Ruck4HIT 2027

Rules & Requirements

This document outlines the rules and requirements of the Ruck4HIT 2027 event for which all participants must acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agree to follow.

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1. THE EVENT

Through the years, the number of ruckers has been modified, the weight has been adjusted, and the legs have changed from time to time, but the pace has remained the same. And, even though this event was designed to be tough, it is not impossible, as has been proven. The pace also, while a minimum requirement, is not impossible. In fact, through the years, we have actually seen the pace get crushed! You get through this endurance event through teamwork, the backbone of any military operation. Each team will start and finish this event together, leaving no one behind.

1.1 Course

Legs will be posted in advance of the event, so that participants will have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the course.

1.1.1 Every leg of the course shall be completed

1.1.2 Each leg shall be completed fully from start to finish
1.1.3 Legs shall be completed in order.

Skipping legs is not permitted. Teams found to be skipping legs may be moved to the Jones Division, removed from the course, and/or disqualified from the event

1.2 Pace

In order for all of the teams and participants to finish at the designated time and location, and for the course volunteers to secure from their posts in a timely manner, a minimum pace has been established.

1.2.1 **Pace.** The minimum pace through the entirety of the course and event is 10:25/mile.
1.2.2 **Time Release.** The time designated, based upon the minimum pace, that a rucker shall depart an exchange and begin the subsequent leg, without having to wait for the previous rucker to finish the prior leg.

1.3 Pace Declaration during registration (Staggered Start)

1.3.1 **Estimated Pace.** Ruckers are expected to provide an honest and realistic estimate of the pace they anticipate maintaining throughout the event while carrying the required event load. The estimated pace will be used solely for event planning and start-time assignments. It will not be used to penalize teams whose actual pace differs from their estimate. Teams will be assigned to staggered start times based on their overall declared pace.
1.3.2 **Purpose.** The purpose of staggered starts is to reduce course congestion, improve traffic flow on the route, and provide a safer and more enjoyable experience for all participants. Staggered time assignments will also help reduce the spread of finish times, allowing teams to arrive at the fairgrounds within a more condensed time window and enhancing the overall event atmosphere for participants, volunteers, sponsors, and spectators

2. TEAMS

Each team participating in the Ruck4HIT shall consist of 2 captains, 2 drivers per van, between seven 7 and 14 ruckers, and up to 3 support runners. ALL team members (Captains, Ruckers, Drivers, & Support runners) MUST be registered. Minimum age for all participants is 18 years old.

2.1 Captains

Each team shall designate two (2) Captains, or a Captain and Co-Captain. Team Captains are the Leaders and the primary Points of Contact for their team. Captains may be drivers or ruckers (not support runners) and shall be in the van with the team for the duration of the event. Responsibilities of the Team Captains shall include, but not limited to the following:

2.1.1 Team Captains are responsible for ensuring that the team meets or exceeds the minimum fundraising requirement (Section 6.1.3)
2.1.2 Prior to the event, dissemination of information provided by Event Staff intended for all team participants
2.1.3 During the event, maintaining an open line of communication with Event Staff and/or Race Officials
2.1.4 Logging arrival and departure times

Since at least one driver will be awake at all times, it is permissible that a driver performs this task on behalf of the Captain

2.1.5 Knowing the location of all team members, and
2.1.6 Other duties identified by Event Staff and/or Race Officials.

2.2 Ruckers

Each team may consist of between 7 and 14 ruckers (Sections 3.1.2 and 3.2.1), who are the heart and soul of the team. Responsibilities of Ruckers shall include, but not limited to the following:

2.2.1 A Rucker may be a Team Captain
2.2.2 Must begin the event with no fewer than 7 ruckers
2.2.3 Skipping legs is not permitted. Teams found to be skipping legs may be moved to the Jones Division, removed from the course, and/or disqualified from the event
2.2.4 If a team loses a rucker, whether due to injury or choice, the leg assignments shall be completed by the remaining team members (excluding drivers and support runners), and require notification to Race Officials
2.2.5 If the number of ruckers drops below five (5) and your team wishes to complete all remaining leg assignments with four ruckers, this will require notification and approval of Race Officials
2.2.6 Ruckers will ruck with their required weight from start to finish. Participants found to be rucking without their minimum required weight may be removed from the course and/or disqualified from the event
2.2.7 Ruckers are responsible for checking out with the exchange volunteer when they begin their designated leg and check in with the exchange volunteer upon completion of the designated leg

