

University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees Regulations Regarding Use of University Property

1. Introduction

As noted in the University of Rhode Island's [Mission Statement, and consistent with University values](#), the University of Rhode Island (also "University" or "URI") is committed to high-quality education, community engagement, and the freedom to learn, teach, create, and conduct research with integrity in the pursuit and dissemination of new knowledge aimed at contributing to the public good. The management of University Property and other resources is paramount to meeting that mission.

The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees is committed to supporting the exercise of constitutionally protected expression, while maintaining a safe environment on all University Property. Thus, the Board of Trustees establishes the requirements enumerated below for the use of University Property to provide a safe, secure environment, preserve the integrity of its campuses, protect the health, safety, and welfare of all members of the University community, and focus on its mission while simultaneously protecting the principles of free expression, assembly, and dissent protected by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Rhode Island. These principles are also reflected in the [University Manual](#) and the [Student Handbook](#).

2. Authority and Applicability

Pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws §§ 16-32-2 and 16-32-2.1, the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees is empowered to make rules and regulations for the "control and use" of University Property, while the President of the University is responsible for the general management of University Property.

These regulations apply to all users of University Property, including students, faculty, staff, affiliates, and third parties who wish to use any University Property for any purpose. In addition, these regulations apply to all activities on and forms of use of University Property, including educational, recreational, residential, and extra-curricular activities.

These regulations are intended to be neutral, generally applicable, and enforced equitably and with reason, at all times consistent with individual rights protected by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Rhode Island, federal and state laws, and other University policies and procedures. These regulations shall not be implemented or applied in a discriminatory manner or in a way that is based, unlawfully, on the viewpoints or protected expression or association of users of University Property.

3. Definitions

University Operations. All teaching, research, community engagement, and business functions, as well as any other official activity of the University.

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. University Property includes all real property, including without limitation land, buildings and other structures, fences, driveways and walkways, and other permanent improvements and associated infrastructure.

4. General

The primary purpose of University Property is to support the University's mission. Every individual and group using University Property is expected to use it in a manner that (i) complies with all applicable laws, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations; (ii) maintains and protects the integrity, cleanliness, and functionality of the University Property; (iii) does not materially and substantially disrupt or impede University Operations; and (iv) does not endanger or impinge upon the individual rights of another person.

Access to and use of University Property is governed by the University, not by colleges, departments, or administrative units. Space is allocated to colleges, departments, and administrative units pursuant to the University's policy on [Allocation and Utilization of Space](#). Individual colleges, departments, and administrative units may adopt guidelines governing the use of those spaces allocated for their specific use provided that such guidelines are consistent with these regulations.

5. Limitations and Prohibited Activities

The University may establish reasonable standards and limitations regarding the time, place, and manner of use of any University Property, including access to certain areas within a building, entire buildings themselves, or specified areas of University Property, by both the general public and the University community. The University also has the right to restrict access to any and all University Property, including the campus(es) as a whole, as necessary to address safety and/or security concerns.

Specific requirements relative to the limitations and prohibited activities (e.g., building hours, decibel levels, posting, etc.) shall be developed by the URI Department of Public Safety and posted on the Public Safety website.

All of the below limitations and prohibited activities will be interpreted in a manner consistent with URI's Mission Statement and University values, the establishment of the University as a place for living, learning, and the pursuit of knowledge, and the principles of free expression, assembly, and dissent protected by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Rhode Island, and will be applied in a manner consistent with due process.

- a. Individual Rights: Under no circumstances may University Property be used in a manner that impinges upon the rights of any person protected under the United States or Rhode Island Constitutions; any federal, state, or local law; or any University policy.
- b. Violation of Law: Any use of University Property that violates federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or ordinances will constitute a violation of these regulations.
- c. Disruption of University Operations: The use of University Property must not materially and substantially disrupt or impede University Operations or scheduled meetings, programs, or events.
- d. Campus and Building Access and Egress: Any use of University Property must not substantially impede access to, use of, or egress from University Property (or otherwise substantially impede access to or egress from sanctioned University functions and activities) or substantially impede vehicular or pedestrian right-of-way. Driving on walkways or accessing gated roadways unless authorized or otherwise posted is strictly prohibited.

