Campus Events

New guidelines from the State of Rhode Island and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are making it possible for the University of Rhode Island to hold more in-person events. The updated University guidelines and requirements below are designed to ensure the success of our campus events while providing for the health and safety of all involved.

The guidelines and requirements below are designed to be scalable, however the University recognizes that each Event and Venue is unique and individual Venue operations and Event management plans may need to be developed that expand on these guidelines and requirements. The provisions of this document will be updated as needed based on feedback from the URI community and in concert with any changes to State of Rhode Island and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.

Overview

Organized, in-person gatherings of individuals on University Property, other than scheduled classes, laboratory/studio sessions, and student-athletes participating in approved team sports, are considered Events and are subject to the limitations described below. For purposes of these guidelines and requirements, an in-person meeting is regarded as an Event and is therefore subject to the same provisions as provided in the document.

The URI COVID-19 Task Force (Task Force) is responsible for issuing guidelines and requirements that address the planning and conduct of campus Events as well as reviewing and approving such Events as necessary. All Events occurring on University Property or under the auspices of the University must comply with these guidelines and requirements and with those promulgated by the State of RI. Where any differences exist between State guidelines and University guidelines and requirements, the more restrictive/conservative provision shall apply.

All Events with more than fifteen (15) Attendees require advance notice to the Task Force, and all URI Events with more than fifty (50) Attendees also require explicit approval from the Task Force as described below.

Until further notice, the University continues to limit Hosted Events for outside groups/customers. See Appendix 1 for more information.

Definitions

Attendee. A person who attends an Event.

Catered Event. An Event catered by URI Dining Services or another vendor approved by the COVID-19 Task Force in consultation with URI Dining Services.

Event. A gathering, assembly, or group activity having designated start/end time or times, other than regularly scheduled class sessions. Events include, but are not limited to, meetings, receptions, conferences, parties, banquet, fairs, festivals, vendor events, concerts, arts and entertainment Events, sporting events, tournaments, and races. As defined by the State of Rhode Island, Events may be classified “public events,” such as performances or movie screening where Attendees do not interact with each other directly, or “social gatherings,” such as weddings, parties, or networking Events where Attendees do interact with each other. The term “public events” refers to the type of activity taking place; it does not matter whether the Event is open to the general public or restricted to the campus community.
**Event Manager.** The University employee designated by the Event Sponsor as having responsibility for identifying and implementing all safety and security measures necessary to meet the COVID-19 health and safety requirements of the University as well as applicable life safety codes and standards. This individual must be a University employee, with the exception of a student organization meeting involving ten (10) or fewer Attendees for which a student leader of the organization may serve as the Event Manager. For meetings, the meeting host is the Event Manager unless another individual has been assigned this role.

**Event Sponsor.** The University department, office, or campus organization hosting an Event, whether or not an external partner organization is involved.

**Household.** See Appendix 1.

**Hosted Event.** Events not sponsored by URI that are organized and hosted by outside groups on University property through an agreement for use of University facilities, regardless of whether a fee is charged.

**University Employee.** Any person employed by the University, including faculty, staff, and students as applicable, regardless of the source of funds within the University.

**University Affiliate.** Any individual who is not a faculty member, staff, or student who otherwise has a formal relationship with the University, including but not limited to visiting scholars, visiting students, postdoctoral or other research fellows, professional program participants, adjunct teaching or clinical personnel, volunteers, employees and associates of the URI Foundation and Alumni Engagement, and members of the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees. Vendors and contractors are not considered University Affiliates.

**University Property.** Property belonging to the State of Rhode Island and held in trust by the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees; property held by the University of Rhode Island or any of its component units in its own name; and property owned by third parties but assigned to, occupied by, or managed by the University or any of its component units.

**Venue.** A facility, room, space, or outdoor location where an Event takes place.

**Visitor.** An individual who is not a current University student, faculty, staff, or Affiliate.

**Event notification and approval**

All campus Events are subject to review by the Task Force and larger events require specific approval as indicated below. To register an Event and/or request approval, submit all information to the Task Force using the URI Public Safety Event Planning Form ([uri.edu/emergency/events/submit/](http://uri.edu/emergency/events/submit/)). The Event Manager is responsible for completing this submission and will be the point of contact for any Task Force follow-up regarding the Event.

**Events with 15 or fewer Attendees**

Event registration is optional but not required.

**Events with 16-50 Attendees**

Events with 16-50 Attendees require notification to the Task Force at least ten (10) business days in advance by completing the URI Public Safety Event Planning Form. Formal approval is not generally required for Events with Attendees, but the Task Force reviews all such notifications and may contact the Event Manager for any Event that appears to need further review and approval. Otherwise, Events with fifty (50) or fewer Attendees may proceed as scheduled so long as the required notification has been submitted.
Events with more than 50 Attendees

Events with more than fifty (50) Attendees require review and approval from the COVID-19 Task Force. Such approval must be requested at least twenty (20) business days in advance using the URI Public Safety Event Planning Form. The Event Manager must also complete the State of RI Event Template: COVID-19 Control Plan for any events with more than fifty (50) Attendees and include it when submitting the URI Public Safety Event Planning Form.