It is understandable that an incoming rucker may be tired and distracted upon arriving, and an outgoing rucker does not want to delay departure, so it is permissible that another team member performs this task on behalf of the ruckers

2.2.8 Ruckers SHALL NOT drive the team van, or any other vehicle on the course
2.2.9 Ruckers shall not be transported in any vehicle other than the team van
2.2.10 Shall wear required nighttime gear between the hours of 7PM and 6AM
2.2.11 Ruckers should assist Team Captains meet or exceed the minimum fundraising requirement.

2.3 Drivers

Each team shall consist of two (2) drivers per team van. Drivers are the eyes and ears of the team. Responsibilities of the Team Drivers shall include, but not limited to the following:

2.3.1 Drivers must possess a valid driver's license
2.3.2 Transporting team members to and from exchanges
2.3.3 Knowing the identity and location of any team members on the course
2.3.4 Rotating duties with the other driver in order to maintain safety and awareness throughout the event
2.3.5 Drivers SHALL NOT ruck/run
2.3.6 Must wear a reflective vest, when outside of the team van between the hours of 7PM and 6AM
2.3.7 Drivers should assist Team Captains meet or exceed the minimum fundraising requirement
2.3.8 Other duties identified by Event Staff and/or Race Official

2.4 Support Runners

Each team may have no more than three (3) support runners. Support runners are the quiet warriors, keeping pace and encouraging the ruckers. Responsibilities of the Support runners shall include, but not limited to the following:

2.4.1 Support runners MUST be registered
2.4.2 Shall not utilize bicycles, vehicles, or other mechanical devices to support ruckers on the course
2.4.3 Support runners, in coordination with the Team Captain(s), are responsible for their own transportation and identifying the meet locations

The ability of support runners varies. Some may be marathoners or ultra-ruckers, while others may be weekend 5K-ers wanting to do whatever they can to support the ruckers. Use them wisely. Too early and/or too often may negate their benefit. Ruckers should be relatively fresh on the first night/morning, so experience has shown that support runners are most effective when used during the overnight hours on the second night/morning

2.4.4 Must wear required nighttime gear between the hours of 7PM and 6AM
2.4.5 Support runners SHALL NOT carry and/or run with a ruck
2.4.6 Support runners can ride in the team van(s), if Team Captain allows it
2.4.7 Support runners should assist Team Captains meet or exceed the minimum fundraising requirement

3. DIVISIONS

This is an endurance event, and an opportunity to raise funds and awareness for veterans and military families, not a race. We understand that there will always be a certain level of competitiveness that cannot be separated from an event of this nature. Please do not let ego replace the reason you chose to participate in the Ruck4HIT.

Ruck4HIT has three divisions, based on Eric's life and his service, both defined by integrity and punctuated with honor. One division is not to be considered better or lesser than the others. This is an "All Team Event". Each division should be respected as part of the Ruck4HIT team.

3.1 Jethro Division (Falmouth to P-Town to Falmouth)

The Jethro Division represents Captain Jones when he was working. "Jethro" is Eric's call sign, and when on a mission, his job was to support his men and women, provide them with cover and safety, complete the mission, and represent The Corps!

3.1.1 MUST meet or beat all of the time releases (Section 1.2.2). A team that fails to keep pace (Section 2.1.2) shall use the established time release and, if not already there be moved to the Jones Division
3.1.2 May consist of no more than 7 ruckers and 1 van
3.1.3 Must have 2 drivers and there shall be no substitutions once the event begins
3.1.4 May utilize up to 3 support runners

3.2 Jones Division (Falmouth to P-Town to Falmouth)

The Jones Division represents Eric when he was not on duty. He laughed and joked with others, always supported those around him, and never missed an opportunity to help someone he saw struggling.

