

With our Lend A Hand Up planning guide, hosting a 90 day online campaign can be an easy and effective way to raise help and hope for someone facing serious medical challenges. Our step-by-step planning guide includes tips, templates and examples to serve as a springboard for your own unique campaign.

In addition to fundraising tools, Lend A Hand Up also offers *BOOST* funding to increase the success of fundraising efforts that help local, eligible families. Learn more about Lend A Hand Up eligibility guidelines.

Learn more about Lend A Hand Up eligibility guidelines: [Apply for Boost Funds](#)

### GETTING READY – Plan a Successful Online Campaign

#### Step 1. Review Fundraising Strategies

Review fundraising options with others to determine whether an online campaign - with or without a benefit - would be the best way to help a friend or family member. Gain input and approval from the recipient/family. Designate a Fundraising Champion to serve as a leader and communication link between volunteers, the recipient/family and others involved with the fundraising effort.

#### Step 2. Set up an Individual/Family Benefit Fund

Establish a benefit fund at a local bank or credit union to insure that donations are properly managed and accessible to the recipient/family. A benefit fund is a short-term account to assist volunteers and the recipient/family with collecting donations, paying bills and distributing funds. Banks rarely charge to establish a benefit fund and usually set them up as short-term, non-interest bearing accounts. Gifts made to an individual/family benefit fund are generally not considered to be tax-deductible gifts, nor reportable income.

##### A. Determine a benefit fund name

Generally, the title of the fund includes the name of the person experiencing a medical challenge – the recipient of the fundraising campaign. For example, John Doe Benefit Fund.

##### B. Carefully choose benefit fund title signers (authorized account managers)

The recipient and fundraising champion should carefully determine who will serve as authorized signers for the benefit fund and how the account will be used.

To qualify for Lend A Hand Up boost funding, a benefit fund must be established at a local bank or credit union with at least two title signers. One signer must be the recipient or a family member. The other signer should be the fundraising champion or another trustworthy individual who is not an immediate family member nor lives in the same household as the recipient. (Additional signers may be requested by the financial institution or recipient.) If the individual receiving proceeds is receiving assistance through Medicaid, SSI, or other programs, it is recommended they review how being an authorized signer on the account may affect benefits.

**C. Set-up a benefit fund at a local bank/credit union**

When setting up a new benefit fund, authorized signers should be prepared to provide:

- The title and purpose of the benefit fund
- Names and social security numbers (or other tax identification) for authorized title signers
- How deposits will be made
- How funds will be utilized/distributed (If funding has the potential to adversely affect the recipient's eligibility for assistance under Medicaid, SSI or other programs, it may be beneficial to discuss how other family members may serve as account managers who oversee that funds are distributed to medical providers, insurance companies and others directly)
- Consideration as to what would happen to funds if authorized signer(s) are no longer able to serve, or in the unfortunate event of the recipient's death
- Whether the account should be interest-bearing (it's generally recommended that the account be non-interest bearing to eliminate reporting requirements)
- What type of information will be made available and/or reported. For example, will deposit records include donor names and addresses for tracking and sending thank you letters?
- How long the fund will remain active

**Step 3. Apply for LEND A HAND UP Boost Funding and other resources**

If hosting an online campaign and/or benefit to help a resident of Cass County, ND or Clay County, MN who is experiencing financial hardship due to a serious medical condition, you are encouraged to apply to Lend A Hand Up for:

- Free online fundraising tools
- Personal coaching
- Up to \$5,000 of boost funding

**A. Review Lend A Hand Up eligibility criteria**

**Step 4. If approved - Establish a LEND A HAND UP Campaign for the individual/family**

If approved, Lend A Hand Up staff will guide you to establish a unique giving page on the [lendahandup.org](http://lendahandup.org) website for the individual/family recipient. Since Dakota Medical Foundation (DMF) covers all Lend A Hand Up administrative costs, 100% of funds raised through the site will be directed to the individual/family benefit fund at the bank/credit union, along with boost funding awards.

Note: Boost funding is made possible through the generous support of Lend A Hand Up boost donors (program supporters) in partnership with Dakota Medical Foundation (DMF).

### Promote your Online Campaign

#### Step 4. Choose Your Tools & Inspire Others to Give

In addition to sharing information on your personal social media accounts, there are many free tools that can help you connect to people who share your care and concern for the recipient/family.

Consider one or more of these tools to share, connect and engage.

**A. Facebook Page.** (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/create/>)

*Purpose: Reach a wider audience of community support*

A Facebook page can be followed by anyone who has an interest in helping a family in need - they don't need to be Facebook friends with the family. Updates are public and can be easily shared by anyone who wants to help.

**Be sure to add information about Lend A Hand Up boost funding along with a link to the individual/family's unique fundraising page on [www.lendahandup.org](http://www.lendahandup.org)**

**B. Facebook Event.** (<https://www.facebook.com/events/>)

*Purpose: Build awareness and invite others to support your online fundraising campaign*

When hosting an online campaign (versus a benefit event with a date, time and place), Facebook will only allow a span of up to two weeks per Facebook event.

**Be sure to add information about Lend A Hand Up boost funding along with a link to the individual/family's unique fundraising page on [www.lendahandup.org](http://www.lendahandup.org)**

**C. Facebook Group.** (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/>)

*Purpose: Rally connectors or provide a private space for interaction*

An option for groups who prefer to share on social media using a closed or private Facebook group to stay connected.