Review process

For Events requiring approval, the Task Force will review the submitted Event plans to ensure compliance with all State and University guidelines and requirements and evaluate the necessity of holding the event in person versus a virtual Event. The Task Force will make every effort to notify the Event Manager of their determination within ten (10) business days of receiving the request. Events subject to review and approval should not be marketed or promoted until Task Force approval is received.

Venue capacity and Event size

The permitted size of an Event is based on a percentage of normal Venue capacity (currently 100% in most cases.) Normal capacity is the occupancy assigned by the RI State Fire Marshal, if available, or otherwise the typical capacity of the Venue prior to COVID-related restrictions. NOTE: This capacity must be reduced if unvaccinated attendees will be permitted to attend the Event, as unvaccinated individuals must maintain at least three (3) feet of physical distancing from others.

Social Gatherings

The capacity of indoor and outdoor Social Gatherings is no longer limited, provided applicable requirements for face coverings, physical distancing, and similar measures are adhered to.

WARNING: The most common way COVID-19 spreads is in social settings between friends and family who are not wearing masks and have not yet been vaccinated. The more a person interacts with others, and the longer that interaction lasts, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread in the community.

Public Events

The capacity of indoor and outdoor Public Events is 100% of Venue capacity. Additional approval from the RI Department of Business Regulation (DBR) is required for indoor Public Events with more than 2,500 attendees.

IMPORTANT: Should the State of Rhode Island subsequently reduce the number of Attendees permitted for Events, those lower numbers will take effect immediately and this document will be updated accordingly. Should the State increase the number of Attendees permitted, the limits indicated above will remain in effect until the Task Force determines it is safe and appropriate to increase the size of campus Events.

Sporting Events

URI Athletics will determine protocols for spectators at outdoor Athletics games, subject to review by the URI COVID-19 Task Force. Spectators are limited to those categories determined by Athletics and must be ticketed in advance for all venues (Meade Stadium, URI Soccer Complex, Bill Beck Field, URI Softball Complex, URI Tennis Complex.) Guests are required to comply with all URI and State of RI requirements for face coverings, physical distancing, and contact tracing.
Capacity limits

Event Managers must work with Venue staff using the information above to determine the maximum number of Attendees for their planned Event and must ensure capacity limits are maintained at all times. Note that, if an Event will utilize several spaces/rooms in a Venue, capacity limits apply not only to the Event as a whole (i.e., the total number of Attendees who may participate in an Event) but also the occupancy of each individual space/room being used.

Event Managers must take into consideration that people may show up at the Event in numbers that exceed maximum capacity. Event staff must be able to effectively turn people away from an Event if their admittance would cause the Event to exceed its allowable capacity.

NOTE: These capacity limits also apply to places of general public interaction that are not normally considered “places of assembly” (for example, retail spaces, offices, gyms, etc.) during Events or activities with designated start/end times held within those settings.

Physical distancing and operations

When possible, ticketing/check-in stations should be located outdoors. For larger Events, Event Managers should consider timed tickets or parking limitations to assist with maintaining Event capacity limits.

Event Managers are responsible for establishing protocols and designating staff to ensure capacity limits and physical distancing are maintained, especially in high traffic areas (e.g., lobbies, entrances, exits, restrooms, and popular exhibits/displays). Venues that expect a significant number of Attendees to enter or exit around the same time, such as at the beginning/end of a movie or a performance, should establish protocols, proactively communicate with Attendees, and designate staff to ensure Attendees enter and exit the premises in an orderly manner.

When possible, physical, non-porous barriers should be utilized at key points of Attendee interaction. Examples include Plexiglas or other materials in accordance with standards established by RIDOH and the Fire Code. Examples include reservation/ticketing stations and similar locations with a clear demarcation between Attendees and Event staff.

In order to facilitate physical distancing among Event staff, Event Managers should consider:

- Staggering employee shifts and break times;
- Designating separate work zones;
- Spacing workstations and personnel positioning by three feet, when practicable; and
- Eliminating or minimizing the use of shared equipment. If equipment must be shared, it should be sanitized between use.

Live performances are allowed, provided that:

- All performers, whether individuals or groups, are fully vaccinated, as verified by the Event Manager or URI Health Services via proof of vaccination.
- For indoor events, there is at least six (6) feet of physical distance between performers and the same distance from tables and high-traffic areas. This distance can be reduced to three (3) feet if all performers wear masks throughout the performance.
- For outdoor events, there is at least three (3) feet of physical distance between performers and the same distance from tables and high-traffic areas.
- No mingling or congregating is allowed, and Attendees must remain seated.
- No backstage, pre- or post-performance gatherings are permitted.
Smoking and vaping are prohibited except in designated outdoor areas and must otherwise be in compliance with University policy and local ordinances.

NOTE: Event Managers must anticipate that some Attendees will not understand or follow the guidelines and requirements enumerated in this document. Event Managers must be ready to manage or exclude participants from Events as these situations arise.