3.2.1 May utilize the time releases (Section 1.2.2)

3.2.2 May consist of up to 14 ruckers
3.2.3 If the number of ruckers exceeds 7, then two vans are required
3.2.4 Must have 2 drivers per van, there shall be no substitutions once the event begins
3.2.5 May utilize up to 3 support runners

3.3 HELOS Division (P-Town to Falmouth)

Eric was a Helicopter pilot. A common term for a helicopter is 'HELO', known for supporting missions, hovering where needed, and operating on shorter durations than jets. The HELOS division reflects the same spirit. HELOS stands for 'Heroes Electrifying Loyal Onward Support'.

3.3.1 May utilize the time releases (Section 1.2.2)
3.3.2 May consist of no more than 7 ruckers and 1 van
3.3.3 Must have 2 drivers per van, there shall be no substitutions once the event begins
3.3.4 May utilize up to 3 support runners

4. EQUIPMENT

4.1 Ruck

This is not merely an event that requires the carrying of weight. The weight is just one aspect of this. The ruck, in addition to the weight, is intended to symbolize the burdens that our service members endure. They do not have the luxury of dropping and/or modifying their packs, without the risk of leaving behind essential equipment.

Rucks will be inspected and weighed at check-in and may be checked periodically throughout the course.

For rucks determined to be underweight at check-in, pre-made weights will be added.

4.1.1 Weight

For ruckers weighing 160lbs or less, the ruck shall weigh no less than 10lbs. For ruckers weighing in at more than 160lbs, the ruck shall weigh no less than 20lbs.

The required minimum weight SHALL NOT be reduced during the event and there may be random weight checks throughout the course. Teams or participants found to be dropping weight during the event may be removed from the course and/or disqualified from the event

4.1.2 Size

The size of the ruck shall be substantial enough so as to appear as a ruck would. It would be convenient to choose a pack of some sort that was small in size, making it easier to carry, but this event is not intended to be easy.

4.1.3 Style

A "ruck" is a pack, NOT
- a converted hydration pack
- a sling bag
- a string bag
- a modified/converted plate carrier or weighted vest

- any other pack not approved by the Race Committee.

If you have a question about whether your ruck is approved or not, you should bring it to the attention of the Race Committee PRIOR to arriving for weigh-in

4.2 Vehicles on the course

Like the ruck, the type of vehicle used for this event has meaning. Being cramped into a vehicle with other team members is part of the experience, and challenge. The more people and equipment, the less space available for comfort. Also, the length and difficulty of the mission dictates a level of comfort (noise, developing odors, etc.).

4.2.1 Van(s)

Team vans shall be passenger vans, designed to transport no more than 15 passengers, NOT:

- campers
- recreational vehicles
- converted buses
- any other vehicles without prior approval of the Race Committee

4.2.2 Support vehicles / bicycles

Support vehicles or bicycles are NOT ALLOWED on course

- Although this is an open course, bicycles shall not be used to pace or support the ruckers. This causes a safety concern

We encourage you to coordinate with family, friends, and/or others to come out and show their support, but they shall not store equipment or other essentials (allowing for more room in the team van) and ruckers shall not be allowed to dress, rest, stretch, sleep, etc., in any vehicle other than the team van(s)

4.3 Clothing/Attire

Each rucker/rucker is expected to wear clothing that is comfortable, safe, and appropriate for an event of this nature.

4.4 Headphones and Personal Music Devices

Headphones, earbuds, eyeglasses and/or headwear with speakers are highly discouraged. If used, they shall not be worn in such a manner so as to interfere with the ability to hear traffic, directions from Race Officials, or any audible warnings provided for safety.

4.5 Nighttime gear

4.5.1 Equipment required to be worn during nighttime hours are required in order to keep you safe. It includes, but is not limited to:

- reflective vest
- headlamp
- front-facing flashing light (or colored static light, in addition to headlamp)
- rear-facing flashing light (or colored static light)

4.5.2 Nighttime gear MUST be worn at all times, when outside of the team van, during nighttime hours. This includes ruckers, drivers, and support runners

4.5.3 "Nighttime" is defined as the time between 7PM and 6AM.

