



# Final Exit Network

## ANNUAL REPORT 2025

# Strategic Goals 2025-2026

*Compassion. Autonomy. Dignity.*

## **Promote FEN's mission to expanded audiences.**

Ensuring that more people understand and support the right to a peaceful, chosen death is critical. To do this, we will identify high-profile individuals and groups whose voices can amplify FEN's message and expand outreach strategies to engage each effectively. We will also reassess current messaging and programs to determine what's working, what needs refining, and what may no longer serve our goals. As we grow, we continue to evaluate the staffing and expert support needed to communicate with broader and more diverse audiences. These efforts will help ensure FEN's message reaches further, resonates more deeply, and supports those seeking compassionate end of life options.

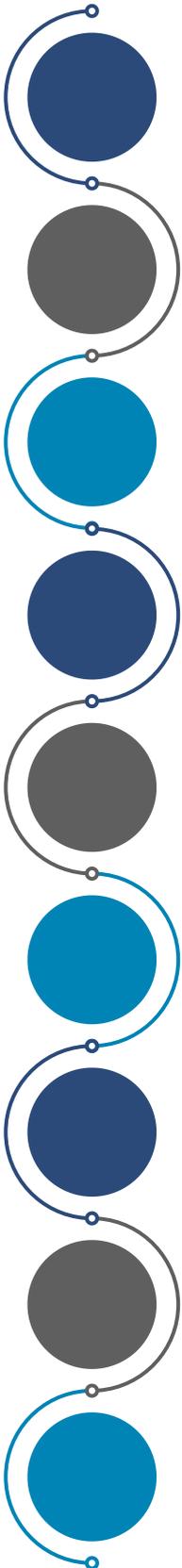
## **Sustain and strengthen the Exit Guide Program.**

Final Exit Network is committed to securing the long-term sustainability of our guide program—both financially and organizationally—so that we can continue offering compassionate, informed support to those facing end of life decisions. To ensure financial sustainability, we're deepening our outreach and engagement with individuals, foundations, and major donors. Operationally, we continue to review staffing, clarify roles, and strengthen our culture of communication and volunteer support. By investing in both the financial foundation and operational structure of the guide program, FEN is taking thoughtful steps to protect and strengthen this vital service for years to come.

## **Expand awareness of FEN's unique dementia-focused services and program.**

As the prevalence of dementia grows, Final Exit Network is expanding awareness of our unique services tailored to individuals facing this difficult diagnosis. Our goal is to ensure that those in the early stages of dementia—and their caregivers—understand the full range of end of life options available to them, including VSED (voluntarily stopping eating and drinking) and the refusal of life-sustaining treatment. We are actively engaging neurologists to better understand and influence their perspectives on these choices, and using our social media platforms to foster thoughtful, compassionate conversations around dementia and autonomy. By assessing the needs and attitudes of patients and caregivers, we aim to improve access to information and support, empowering more people to make informed decisions while they still can.

**All goals ultimately support FEN's core objective:  
to educate about and support end of life choice.  
It's why we exist and why we attract dedicated supporters.**



# Annual Report 2025

## How Did FEN Stack Up To Its Goals This Past Year?



### Strategically expand staffing to ensure leadership continuity.

- Following a comprehensive evaluation of staffing needs, FEN created an executive assistant position and welcomed Michelle Kalapodis to that role in July 2024.
- With Mary Ewert's retirement announcement, FEN leadership underwent an extensive search process to identify and recruit a new executive director.
- An executive search firm reviewed more than 500 applicants and facilitated the hiring process for Executive Director Michelle Witte in summer of 2025.



### Amplify FEN's thought leadership expertise.

- FEN volunteers and staff appeared on eight podcasts throughout the year.
- International conferences brought FEN speakers in as presenters and panelists, reaching an extended global audience.
- San Francisco Public Library recognized FEN volunteer Jim Van Buskirk as a 2025 Library Laureate for his work as editor of *There at the End: Voices from Final Exit Network*.
- FEN volunteer and former board member Gary Wederspahn discussed FEN's work in a June 2025 AARP magazine interview.



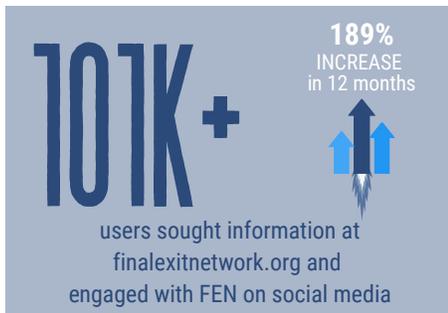
### Augment and diversify Final Exit Network's financial vitality.

- The average donation increased from \$933 to \$1,340 year-over-year.
- FEN membership increased by 22%, providing over \$93,000 in support.
- FEN secured \$140,000 from private foundations, representing a 142% increase in grant funding year-over-year.
- Recurring donations (individuals giving to FEN each month) increased by 70%.
- Infinity Society membership (those who remember FEN in estate plans) grew by 40%.



### Forge deeper collaborations with right to die organizations.

- FEN is currently working with more than ten right to die organizations nationally and the World Federation of Right to Die Societies.
- New and renewed collaborations with Swiss right to die organizations provide FEN members with alternatives when exploring their options for a death with dignity.
- FEN's Swiss Option Advisor team develops regular communications to address common questions about the Swiss option.

