but higher entry fees may negatively impact race participation. It is common for a race to discount the race fees if they are paid early. Early registration allows races to reduce the cost of the race. It is a win/win.
  8. Identify and solicit specific sponsors. There is no set formula for race sponsorships. Each event is unique. Generally, you want to present a sponsor with an idea they are pleased to be associated with and want to support. You will want to demonstrate the benefits a sponsor will receive from supporting the race, which is generally marketing and advertisements. Make your requests early with plenty of lead time before race day to improve your chances. Don't hesitate to pursue multiple sponsors as donors are often difficult to recruit.
  9. Arrange for appropriate medical care to be on-site during the race. Runners can suffer from heat-related problems, falls, collisions with cars and other runners (or wildlife), and other unexpected accidents. Having Emergency Medical Services (ambulance) or trained medical personnel on-site is your best preparation.
  10. Identify a volunteer base. A well-organized race requires volunteers for registration, the finish line, monitoring the course, traffic control, and operating water tables on the course, just to name a few. The most important volunteer, however, is the Race Director who is the person in charge and responsible for the event.
  11. Make sure you have a liability insurance policy in place, as well as additional coverage that might be necessary for your event. GWTC requires coverage for non-club races to be eligible for Grand Prix status, which is an intra-club competition. Most permitting agencies (City, County, State, etc.) also require proof of insurance. Check with your insurance agent. Event insurance is also offered by the Road Runners Club of America, <https://www.rrca.org/services/rrca-insurance-services/>.
  12. Be conscious of the impact your race will have on the environment. Parking and large numbers of people can impact an area not used to such. Clean up afterwards so that the areas you use will look better after the race than before, including your water stations. Permanent or long-lasting marks (paint, even "wash off" paint) should not be used to mark a course unless specifically authorized by the entity having authority over the course venue. Avoid using environmentally harmful products like Styrofoam and plastic. Whenever possible – recycle cans and bottles. Runners who drop their supplement packaging on the course are littering. Just because it is a race does not grant permission to toss wrappings onto the ground.



13. Prepare a plan for dealing with emergencies. Weather extremes, violence against runners or spectators, and any other acts that might disrupt the race and pose a grave danger to the runners, volunteers, or spectators should be anticipated with a response plan in place. Know how you will communicate with runners, volunteers and law enforcement if something goes bad. Be prepared to cancel the race, even day of, if the weather creates a dangerous situation.

## GUIDELINES FOR A GOOD RACE COURSE

1. A "good course" is often in "the eye of the beholder." Runner safety is, of course, paramount. Tallahassee offers a great variety of terrain, and the type of course you choose will be a defining part of the race. The Race Director should decide which type of course will be used (paved, trail, hilly, flat, etc.) and then communicate its characteristics to runners. Most runners appreciate interesting courses that minimize traffic. Some races promote "flat and fast" courses, while others pride themselves on being tough and hilly. Many are on paved roads, while many others are on trails or off road.
2. All courses should be accurately measured, and the mile or kilometer marks identified along the way. If possible, the course should be measured following procedures of USA Track & Field ("USATF") so that it can be certified if appropriate. (GWTC Grand Prix courses must be certified unless they are off-road courses.) The "Jones Counter" remains the primary recognized device for measuring courses that are to be USATF certified. Car odometers and GPS devices do NOT accurately measure courses. You can find more on measuring and certifying courses at <http://www.usatf.org/events/courses/certification/> . There are few things that disappoint runners more than an inaccurate course.
3. Be aware of the starting and finishing areas and be sure they provide a safe area for runners. Evaluate whether these areas offer enough room to keep runners from being too crowded at the start or backing up at the finish.
4. Safety is critical and vehicular traffic is the number one concern when it comes to safety. Very few races are run on streets that have been closed to traffic. Do your best to avoid busy intersections and narrow streets that do not offer a safe place to run unless you have experienced people (police officers or qualified volunteers) to control traffic at these points on the course. Police or other law enforcement officials may prohibit you from using certain major roads when you develop your race plan.
5. Each mile split on the course should be marked in a way that is clearly visible (a sign on a post and chalk on the road are two options) and place the markers out of the likely path of runners.
6. The course should have water stations every 2 or 3 miles (especially in warm weather months), or in the case of a 5K race, near the 1.5-mile mark. Plan your course in such a way as to make this possible.



