



Federated
Health Charities

How to Run a Vacation Day Incentive Draw

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Vacation Day Incentive Draws

The vacation day incentive draw has become the most popular way of encouraging people to make payroll pledge donations in participating workplaces. This draw involves raffling off vacation days donated by your senior leadership team to people who make a payroll pledge to the campaign. If your campaign is interested in holding a vacation day draw, please follow the steps below.

Planning a vacation day draw

It can take time to complete the steps in this process, so it is best to start early to ensure you have your vacation day incentives ready for your campaign launch.

1. Get internal approval to conduct the draw. A good place to start the process is by talking to your **Executive Lead**.
2. With their help, ask your ministry or agency’s Senior Executive Leadership Team/Senior Management Team (SELT/SMT) to donate vacation time (half a day, full day, multiple days, etc.) to the campaign as an incentive for payroll donations. See “Appendix A” for an ask-out letter/email template that you can customize with the approval of your HR representative or Senior Management Team
 - a. Ensure that people who volunteer to donate vacation time understand that they cannot receive a tax receipt for their donated day(s) as there is no defined cash value.
 - b. Reach out to SELT/SMT as early in your campaign planning as possible (i.e. as soon as you have your **Executive Lead**'s approval to move forward) so you can give people adequate time to decide if they want to donate and you can also communicate the total number of days available.
3. Track days received and who donated them.
4. Determine the total number of days you have available to give away.

5. Determine how you would like to distribute them (ex. if you received 10 days' worth of vacation, do you want to give away 2 prizes of a week (5 days) each? Do you want to give away 5 two-day vacations? etc.). Generally, the larger the amount of time you are giving away (such as a week) the bigger the incentive for people to donate. Federated Health staff will help you determine the best way to utilize your vacation days to optimize fundraising. Reach out to us when you have your days ready, and we can discuss this together.
6. Determine if you will set a minimum donation to qualify, such as \$5 or \$10 per pay or a lump sum, such as \$50. You can determine your minimum donation based on the size of the prize. If you are giving away one or two days, you might consider setting a lower minimum donation to qualify, such as \$2/pay. If you are giving away a week (5 days) or more, consider setting a higher minimum donation such as \$5 per pay. We strongly suggest you set a minimum donation to qualify, and Federated Health staff can help you determine what this should be. We can discuss this along with the best ways to use your days.
7. Connect with your ministry/agency's human resources branch to get their requirements for the draw. These might include that the winner must use the vacation days before the end of the year, that the days cannot be cashed out or carried over, etc. These requirements can vary in each ministry/agency, so ensure you talk to your human resources team to determine the restrictions you need to include in the draw and make sure you include these in the "small print" in your communications.
8. Plan your communications strategy. The success of your draw will depend on how well you communicate it. Have a clear plan before you begin communicating. This includes knowing the number of vacation days you have to give away, your minimum donation, your donation deadlines, how people can donate, when you will announce the winner, any qualifying restrictions, etc. Map out where and when you will communicate this and ensure everyone on your campaign team (including volunteers) has this information so that everyone is promoting the draw accurately.

N.B. – if you are a ministry/agency that has access to WIN, we recommend that you require people must make their donations via WIN to qualify for the vacation days draw. This allows Federated Health Charities to conduct the draw in a timely manner. Including the paper pledge forms will add several weeks to the timeline to select the winner(s), as it takes several weeks for OSS to process the paper forms.

Conducting the Draw

Once you have successfully planned and launched your incentive draw, please follow the steps below to set up the draw to select the winner(s):

1. The team at Federated Health Charities conducts the actual draw. This allows donations to remain private.
2. Contact [Sarah Wood](#) and [Tatyana Parfenyuk](#) to let them know you plan to conduct a draw, including how many winners need to be drawn, your minimum donation, and your donation deadline. Federated Health Charities will use this data to pull donors from the database and randomly select the winner(s). We will notify you of the winner(s) so you can announce them.

3. Federated Health Charities will let you know when we will be able to draw your winner(s) and when you can expect to announce the result based on your donation deadline. Please contact [Federated Health Charities](#) before you promote a date to announce the winner(s) of the vacation days draw as there is a timeline that needs to be followed to conduct the draw that determine when you can announce your winner.

Awarding the Vacation Days

Once Federated Health Charities has selected the winner(s), you will need to inform people of how the days will be moved from the donor to the winner. The vacation days do not actually get transferred (from the donor to the winner) in WIN.