Campus Tours

During in-person guided tours the current student guide, customer-facing staff, and visitors should maintain appropriate physical distancing whenever possible. Self-guided tours will be promoted to those who have not pre-registered for a tour or met guided tour requirements.

Event ticketing and payment

Advance online reservations and contactless/digital ticketing are required for all University of Rhode Island Events. Event Managers must also make provisions for Attendees without access to smart devices for electronic ticketing. Walk-ins are not permitted for any Event (i.e., individuals who have not pre-registered).

Collecting contact tracing information

As required by State of Rhode Island guidelines, the Event Manager must maintain a log to retain the names, phone numbers, and the date/time of Event Attendees and of employees working each Event. Attendee contact information should be collected as part of the online pre-registration process, and Event Managers are responsible for preparing an employee log following each Event. The logs must be kept by the Event Manager for a period of thirty (30) days and this information must be made available to URI Health Services and/or the State of Rhode Island upon request for the purposes of contact tracing. Records over thirty (30) days old must be permanently destroyed. Attendees must be notified at the time of collection that the information is being collected solely for the purpose of contact tracing relative to this specific Event.

Protective measures

Screening procedures

Effective May 21, 2021 and until further notice, the University has paused use the electronic daily self-assessment app for COVID-19. However, all students, employees, and visitors coming to any University of Rhode Island campus are expected to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and may not come to campus or attend University Events if sick. See Daily Health Self-Screening for additional information.

Face coverings

All individuals on University Property must at all times follow University and State of Rhode Island guidelines for wearing face coverings and following other protective measures as required by the University and the State of RI. No Attendee will be permitted to enter or participate in an indoor Event without a face covering (unless exempted, see Face Coverings.)
Shared objects and frequently touched objects and surfaces

Commonly touched surfaces in restrooms (e.g., doorknobs, stall handles, sinks, paper towel dispensers, soap dispensers, toilet seats, etc.) must be cleaned frequently and in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.

Enhanced cleaning and/or disinfecting procedures

Event Managers must work with venue staff to arrange sufficient custodial services to meet cleaning needs for their Event as described herein and in the State of Rhode Island and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Each Event must have a plan to carry out these cleaning and sanitizing functions. The additional cost of custodial staffing for an Event may be charged to the Event Sponsor. If the necessary staffing and supplies cannot be arranged, the Event must be canceled.

Hand washing facilities with running soap and water or hand sanitizer that contains 60% alcohol must be available to all Attendees. Hand sanitizer should be made available at the Venue’s entrances and exits as well as outside bathroom facilities, around food and beverage operations, and in common areas, when practicable.

Accessibility accommodations

Nothing in this document will preclude the obligation to maintain accessibility standards for Attendees at any Event.

Implementation

An Event Manager must be present at any Event to implement and monitor for compliance with physical distancing measures, sanitization, and other standards included in this guidance. The Event Manager must have the State of RI’s COVID-19 Control Event Plan Template present at the Event, if applicable. The Event Manager must provide training on or a review of these measures and standards for all Employees and other individuals working the Event prior to the start of the Event.

Signage must be posted, visible to Attendees, that communicates expected physical distancing, mask wearing, and Attendee screening policies. Audio and video announcements, website pages, social media posts, and electronic communication are also encouraged.

Some Event operations are subject to alternative or additional State of Rhode Island guidance. Plans for any such Events/operations must be coordinated through the University’s COVID-19 Task Force. More information about this alternative or additional State of Rhode Island guidance can be found on the www.reopeningri.com web site. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- **Food and beverage operations** are subject to the requirements and recommendations described in the State’s guidance for restaurants.
- **Retail operations** are subject to the requirements and recommendations described in the State’s guidance for non-essential retailers.
- **Childcare and summer camp operations** are subject to the requirements and recommendations described in the State’s guidance for childcare and summer camps.
- **Gyms or fitness operations** are subject to the requirements and recommendations described in the State’s guidance for gyms and fitness centers.
• **Parks and beaches operations**, including use of the bike path, are subject to the requirements and recommendations described in the State’s guidance for parks and beaches.

• **Boating operations** are subject to the requirements and recommendations described in the State’s guidance for party and charter boats.

• **Transportation operations** (e.g., shuttles, valet services) are subject to the requirements and recommendations described in the State’s guidance for bus services and car and van transportation as applicable.

**Appendix 1: Hosted Events**

Hosted Events are subject to the same policies and requirements as described herein for University-sponsored Events. These include, but are not limited to, face coverings, social distancing, daily health self-assessment, COVID testing, contact tracing, and isolation/quarantine. Group size is restricted to the lesser of State of RI guidelines or the University’s own limits as provided in this document.

The URI COVID-19 Task Force’s criteria for reviewing Hosted Events requests includes:

• Relevance to the University’s academic, research, and public service missions;
• Prioritization of internal groups seeking to host events at URI;
• Group composition and size, and whether or not the proposed event involves overnight accommodations on campus; and
• Host organization’s ability to provide for health and safety needs including testing, contact tracing, and isolation/quarantine without depending on URI for these functions.

In addition, overnight accommodations will not be approved for groups of minors except in conjunction with URI-hosted events such as student orientation.