

NEWS RELEASE

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AMWAY RIVER BANK RUN MOVING 2021 EVENT TO OCT. 23

Organizers hope pivot from spring to fall allows for 'closer to normal' event

(GRAND RAPIDS, MI) - Amway River Bank Run organizers announce that the 2021 event date has changed from May 8 to October 23 in downtown Grand Rapids. The decision to move the 44th iteration of the annual event was made after careful consideration and consultation with local health professionals, including health partner Spectrum Health.

The specific event details and safety procedures are still being finalized and will be communicated as they are confirmed. Organizers believe delaying the event to October from its usual second Saturday in May date will allow the occasion to resemble more closely what participants and spectators have come to expect from Grand Rapids' signature outdoor sporting event.

"The safety of the runners, volunteers and supporters has always been at the center of every decision we've made regarding last year's and this year's event," said Russ Hines, owner, Riverbank Events and Media, which owns and operates the annual event. "Even though we do expect there to still be COVID-19 safety precautions in place this October, we felt that it was in everyone's best interest to allow more time to be comfortable with an in-person event."

Participants that registered for the May 8 date will automatically be confirmed for the October 23 event.

The social distancing required to prevent the spread of COVID-19 forced the cancellation of the 2020 in-person event, but as more people have learned how to manage social distancing, and giving more time for participants to be vaccinated, run officials believe a later 2021 in-person event is prudent.

"We feel delaying this year's event to allow more participants and volunteers to be vaccinated will give us the chance to offer a safer and responsible in-person event," Amway River Bank Run race director David Madiol said. "We continue to be very grateful for the community's support

this past year and look forward to seeing people's smiles downtown next October, even if they're behind masks!"

In addition to Amway's title sponsorship, the 2021 event will continue to be presented by Fifth Third Bank and Spectrum Health, and both organizations had a hand in the decision to push the 2021 event to October.

"Our partners at Amway, Spectrum Health and Fifth Third Bank have been so understanding of all the pivots we've had to make over the last year, but they, along with so many other sponsors, elite athletes, runners, volunteers and vendors have all rallied around to make sure the Amway River Bank Run tradition continues moving forward in 2021," added Hines.

"We commend and support Amway River Bank Run organizers in moving the event to the fall and balancing the desire to 'return to normal' with the need to protect the health and safety of participants and the community at large. We look forward to partnering on a successful race," said Spectrum Health president and CEO Tina Freese Decker.

"We understand what it takes to make this a successful event under normal circumstances let alone the conditions that face us today," said Scott Stenstrom, marketing and communications director for Fifth Third Bank. "The team will be excited and ready to go come October."

Anyone interested in receiving race details can sign up for an email newsletter at <https://amwayriverbankrun.com/enews-signup/>. Questions can be emailed to runinfo@amwayriverbankrun.com.

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