7. Water should always be available at the start and finish areas. It is recommended you provide recycling containers for any bottles or cans being used (and discourage the use of plastics). If possible, avoid plastic water bottles and instead use water coolers and provide paper cups for drinking. These coolers are available for rent through GWTC.
8. The course should be clearly marked so runners can follow it. Most races use chalk dust (also known as field marker) and/or arrow signs to mark the course. You can also purchase cans of spray chalk which works well. Volunteers can also be used to direct runners along the course, especially at major turns. DO NOT use paint on a hard surface, or other long-lasting material unless specific approval has been granted by the appropriate entity having authority over the course venue.
9. Most often races will start and finish at or close to the same point. If, however, your race is "point to point" and there is a significant distance between the start and finish, you may need to provide transportation between these two places. While a point-to-point course can be fun and attractive to runners, it can complicate a race director's life.
10. Look for a safe place for registration and the awards ceremony that provides protection in the event of inclement weather.
11. For a list of USATF certified courses in the Tallahassee area, visit:  
[www.usatf.org/events/courses/search/](http://www.usatf.org/events/courses/search/)

## RACE DIRECTOR: MAIN DUTIES

1. The Race Director is the driving force behind any successful race. The Race Director lays out the plan for the race, produces a budget, makes sure all the details are covered and, most importantly, is a decision maker. A good race director finds good people to help and delegates jobs to them. But the director is also the one who will be blamed when things do not go right. If there is not someone willing to take on these responsibilities, you should reconsider conducting a race.
2. The Race Director should be aware when a race inconveniences people that are not in the race and businesses not associated with the race and try to resolve any issues. Advance notice of the impact on neighborhoods and businesses can help. A friendly note on the mailbox, the homeowners' association or a face-to-face visit by volunteers goes a long way towards calming race day tension.

## PERMITS: CHECK THE FOLLOWING AND MORE

You will almost ALWAYS need a permit in order to hold a race. You can start by checking the following places (this list is not complete and may not always be up to date):



- State Office Complex, SouthWood and other state properties Reservations, Department of Management Services
  - Phone: 850-488-2074; email [Reservations@dms.myflorida.com](mailto:Reservations@dms.myflorida.com).  
<http://tinyurl.com/prf7fwl>
- City of Tallahassee, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs
  - Special Events Permits – Jennifer Carter
    - [Jennifer.Carter@tal.gov.com](mailto:Jennifer.Carter@tal.gov.com)
    - 850-891-3885
  - Road Closures – Raphie Barreto
    - [Raphie.Barreto@talgov.com](mailto:Raphie.Barreto@talgov.com)
    - 850-363-5629
    - 1201 Myers Park Drive Tallahassee, FL 32301
    - [www.talgov.com/Uploads/Public/Documents/parks/specialevents/specialeventspermit.pdf](http://www.talgov.com/Uploads/Public/Documents/parks/specialevents/specialeventspermit.pdf)
- Races on the FSU campus
  - Contact: the FSU Police Department: Sgt. Jeremy Izquierdo [jizquierdo@fsu.edu](mailto:jizquierdo@fsu.edu)
  - 830 West Jefferson St., Tallahassee, FL 32304
  - 850-644-3761
  - <https://union.fsu.edu/eventplanning/5k-race-walk>
- Leon County Parks & Recreation – Special Events
  - 1907 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32301
  - Phone: (850) 606-1470
  - [https://fileoncountyweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/search.html?display=detail&F\\_Class=Special%20Event&module=FR&webScreenDesign=specialevents](https://fileoncountyweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/search.html?display=detail&F_Class=Special%20Event&module=FR&webScreenDesign=specialevents)
- Maclay Gardens State Park
  - 3540 Thomasville Road, Tallahassee, FL 32309
  - (850) 487-4556
  - <https://www.floridastateparks.org/MaclayGardens>

## **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE**

1. Every race director should carefully consider what type of medical assistance should be available on race day. There is no magical formula, but it is strongly recommended that trained medical personnel be available at all events.
2. One source of help is the Leon County EMS (LCEMS). LCEMS provides coverage to a multitude of special events and sports every year. In all of their events, Leon County uses the following guidelines:

LCEMS requests that you schedule your event with LCEMS at least 15 days prior to the event date. That gives them time to staff the event and develop a coverage plan specific to your



venue. Events are required by internal policy to be prepaid; LCEMS requires all events to be paid at least 10 days prior to the event.

