Campus Events

As we move towards Summer 2021, 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.

Because many protective measures remain in place, event organizers must still be aware of possible increased staffing costs around Events due to greater sanitation demands and Attendee monitoring. Organizers should also be prepared to modify, scale back, or cancel their Event if notified by University officials to do so.

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 (without spectators), are considered Events and are limited to those that are reasonably necessary to the University’s mission and cannot be held virtually. 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 Rhode Island. 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 2 for more information.

Definitions

Attendee. A person who attends an Event.

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/](https://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 16-50 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 restricted to the LESSER of Venue capacity (as modified for COVID-19) or the maximum number of Attendees, performers, and staff permitted by State of Rhode Island guidelines for the Event format (social gathering versus public event) and location (indoor versus outdoor). The maximum Venue capacity indicates the total number of people present at the Event; this total includes staff, performers, media and/or other individuals in addition to the Attendees.

Social Gatherings

The capacity of indoor Social Gatherings is limited to fifteen (15) people regardless of Venue. The capacity for outdoor Social Gatherings is limited to fifty (50) people.

Exceptions for catered events may be made in accordance with State of Rhode Island Executive Orders, subject to review and approval by the URI COVID-19 Task Force.

Public Events

The capacity of Public Events is limited as follows:

- **Indoor venues of assembly:** Up to 50% of normal capacity to a maximum of two hundred fifty (250) people.
- **Outdoor venues of assembly:** Up to 50% of normal capacity to a maximum of five hundred (500) people.
- **Indoor sporting facilities:** Spectators are prohibited from attending sporting events other than as specifically approved by the URI COVID-19 Task Force and the State of Rhode Island.
- **Outdoor sporting facilities:** For approved outdoor Athletics sporting events, up to a limit of five hundred (500) people.
- **All other locations:** No more than one (1) person per fifty (50) square feet of generally accessible floor space.

In all cases, there must be sufficient space for Attendees to maintain at least six (6) feet of physical separation at all times or, if individuals will be physically exerting themselves, they must remain at least fourteen (14) feet apart from other individuals unless they are members of the same household (see Appendix 1.)
IMPORTANT: Should the State of Rhode Island further restrict 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 requirements for face coverings, social 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 COVID Modified 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**

**Event Managers must prevent mingling or congregating in common areas** (e.g., lobbies, dance floors, unseated concert areas, recreation spaces).

**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.

**For queuing at entrances or reservation/ticketing stations, Event Managers must facilitate physical distancing.** This includes:

- Demarcating six-foot spacing in any lines by using tape and/or with signage, rope/belt stanchions, or other methods;
- Demarcating a six-foot distance between each reservation/ticketing station; and
- Demarcating a six-foot distance between the waiting line for Attendees and any reservation/ticketing station.

**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 that facilitates 6-foot physical distancing.
Event Managers should demarcate physical distancing (i.e., six-foot) spaces, especially in high-traffic areas, whenever practicable.

Seating and tables must be spaced to facilitate physical distancing. In instances where separation or removal of seating, tables, or other stations is not practical, signage and/or other measures must be implemented to prevent access to certain seating and tables to facilitate physical distancing.

One-way foot traffic flows should be established whenever practicable. This may involve designating separate entrances and exits and limiting access to areas where one-way flows are not feasible. Signage, floor markings, and engagement of staff to facilitate one-way flows and reduce congestion are strongly encouraged, especially in high-traffic areas.

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 six feet, when practicable; and
- Eliminating or minimizing the use of shared equipment. If equipment must be shared, it should be sanitized between use.

Physical distancing should be promoted within bathrooms (alternating stalls, sinks, etc.) as addressed in the URI COVID-19 Building Reopening Guide.

Bag and coat checks should not be used during University Events due to commingling and risk of contamination between checked items.

Live performances are allowed, provided that:

- There is fourteen (14) feet of physical distance between performers and the same distance from tables and high-traffic areas. This distance can be reduced to six (6) feet if all performers wear masks throughout the performance or if there is a physical, non-porous barrier (e.g., Plexiglas) separating performers from other performers, from tables, and from high-traffic areas.
- No mingling or congregating is allowed, and Attendees must remain seated.
- No backstage, pre- or post-performance gatherings are permitted.

Food and beverages are currently permitted only for outdoor Events catered by URI Dining Services. The use of self-service beverage stations, including water fountains, is not allowed and Event Managers are responsible to ensure this prohibition is met. When food service is provided, it must be either table service or “grab-and-go”; buffet service is not 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. In-person tours are limited to nine (9) attendees plus the instructor/tour guide. 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 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

The State of Rhode Island requires that establishments screen employees, customers, and visitors for symptoms of COVID-19. At URI this will consist of electronic self-screening designated as a Daily Health Self-Assessment. The outcome of the Daily Health Self-Assessment will determine if an individual may come to University Property or must isolate, quarantine, or otherwise remain away from University Property. Presentation of an email showing that an individual has passed the Daily Health Self-Assessment is mandatory for all Event Attendees and may be requested at any time by an Event Manager or associated staff as authorized by the Event Manager. NOTE: Attendees without smart devices may print their email confirmation and bring it with them to the Event.

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. No Attendee will be permitted to enter or participate in an 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.
Event Managers should remove all publicly accessible brochures, maps, swag, gifts, and promotional items. If an Event expects to include access to such items for Attendees, distribution must be directly to those Attendees. These items may not be shared by Attendees and must be discarded or sanitized if re-collected from Attendees.

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.

All commonly touched surfaces (e.g., seats) and objects must be sanitized between uses. If surfaces or objects are involved in a recreational or historical/cultural activity and cannot be sanitized between uses then this activity must be prohibited as well as access to these surfaces or objects.

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.

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**Appendix 1: Defining Household at Institutes of Higher Education**

For purposes of State of Rhode Island and University COVID-19 guidelines and requirements, the following definitions of a “household” apply to those living in campus housing:

• **Residence Hall Suites and Apartments**: A group of students living in a semi-private residence hall suite or apartment, which has multiple sleeping rooms connected to a common/shared space, including multiple bathrooms, and is not readily accessible to others, is considered equivalent to a household.

• **Multiple-Occupancy Residence Hall Rooms**: A group of two or more students who share a sleeping room (i.e., roommates) that is not part of a suite is considered equivalent to a household.

• **Single-Occupancy Residence Hall Rooms**: A student residing in a single-occupancy residence hall room may choose to form a stable pod of no more than three individuals total who also reside in single-occupancy rooms in the same residence hall. Such a pod is considered equivalent to a household.

• **Greek Housing**: Students living in Greek houses will follow the provisions for Multiple- and/or Single-Occupancy Residence Hall Rooms as applicable.

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**Appendix 2: 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.