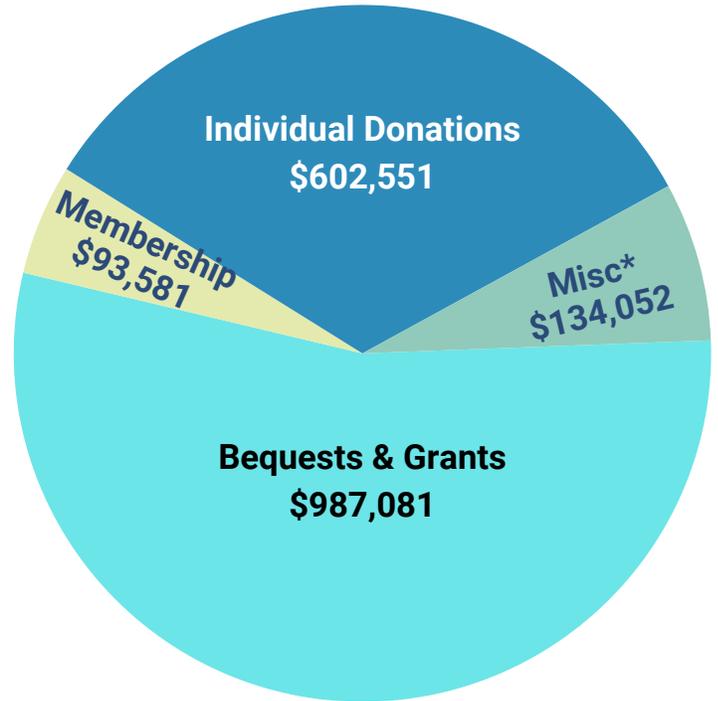


# Financials July 2024–June 2025

## Highlights:

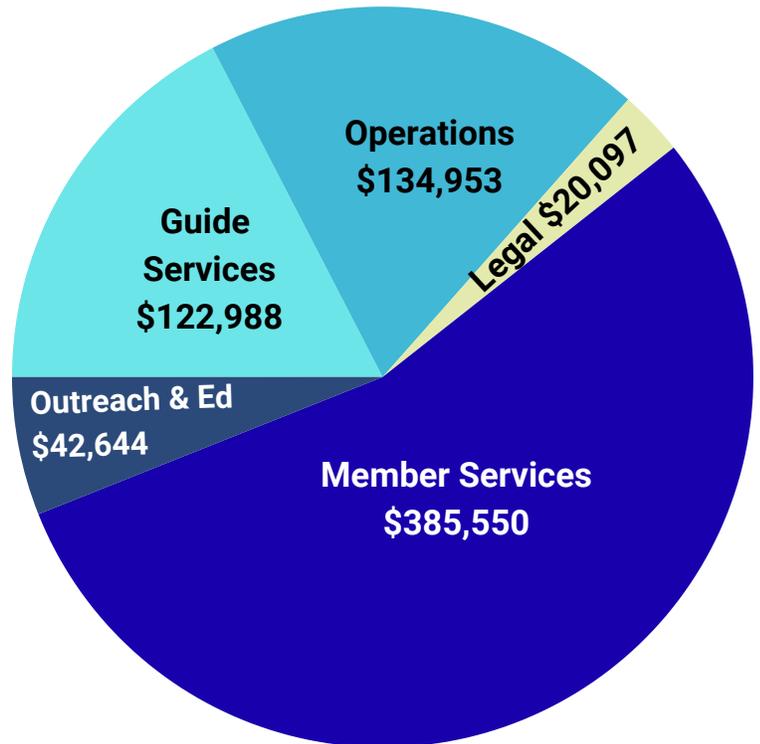
- 1,182 donors gave a total of \$1,589,632 between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.
- FEN maintained Platinum Level status (the highest level charities can attain) from Candid/GuideStar, recognizing FEN’s commitment to financial transparency.
- Charity Navigator again rated Final Exit Network as a 4-Star charity—its highest rating—recognizing its commitment to accountability and finance, leadership and adaptability, and culture and community.
- 78% of FEN’s expenses are directly attributed to education and program services, exceeding best practice standards.
- FEN’s Investment Account totaled over \$7 million as of June 30, 2025, an increase of \$1.5 million from the prior twelve months. These funds, raised through individual gifts, bequests, and grants, support all of FEN’s programs.

### TOTAL REVENUE \$1,817,264\*



\*Does not include unrealized gain (change in the market value of held investments) of \$624,090

### TOTAL EXPENSES: \$706,232



Please note that we are in the midst of our annual audit/review, so all numbers are confirmed but unaudited.



FEN's success wouldn't be possible without the support of our members, volunteers, and donors.  
**You** make the difference. Thank you!

PO BOX 10071  
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32302

### 2025–2026 Board of Directors

- Brian Ruder, President
- Anita Winsor, Vice President
- Michael Klingler, Treasurer
- Russell Bates
- Randee Laikind
- Janis Landis
- Christopher Palmer

### Staff

- Michelle Witte, Executive Director
- Lowrey Brown, Exit Guide Program Director
- Michelle Kalapodis, Executive Assistant
- Heike Sanford, Member Services Coordinator

### Final Exit Network

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## OUR MISSION

*To educate and support those who want choice in dying.*

## OUR VISION

*That any competent person unbearably suffering an intractable medical condition has the option to die legally and peacefully.*