



## 11th Annual Canal Pursuit for Mental Health August 23, 2025

### Participant Guide

**THE RUN:** The **Canal Pursuit for Mental Health** is a fun run/walk day at several locations along the Port Severn-to-Ottawa route of the original Canal Pursuit. Locations include Port Severn, Peterborough, Trenton, Belleville, Kingston, Smiths Falls, Kemptville and Ottawa, as well as a virtual event.

**REGISTRATION:** There is no registration fee; this is a fundraiser, not a race. We are asking every participant to consider using the fundraising tools available to help raise funds for the Mood Disorders Society of Canada. To register as a runner, go to [www.CanalPursuit.defeatdepression.ca](http://www.CanalPursuit.defeatdepression.ca) and click on the “Register” button on the top menu bar of the window. You’ll be taken to a page with a bunch of buttons indicating different locations. Choose the location you’d like to enter. You’ll be asked to sign a waiver and give some contact information, and you’ll be introduced to a fundraising platform with all of the tools needed to let people know what you are doing and why.

**THE ROUTE:** Each location has routes that are roughly 5 km and 10 km long.

**START TIMES? NO, FINISH TIME:** This is a little tricky. It’s not a race. The goal of the run is to have everyone **finish** at the same time. Everyone at all locations, at all running and walking distances, finishing just before noon on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, so that they can all join the virtual presence as Clay finishes his section of the run in Ottawa on Parliament Hill, carrying the original flag. If it takes you two hours to walk 10 km, start your walk before 10:00 am so that you finish before noon. The goal is to have everyone watching and virtually meeting on Parliament Hill so we can all carry The Flag to the finish.

**THE FLAG:** For the first two years, Clay Williams ran the full distance of the Canal Pursuit, and carried a Canadian Flag with him, and the relay runners have carried the flag since then. Clay

has asked people who know someone or are themselves struggling with depression, anxiety, bipolar, or any mood disorder to sign the flag, and the flag will be carried to Ottawa on the Canal Pursuit as a symbol that they don't have to carry their burdens alone. Each of the local events will have a flag that runners can sign as well as carry, in solidarity with Clay as he carries the original flag in Ottawa. Ask your local Team Leader about the flag! As we all carry the flag for the finale on Parliament Hill at noon on August 23rd, we will all be showing our support for those who are struggling, sending the message that someone is on their side.

**ELBOWS UP!!**