Dedicated event coverage is staffed with dedicated units/ambulances. The units will stay at the event for the specified time period and will not leave the event unless a true emergency exists requiring emergency transport at that moment. Otherwise, a second unit will be brought in to accomplish the transport of a patient to a receiving hospital, and the dedicated unit will stay in place.

Payment for events can be made by cashier's check, money order, credit card (Visa / MC only) and purchase order for well-established customers where there is a continuous business relationship. Credit cards are the preferred method for payment.

Each event is specific to the venue used; some events may require preparation of an event safety plan or a communications plan or a site map depending on the size and complexity of the venue. Events that require a permit are handled through the permitting review process and EMS will review the portion of the application where we will be involved. Generally, the larger your event the more lead time is needed for staffing and planning so more than 15 days of notice is recommended.

- Major Brett Davidson
  - Division of Emergency Medical Services 911-2 Easterwood Drive
  - Tallahassee, FL 32311
  - Cell- 850.264.8984
  - Phone - 850.606.2117
  - Fax - 850.606.2101
  - 24 Hour Dispatch – 850-606-5808

## **PUBLICITY**

1. It is important to create and use a social media platform, including a website, Facebook, Instagram sites, etc. Use these to tell the story of your race! Social media is among the best and most cost-effective means to get the word out about your event. And of course, runners should be able to register by going to your site.
2. If desired, develop a race flyer that describes the race and informs runners how to register. Include a version that can be downloaded from the website. Print race flyers and leave copies at local running stores, fitness and athletic stores, gyms, sponsor locations and any place you think would be appropriate. Nowadays, people tend to rely more on race information they get online so make sure your website and any social media posts contain the details of when the race will be run and how to register. QR codes are especially useful on printed materials.





3. Evaluate the benefits of advertising your event on the radio, TV, billboards, paid social media, or in local area newspapers. Most media will run public service announcements, especially if the beneficiary of the event is a nonprofit group. An excellent place for a paid announcement or flyer is the GWTC monthly newsletter, the *Fleet Foot*. Contact the current newsletter Editor, [fleetfoot@gulfwinds.org](mailto:fleetfoot@gulfwinds.org), to make arrangements.
4. Submit details of your race and a copy of the race flyer (if you have one) electronically to GWTC for publication on the GWTC website race calendar. This is a very popular place to list your race and to find races if you are looking for one. There is no charge for the listing of your race. If you have a map of the course, you may wish to include that too. Runners love to scout out race courses before the big event.
5. Market with your sponsors. Sponsors often have successful methods of advertising. It can be a benefit to the sponsor and the race to jointly market the event.
6. Contact Herb Wills ([hwills@gmail.com](mailto:hwills@gmail.com)) at Trouble Afoot (<http://troubleafoot.blogspot.com/>). He has a great race calendar and readership.

## REGISTRATION

1. It is important to have a system for registering runners for your race, preferably online. Each runner should complete a form and waiver and pay a registration fee. The form should collect all the information you need to communicate with runners and to identify the award winners. Many races offer online registration through services such as RunSignUp.com, Eventbrite.com, Active.com, RaceRoster.com, ItsYourRace.com or RaceIt.com. Paper registration forms are generally used on race day.
2. A well-designed registration form should contain the following information and sections:
  - a. The name and location of the event.
  - b. The date, time, registration fees (including early registration and race day registration), length of races (5K, One Mile, 10K, etc.), and deadlines for pre-registration.
  - c. Directions as to how to register online, on paper, or on-site.
  - d. The name to whom the checks should be paid. Online registration enables credit card use.
  - e. Sponsor information.
  - f. Identify who benefits from the proceeds of the race.
  - g. Description of the Awards: what they are and what categories (top 3 finishers, age groups, etc.) are being used.