- e. Endangerment: University Property may not be used in a manner that physically endangers others or that is violent or incites violence.
- f. Leafletting and Distribution of Literature: Leafletting or the distribution of literature is allowed provided that the activity does not disrupt the flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic or block access to or egress from University Property.
- g. Graffiti: Graffiti is defined as unauthorized and unlawful writings or drawings made on a wall or other surface. Graffiti is not protected speech, and may be considered the illegal defacement of property, punishable as a crime under Rhode Island General Law (RIGL § 11-44-21.1). Temporary markings, such as (water-soluble) chalking, are permissible provided the speech is lawful and the markings are easily removable.
- h. Erection of Structures: No structure, permanent or temporary, may be erected on University Property without specific written approval from the Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, or, for structures related to educational activities, the Dean of the College responsible for that structure. Camping, defined as the erection of a temporary shelter or otherwise maintaining a space designed for living (eating, sleeping, etc.) outside, is prohibited without written permission from the Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance or the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.
- i. Modifications to University Property: Unauthorized modifications to University Property such as addition or removal of trees or other landscaping, digging holes or the construction of mounds, changes to building facades, alteration of wayfinding materials, the addition of paint or other markings to surfaces (e.g., to parking lots), or similar changes to University Property are not allowed. In addition, unauthorized banners, posters, stickers, objects, or any other moveable item may not be affixed to University Property in such a way that damages University Property.
- j. Amplified and Projected Sound: Sound levels must be maintained at a volume that does not interfere with University Operations. The use of amplified and projected sound is regulated by rules developed by the URI Department of Public Safety and posted to the URI Department of Public Safety website. These rules address decibel levels, sound locations, limitations, and exceptions.
- k. Building Access: Access to non-residential buildings, outside of posted building hours, is limited to persons with a bona fide business or educational purpose at that location. Access to residential buildings by non-residents is by invitation only and the University reserves the right to ask non-residents to leave at any time.
- l. Building Exteriors: Climbing, scaling, or rappelling on University Property is prohibited unless expressly permitted in writing by the Vice President for Administration and Finance or their delegate.
- m. Bicycles, Skateboards and Similar Conveyances. The use of bicycles, scooters, skateboards, and similar means of motorized and non-motorized conveyance on University Property (except for mobility aids) is regulated by rules developed by the URI Department of Public Safety and posted to the URI Department of Public Safety website. These rules shall reflect the University's commitments to accessibility and sustainable transportation.

- n. Open Flames and Fire Safety: Any activity that includes the possession or use of fireworks or the use of fire pits, campfires, or torches without prior written permission by the University (and/or local or state fire authorities) are prohibited. Protected candles (candles with wind screens) may be used with prior approval from the URI Department of Public Safety. The unauthorized or improper activation, possession, use, removal, or disabling of fire safety equipment and/or warning devices; failure to follow standard fire safety procedures; and/or interference with firefighting equipment or personnel are prohibited.
- o. Sanitation: Urination or defecation in any place other than a designated restroom is prohibited. Public restrooms are available throughout the campus for all users of University Property during posted building hours.

6. Enforcement and Violations

The URI Department of Public Safety, along with any offices sponsoring or directly associated with an event, is responsible for enforcing infractions of these regulations. The URI Department of Public Safety may require adjustments, up to and including cessation of the activities associated with any particular use of University Property, should those activities violate the terms of these regulations. Violations of these regulations may lead to removal from University Property, possible loss of further access to and use of University Property, and/or prosecution for trespass, disorderly conduct, or other offenses under state law. In addition, pursuant to RIGL § 16-32-2, fines for violations of these regulations may be imposed by a district court or police court in the city or town where the violation occurred through a fine schedule determined by the URI Department of Public Safety.

The URI Department of Public Safety shall make all efforts to provide initial warnings for noncriminal violations, except that such warnings shall not be warranted in cases where the individual poses an immediate risk of harm to persons or property, such as graffiti, vandalism, or physical violence, or for any criminal violations.

In addition to emergency measures undertaken and any criminal prosecution that may be pursued by the URI Department of Public Safety, violations of these regulations may lead to disciplinary actions or other administrative response by the University. Such discipline for students will be imposed under the [Student Handbook](#) or the [Graduate School Manual](#) and for employees under applicable [Human Resource Administration](#) policies, collective bargaining agreements, or other controlling agreements.

Users of University Property are responsible for any damage, loss, or destruction of University Property (as well as moveable property or the contents of a building) they caused and may be assessed a fee for any cost incurred by the University as a result of that user's violation of these regulations.

7. Exceptions

Except as otherwise set out in these regulations, exceptions to the limitations and prohibited activities delineated within these regulations may only be granted through a written agreement with the University as may be entered into pursuant to established processes of the University.