Example: If you begin your leg at 6:49PM and expect to finish at or about 7:15PM, you must wear nighttime gear upon starting your leg

5. CHALLENGES

5.1 Challenge Officials

Challenge Officials are Race Officials and are responsible for the following:

5.1.1 Explaining the challenge
5.1.2 Instructing the team when to begin
5.1.3 Determining if the challenge has been completed properly

5.2 Team Challenges

5.2.1 All drivers and ruckers must be present in order to begin a team challenge (including 7- to 14-person teams)
5.2.2 The order in which a team challenge is started shall be based upon what time the entire team (ALL drivers and ruckers) reports to the Challenge Official
5.2.3 A Team Challenge shall be completed as designed

Example: The entire team (ALL drivers and ruckers, including 7- to 14-person teams) will climb the Pilgrim Monument, take a team photo, descend the monument, and release the next rucker

6. FUNDRAISING

In addition to raising awareness and acting as ambassadors for Heroes In Transition, our mission is to raise funds to provide free programs for our veterans and military families.

6.1 Fundraising Goals

6.1.1 Each 7-person team is required to raise $5,000.00 or more
6.1.2 Teams with more than 7 ruckers are required to raise $8,000.00 or more
6.1.3 Team Captains are responsible for ensuring that the team meets or exceeds the minimum fundraising goal

The minimum goal, like the event, is a team effort. Team members (ruckers, drivers, and support runners) should assist Team Captains meet or exceed the minimum fundraising requirement by combining individual donations

Team Captains will be contacted by Event Staff in the event that they have not met the team fundraising goal by June 14th, 2027

6.1.4 A participant's registration fee does not count toward the fundraising requirement. These fees cover the swag that each participant receives for registering and participating.

INTEGRITY FIRST

Event Staff and Race Officials, as well as hundreds of support personnel and volunteers will be present throughout the course and the duration of the event in order to support you, the participants.

In addition to overall safety and efficiency, we will be ensuring that rules are being followed and the spirit of the event is being upheld. We cannot be everywhere, and we cannot foresee every circumstance that will be encountered. We rely on your honor and your integrity to exercise courage, honesty, and accountability, and do the right thing even when no one is watching.

When you get your shirt and your team crosses that Finish Line, you want everyone to know that you "EARNED IT."

Train hard, Train smart!

This document does not cover every situation and we cannot plan for every circumstance that may arise during the course of this event. If you have a question or encounter a situation that runs contrary to the rules and/or does not align with the spirit of the event, we rely on you to bring it to our attention.

WHY WE RUCK

The easy answer is, *"For those who can't."*
When someone asks, "Why do you ruck?" the response should be firm and unwavering:

"4ThoseWhoCant"

The longer—and more meaningful—answer is personal. Each of you carries your own reasons for being here. There is someone who has touched your life, accomplished extraordinary things, made incredible sacrifices, and endured unimaginable circumstances without ever asking for anything in return. By accepting this challenge, you are helping raise awareness and funds that directly support Heroes In Transition (HIT) and its mission to serve veterans, current service members, and military families. For that, we thank you.

In 2027, RUCK4HIT marks its 12th anniversary. What began as a crazy idea—to run from Ground Zero to Cape Cod while wearing weighted packs—became something much bigger. With two vans of drivers, ruckers, and support personnel, that original team completed a 275+ mile course through four states in approximately 37 hours. That effort gave birth to RUCK4HIT. While the location, date, course, and personnel have evolved since 2016, the heart of this event has never changed.

The weight and the rucksack are symbolic. They represent the burdens our service members carry—physically, mentally, and emotionally. This event is not an attempt to replicate those burdens, but to honor them. And when it gets tough out there on the course—and it will—remember why you are here. Remember who you are honoring and what they have sacrificed.

When our service members are called to complete a mission, shortcuts are not an option. Neither are they here. You and your team will complete this mission together. You will not take shortcuts. You will leave no one behind.

And when you look back on what you've accomplished, know this: someone, somewhere, was watching—and they are proud of you.

You earned it.

Why do you ruck?