**Be sure to add information about Lend A Hand Up boost funding along with a link to the individual/family's unique fundraising page on [www.lendahandup.org](http://www.lendahandup.org)**

**D. Email**

Forward group email messages to shared contacts to build awareness of your fundraising campaign. Request others to help you spread the word by forwarding your email.

**Be sure to add information about Lend A Hand Up boost funding along with a link to the individual/family's unique fundraising page on [www.lendahandup.org](http://www.lendahandup.org)**

E. **CaringBridge Journal.** (<https://www.caringbridge.org/>)

*Purpose: Keep people connected to the story as it unfolds; share how they can help.*

Use to create an online journal (along with sharing updates on your Lend A Hand Up giving page.)

Donations made to CaringBridge in honor of an individual/family are not counted toward Lend A Hand Up boost funding since these funds go directly to CaringBridge (not to the individual/family).

**Be sure to add information about Lend A Hand Up boost funding along with a link to the individual/family's unique fundraising page on [www.lendahandup.org](http://www.lendahandup.org)**

F. **Other tools.** Consider how the development of a flyer, video, billboard or other promotional item may assist you in building awareness and support for your fundraising campaign.

**There are lots of ways to get the word out! The key is to publicly promote your online campaign to raise help and hope for your friend/family member.**

**Timeline to help get started:**

<p><b>Week 1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Set up your online fundraiser</b> Once you receive formal approval from Lend A Hand Up, combine efforts to establish a fundraising page on lendahandup.org. Share picture(s) of the individual/family, video (optional) as well as bank information necessary to link the online fund with the benefit fund at the bank.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>“Like” the Lend A Hand Up Facebook Page and share posts about your campaign</b> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/www.dmflendahand.org/">https://www.facebook.com/www.dmflendahand.org/</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Consider creating your own Facebook campaign page and/or event.</b> Share your link with Lend A Hand Up and other connectors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Identify social media connectors.</b> Identify key people to share messages in social media Determine a key person for each family member and social circle they connect with. Invite them to the Facebook page and ask them to share with their connections. <i>Please consider Lend a Hand Up as one of these connectors. Send us the link to your Facebook page, Twitter account, Caring Bridge Journal...and we'll be happy to share.</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Determine how you'll communicate with connectors.</b> Determine the best way to reach these individuals to let them know how they can help. Review Facebook, email, texting and face-to-face communication options. If using Facebook, you may want to tag them in your updates to be sure they see them.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Create/share emails and posts on Twitter, Instagram and other social media sites.</b> Include links to lendahandup.org, your Facebook page, others, etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Set up and/or Post updates on CaringBridge &amp; other sites.</b> Post updates about your health journey and early fundraising results. Share information about how Lend A Hand Up boost funding uplifts generosity, including a link to <a href="http://lendahandup.org">lendahandup.org</a> to learn more and/or make an online gift.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Consider developing a flyer, small card or other item to share and inspire others</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Consider contacting local print and broadcast media with a story idea.</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Keep sharing posts from Lend A Hand's Facebook page</b></li> </ul>

<p><b>Weeks 3-6</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Facebook Posts</b> Continue to share fundraising updates 1-2 times per week. Be clear about how donations will help the family with non-covered medical bills, insurance premiums, travel/lodging expenses, medications, equipment, etc. Encourage others to check fundraising progress at <a href="http://www.lendahandup.org">www.lendahandup.org</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Post Updates on the Lend A Hand Up Website.</b> Continue to share health updates as to how loved ones are doing. Share advice, stories and current needs.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Review and discuss whether you want to host a community benefit/public event.</b> Gain input from others as to how you can greatly increase your fundraising results and emotional support by hosting an event that encourages individuals to rally around the individual/family. Review places, dates and activities.</p> <p>Note: If you want to coordinate Lend A Hand Up Boost funding to support a benefit/event (in addition to an online campaign) – you must apply at least 30 days before the scheduled event and BEFORE the 90 day online campaign ends. Once a 90 day fundraising campaign ends, recipients are not eligible for Lend A Hand Up funding for at least one year. Learn more with the “How to host a benefit” tool.</p>
<p><b>Weeks 6-10</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Facebook Posts. Lend A Hand Up posts. Caringbridge Updates.</b> Continue sharing health and fundraising updates, pictures and videos 1-2 times/week. Consider categorizing updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thankful Thursday – Do a shout-out to one or more people who have come together to show support. Share a positive note, card or drawing to uplift the individual/family.</li> <li>• Throwback Thursday – Share a photo or story from the past</li> <li>• Monday Movies – Share short video clips</li> <li>• Midweek Update – Share an update midweek every week</li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Last chance to plan a benefit and coordinate with Lend A Hand Up Boost funding!</b></p>
<p><b>Final 2 weeks</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Final call to action!</b> Send out emails, posts, tweets.... Let everyone know that the online fund will be closing Soon. Include date that the fund will deactivate.</p>

### After the Online Campaign – Extending Gratitude

**Step 5.** Thank and acknowledge generosity by posting a final public shout-out (which may or may not include fundraising results), sharing personal messages with supporters and/or writing a community letter to the editor. Be sure to acknowledge support in multiple capacities to include financial gifts, cards, transportation, custodial help.....and other ways of showing love and support.

Note: If you want to showcase your fundraising success by taking a “big boost check” picture – just ask. Lend A Hand Up staff love celebrating successful campaigns that help our neighbors!