- h. Special features of the event, such as early packet pickup, pre-race dinner, etc.
  - i. Contact information for answers to questions.  
A well drafted waiver. ([www.rrca.org/event-directors/guidelines-for-safe-events/waivers/](http://www.rrca.org/event-directors/guidelines-for-safe-events/waivers/))
  - j. The registration form should request participants to provide: first and last name; date of birth and/or age as of race day; gender; mailing address; phone number; e-mail address; t-shirt size and no t-shirt option; and signature with space for the date (a parent or legal guardian is required for participants under 18 years of age).
  - k. A clear statement as to whether fees are refundable and, if so, under what circumstances.
3. Determine how long in advance of the race you want to start accepting entries. For most races with fewer than 500 participants, two months is sufficient. If possible, in addition to race day, have a day and location designated for runners to pick up their race numbers and packets. This will help minimize race day congestion.
4. It is recommended that registration and packet pick up on the day of the race start 90 minutes before the race begins and end at least 15 minutes before the race starts. Race day registration is difficult to execute, especially if there is a large crowd, because it can be complicated getting runners registered and assigned numbers and the data timely loaded for accurate and complete race results. To encourage runners to register before race day, most races charge a higher registration fee on race day.
5. On race day, set up a separate table near (but not too close to) the registration area where participants can fill out their forms. If possible, have two clearly marked tables to process runners: one for Race Day Registration and one for Pre-Registered Runners. Many races do not allow race day registration in order to encourage early registration.

## STARTING LINE

1. Make sure the starting line is clearly marked before the race.
2. Runners should be organized so that the faster runners line up closer to the start line. This will help keep the start organized and reduce the chance of runners backing up or tripping each other.
3. Water and restroom facilities should be available near the starting line. Often races rely on port- o-lets. Four or five is a reasonable estimate for a race of 250. You can find a partial listing of local port-o-let vendors on the GWTC website under the Race Director Resources tab. Be sure to check your port-o-lets on race day to ensure they are unlocked and equipped with necessary supplies such as toilet paper.
4. After the runners line up for the start, someone should provide last minute race instructions. Instructions should include which side of the road to run on, where the



- water stops are located, how the course is marked and what to do at the finish line to ensure the runner's time is recorded for results. Any other known precautions given the weather or other factors should also be shared at this time. Instructions should be given before the advertised start time so that the race can start on time.
5. Many races with large numbers of runners offer "gun" and "net" finish times. Gun times refer to the time it takes the runner to complete the race starting when the "gun" goes off and ending when the runner crosses the finish line. Net times refer to the time it takes a runner to complete the race starting when the runner crosses the starting line and ending when the runner crosses the finish line. Net times are used when it takes runners at the back of the starting pack a long time to get to the starting line. A "long time" is a judgement call for the race director to make, assuming an option for providing net time is available. It is certainly worth considering when that point exceeds a minute. Net time requires electronic timing so that each runner's start time is recorded when they cross the starting line. Electronic timing will necessitate the use of bibs with embedded timing chips and appropriate Start/Finish equipment to record times.
  6. The person maintaining the official timing instrument **MUST** be at the **START**, or in radio or phone contact with the starter, so **THE TIMING INSTRUMENT CAN BE STARTED WHEN THE RACE BEGINS**. It is **EASY** for even an experienced race director to forget this important information. To help with this, the person starting the race should confirm that the Timer is ready before allowing the race to start.
  7. It is recommended there be a lead vehicle or bicycle to guide the lead runners along the correct course. A "sweep" vehicle or bicycle to follow the last runner is also strongly recommended so it is known when all runners have finished and are off the course.