There is a two-step process for awarding the days:

1. The donor of the days will go into their WIN and mark the days as used. If they donated 1 day, they would mark one day as used. People who have donated vacation time need to select a day that they will be working (and not taking vacation). This accomplishes the task of them “giving the day away”. After this step, the people who have donated the time have completed their donation.
2. Your Executive Lead will issue a letter to the manager of the winner that states the number of days they have won and any restrictions around using the days (as determined by your human resources office). See Appendix B for a template to customize with your HR representatives. It will be the responsibility of the winner’s manager to manually track their usage of the days. The awarded days will not show up in the winner's WIN. The manager will receive the letter and the winner will coordinate with their manager regarding using the days. This accomplishes the task of “awarding the days”.

Thanks & Appreciation

The staff that give their vacation day(s) for this incentive are campaign champions as well. They have given up a day off with pay to garner staff involvement and increase donations. Please send them a Thank You letter/email. A generic template is in Appendix C.

Some Variations to Consider

You can tweak your incentive draw, or how you use your vacation days, in the following ways:

1. Work From Home (WFH) days have become increasingly desirable in recent years. Consider approaching management for approval to “give away” some WFH days as a part of your campaign. These can be included in auctions or used as part of your incentives.
2. Instead of putting all your donated vacation days towards an incentive draw, save some to be used in a silent auction. Previous auctions have seen vacation days raise a ton of money! So, consider splitting your donated days up, with some being used as an incentive and some being used for auction.

Appendix A – “Ask Out” Template

Dear SMT Colleagues,

The Federated Health Charities Campaign is kicking off the 2024 campaign (Apr 1 – Jun 28) and we hope you will consider donating this year.

Your gift to Federated Health Charities assists 21 health agencies across the province to fund vital research, develop innovative health awareness programs, and provide essential services and support to patients and caregivers.

One donation – 21 ways to make a difference.

As the leader of this years Federated Health Campaign, we appreciate your generosity all the more this time around. Here are some ways you can support the campaign:

1. **Donate 1-2 vacation days.**
This will support the online donation incentive prizes and other special events. **Confirm with _____ by April 5th 2024 if you are able to donate a vacation day.**
2. **Join us in making a leadership-level pledge.**
3. **Raise awareness of the campaign and ways to donate.**

The support of senior leaders, like yourself, that donate to our campaign plays an essential role in helping to raise funds like Heart & Stroke, the Canadian Cancer Society, and the Alzheimer Society of Ontario.

Thank you so much for your support and for working with us to invest in the health of our community.

Sincerely,

(Executive Lead) - 2024 Federated Health Charities Campaign

Appendix B – Vacation Day Procedure Letter

(*This is just a template -- This letter **must** be approved by your HR department and edited to match the policy and procedure of your Ministry/Agency)

Dear **(insert winner's Manager name)**,

(Insert winner's name) was the winner of **(enter # of days)** vacation day(s) in an incentive draw that raised funds to support the 2024 Federated Health Charities Campaign.

The donor of the day(s) has already marked these awarded days as used in WIN. It will be up to the winner's reporting manager to manually track the usage of the day(s). The awarded days will not show up in the winner's WIN. They will not enter this time into their WIN. The winner will contact you to advise of their intention to use the awarded day(s) for a particular date(s). Follow your established process for requesting and granting time off.

This vacation day(s) cannot be banked. Time must be used in the 2024 calendar year. It cannot be exchanged for cash. Only people on payroll are eligible.

Thank you for assisting with fulfilling this award and supporting the Federated Health Charities Campaign.

Sincerely,

(Executive Lead) - 2024 Federated Health Charities Campaign

Appendix C – Thank You

Dear (**insert vacation day donors name here**):

I wanted to send a special note to thank you personally for your generous contribution to this year's Federated Health Charities campaign.

Each year, provincial employees in the Ontario Public Service, Ontario Provincial Police and Ontario government agencies participate in the Federated Health Charities Campaign, raising funds for 21 charities committed to improving Ontarians' health and well-being.

Since 1983, Ontario's public servants have raised more than \$55 million to fund vital research, develop innovative health awareness programs, and provide essential services and support to patients and caregivers in communities across the province.

Your gift of a vacation day(s) to the (**MINISTRY/AGENCY/OPP**) campaign was very helpful in incentivizing employees to make payroll pledges and helped us raise (**total raised in pledges**) in payroll pledges to support people experiencing serious illness and life-changing medical conditions across Ontario.

Thank you so much for your support and for working with us to invest in the health of our community.

Sincerely,

(**Executive Lead**) - 2024 Federated Health Charities Campaign