## **AID STATIONS**

1. You will need volunteers, tables, cups, water and trash bags at each aid station. Place the aid stations in spots where runners will have good access and the tables do not obstruct traffic or place volunteers at risk. Runners should not be required to run more than 2-3 miles without access to an aid station that has water.
2. Have at least two cups of water or sports drink (or both) available per runner per aid station (more on hot and/or humid days). Stations located on an "out and back" course will need more water, sports drink, and cups than courses that are "point to point." For longer races (half marathon and longer), race directors should consider including food or supplements for runners at aid stations.
3. Make sure the aid station volunteers start filling the cups before the runners arrive. One or two 6- or 8-foot tables are needed to hold the prefilled cups. Ideally, the volunteers should hand the cups to the runners as they go by. This can be more challenging than expected, and practice is helpful. Most runners find it easier to take



- a cup from a volunteer if the volunteer is moving the cup slightly in the same direction the runner is moving. Fill cups no more than 2/3 full. Paper cups are recommended (5-9 oz.) as they are more environmentally friendly and are easier to drink from than plastic or Styrofoam cups.
4. Have at least one trash bag at each aid station for the volunteers to collect used cups and other trash. It is very important that aid stations are cleaned up quickly and completely.
  5. Make sure aid station volunteers know how to get more water or supplies if either water or supplies run out.

## FINISH LINE DUTIES

1. Think carefully about the system you will use to record each runner's time and place. This can be a difficult task, and runners may get upset if not done correctly. Generally, chip timing is easier and more accurate and sends a message that your race is professionally managed. All systems must accurately identify the start and finish time for each runner, as well as the order of finish. For most races, every runner is given the same start time. As noted above, it is CRITICAL to make sure the person operating the finish line timing device is able to start the timing device used to record finish times at the exact moment the runners start the race.
2. Historically, a Chronomix or similar device and finish place cards were used to score races. The Chronomix starts when the race begins. As a runner crosses the finish line, the person operating the Chronomix presses a button to record a time and place. Simultaneously, they are given sequentially numbered cards by a second volunteer. The card should have a place for name, gender, age and time. Runners complete and turn in the card at a designated location for race officials to finalize the scoring and prepare an awards listing. Recruit a sufficient number of volunteers to operate the equipment, keep runners in order, and hand out finish cards.
3. Some races use race bibs with tear-off strips containing name, gender and age along with finish place and a barcode. The strips are torn off as runners cross the finish line and placed on a stringer in the order of finish. If timing software is used, the strips may be scanned and matched up with participant information, and awards listings automatically generated. If software is not being used, the results volunteer can use the strips to determine the awards. Extra volunteers must be recruited to tear off the strips and place them on a stringer. Make sure your volunteers know to handle the stringers and keep the finishers with care. If the strips are not in order, accurate results will be difficult to determine. We suggest the use of a video camera to resolve finish order issues.
4. GWTC owns an electronic chip timing system, which can be rented (GWTC volunteers will operate the system) provided a trained GWTC volunteer is available on the date of your race. The rental fee includes race bibs, timing chips and timing



- equipment. The GWTC volunteer will produce an awards sheet and complete results at the conclusion of the race. For additional information, contact Peg Griffin at [peggriff91@gmail.com](mailto:peggriff91@gmail.com). A list of area timers is available on our website under Races/Race Director Resources.
5. The finish chute should provide a wide entry and gradually narrow as runners pass through the line. It can be formed with traffic cones or stanchions that gradually funnel the runners to a single-file line. The chute keeps runners in order after they cross the finish line, making it easier to record times and pass out cards and/or pull tear strips. It is helpful to have volunteers to keep runners in order. If a chip timing system is used, the timers will set up the finish area.
  6. Keep runners moving as quickly as possible to avoid back up at the finish line. Watch out for the mid-pack surge at the finish line. In most races, there may be many finishers who come through the chute in a short period of time. The key is to have a long enough finish chute to be able to keep the runners in order but moving until you can tear off their strips or give them finish cards.
  7. If you use finish cards, they should be consecutively numbered from 1 through the maximum number of finishers you expect (estimate high). Each runner should receive a card after they cross the finish line with their finish place corresponding to the number on the card. Runners should be made aware that they must put their name, gender and age on the card and their best estimate of their finish time. Race volunteers should remind the finishers of this constantly and make sure the runners place the cards in the appropriate box. Set up a table near (but not too close to) the finish area for runners to fill out and turn in their finish cards. If you are awarding prizes by age group and gender, you should have a box for each category and make sure the runners deposit their finish cards in the right box. It is also a good idea to have a person with a clip board at the finish line to record the top 10 finishers with their finish place, name and gender.
  8. Assign 1-3 volunteers to the results table to keep things going smoothly and quickly.
  9. Try to have race results for the overall winners and age group winners as quickly as possible after the race.
  10. Equipment such as timing clocks, Chronomix, water coolers, signs, traffic cones and stanchions, safety vests, tables, and chairs may be rented from GWTC by contacting the GWTC Equipment Manager. An Equipment Rental Form with contact information is available to download on our website under the "Races" tab.

## **RACE DIRECTOR CHECKLIST**

1. Establish a date and time of race (day, month, year)
2. Determine the race venue and location for early packet pick-up, if appropriate.
3. Secure all required permits.



4. Determine equipment needs and where it will be placed on race day. If you wish to rent equipment from GWTC, contact the Equipment Manager as soon as possible to make arrangements.
5. Determine how many aid stations you need, where they will be located and what will be available at each station.
6. Establish entry fees and the dates for early and late registration prices to begin and any discount to be offered to runners who wish to select a no t-shirt option.
7. Identify awards: number of awards, age groupings, male/female, and any special awards (wheelchair, race walkers, etc.).
8. Order t-shirts, towels, medals, trophies, or other items to be given to each registrant and finisher. When calculating the number of t-shirts or items to buy, consider the volunteers if you plan to give them a shirt or item.
9. Determine the system to be used for recording finish times and places for runners and make arrangements to obtain the necessary equipment or timing group. Identify how you intend to communicate the results to participants.
10. Order race numbers (bibs), safety pins, and finish place cards if you plan to use them.
11. Develop a volunteer list and identify each volunteer's assignments/responsibilities. Communicate these responsibilities to your volunteers. Be sure to thank all of your volunteers for their assistance.
12. Ensure there will be adequate restroom (port-o-let) facilities.
13. Secure event insurance (always advisable and required if a GWTC Grand Prix race).
14. Identify a registration crew and process, both before the race and the day of the race.
15. Determine how you will mark and secure the race course for runners. Determine how to accurately measure your course.
16. Develop your plan for medical assistance and responses to emergency situations.
17. Develop and implement a media and communication plan to promote the race.

## RRCA RACE DIRECTOR CODE OF ETHICS

While the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) Code of Ethics is not binding on non-RRCA members, it does offer very good guidance, and it is recommended that all race directors and sponsoring organizations review it carefully. GWTC is a member.

The RRCA Race Director Code of Ethics outlines the expected standards of conduct of any person or a group of people that conduct an event, road race, trail race, or other similar type of event that is either for profit or nonprofit and where individuals pay a fee to participate in an organized running event. All event directors in the RRCA membership and receiving insurance through the RRCA insurance program must agree to abide by the RRCA Race Director Code of Ethics as follows:



1. Race Directors shall put the safety of runners, walkers, volunteers and spectators ahead of all other aspects of the event and abide by the [RRCA Guidelines for Safe events](#) as much as possible.
2. Race Directors should demonstrate honest communication and not make false or misleading statements to any person or business associated with their event including but not limited to the RRCA, elite athletes, event participants, sponsors, local government, local businesses, and other related parties.
3. Race Directors should avoid business transactions with any vendor or person with a proven history of a criminal conviction against them in accordance with the [RRCA's Criminal Background Check policy](#).
4. Race Directors should conduct all financial transactions in an open and transparent manner, especially when partnering with other nonprofit organizations and when accepting funds or special services from government entities.
5. Race Directors should keep current and accurate records of all financial transactions.
6. Race Directors, who are voluntarily directing a race on behalf of a nonprofit running club, nonprofit event, or other nonprofit organization, should not use their positions to profit personally nor perform business transactions known to represent a conflict of interest with the event organizers, sponsors, vendors or staff.
7. Race Directors who are hired and paid a fee to direct a race or race directors that own a race as a business venture should perform all duties to the specifications outlined in all contracts or agreements with all involved parties including local governments, sponsors, third-party vendors, participants, nonprofit partners such as running clubs, running events, and charity partners.
8. Race Directors should preserve and protect the events assets by making prudent and effective use of those assets as well as accurately reporting on their financial condition, as applicable.
9. Race Directors should not personally utilize the event's assets if the assets are owned by a nonprofit running club, other nonprofit or related partner. Assets include but are not limited to capital assets, contact information, trademarked items, etc.
10. All property and business of an event owned by a nonprofit running club, nonprofit organization, or other partner should be conducted in a manner to further the event's interest rather than the personal interest of any individual.
11. Race Directors should respect the event's proprietary information. The Race Director or event staff should not disclose trade secrets, either during or after their employment, association or completion of consulting arrangements, except to individuals authorized by the event.
12. Race Directors should make a commitment to environmental compliance as outlined in event permits. Race Directors should make reasonable efforts to conduct events in a manner that conserves natural resources within the budget of the event.





13. Race Directors should make a commitment to encourage entrants to follow a “drug free” event policy and Race Directors should have athletes competing to win the event and/or earn prize money attest to being “drug free.”
14. Race Directors must ensure that any alcohol served in conjunction with the event is dispensed and monitored in a manner consistent with safety and adherence to all local, state, and federal requirements.
15. Race Directors should be sensitive to the acceptance of gifts or gratuities attempting to influence decision-making. If there is any possibility that giving or receiving the amenity could be viewed or later construed as a bribe or improper inducement, Race Directors or staff should not give or accept the amenity.
16. Race Directors are aware of local, state, and federal laws that pertain to the event and Race Directors must adhere to all such laws.
17. Race Directors should keep informed and be sensitive about how their event affects the community in which their event is held. Race Directors should share that information with their staff, event committee or interested people. They should be sensitive to community needs and work in partnership to better the health and wellness of the community and not be disruptive to citizens.
18. Race Directors should demonstrate a commitment to a nonpartisan agenda in the conduct of their event and prohibit discrimination and harassment of participants based on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, economic status, citizenship, veterans, military status, gender identity, gender, or age. USATF has issued a rule of competition related to gender identity and gender transition. The RRCA follows the USATF rule on gender identity for competition. RRCA members and race directors may host women’s only events. Members and race directors are encouraged to allow men to participate in these events upon request, and race directors may have a different time for men. RRCA members and race directors may place minimum age levels on events for minors in accordance with the RRCA FUNDamentals of Youth Running.
19. Race Directors should make reasonable accommodation for adults in accordance with the ADA and USATF rules for athletes with disabilities. Race Directors should make reasonable accommodations for minors with disabilities if the minor is at or above the minimum age to participate in the race.
20. Race Directors are expected to conduct themselves ethically, honestly and with integrity in all dealings. This means principles of fairness, good faith and respect consistent with all laws, permit regulations and/or internal policies that govern their conduct with others both inside and outside the community.  
RRCA race director members that are found in violation of one or more of the points in this code of ethics may come under review in accordance with the RRCA’s Member Accountability Process found at <http://www.rrca.org/about/governance/>.





## CONCLUSION

Producing a race involves a lot of work and time but it is also a very rewarding experience. The first step is to find a race director(s) committed to the task and who is experienced or willing to learn the process. Step two is to secure a strong support system including volunteers and sponsors. It is our goal to point you in the right direction with this manual. We strongly encourage new race directors to find experienced race directors to help and to learn from. Things happen very quickly on race day, and it takes a good eye to slow it down enough to make sure you don't let something very important go wrong. This manual cannot substitute for that experience. But when you successfully raise money for a cause or watch runners streaming across a finish line having successfully completed your race, you and your support crew will experience a great sense of accomplishment. If you move forward, we wish you the best of luck and welcome you to a unique but rewarding club, The Race Directors.

We appreciate your feedback on this manual. Please let us know how we can make it better.