

## “SMART EVENT” PLANNING

At any chapter function, a safe environment must be created for your members and guests. **If anyone is hurt or property damaged in relation to a chapter event, there is a good chance that claims for compensation will be made against the chapter and the individuals involved with planning and monitoring the event. The more serious the damages or injuries, the more intense the pursuit of compensation.**

All functions should comply with Sigma Phi Epsilon’s event planning policies and the “**Statement on Chapter & Individual Responsibility**,” as well as all campus, local, state, and national laws.

Our policies state:

- **HAVE CLOSED PARTIES.** All chapter social events must be **CLOSED** which means guests should receive a personal, one-to-one invitation, where not more than one other group is invited, where mass advertising is not used, and where the total attendance is no greater than **THREE TIMES CHAPTER SIZE**. If you partner with another fraternity or sorority to plan a party, the attendance guideline does not change. It remains at no greater than three times chapter size. Open parties are difficult to manage safely. For larger or special-type events, see the “Special Event Coverage” section.
- **USE GUEST LISTS.** Guest lists must be prepared 24 hours in advance. By inviting strangers to your function, you could be inviting trouble into your home. No signing in at the door. Every person allowed to enter the event must be on the guest list (both men and women). It is important to know who is in attendance at a chapter function.
- **HIRE PROFESSIONAL SECURITY** to make sure that only those members and guests 21-YEARS-OLD AND OLDER have and consume alcohol. It is against the law to serve minors alcohol. It is better for a third party (other than chapter members) to handle these responsibilities. The hired security will check identifications, oversee the use of wrist bands or other means of identifying both minors and those who can legally drink. Sources to contact for professional security are off-duty police or a professional security service.
- **HIRE LICENSED AND INSURED THIRD-PARTY VENDORS.** These entities are trained and experienced in selling and serving alcohol in accord with state and local laws. Require that the vendor handle the following responsibilities: check identification, make decisions about whom to serve and when not to serve guests, maintain control of alcoholic containers present, collect and remove remaining alcohol at the end of the function.
- **“BRING YOUR OWN BEVERAGE” (BYOB) SYSTEM.** Should a person of legal age choose to consume alcohol, he may bring his own alcohol to a function provided he follows the BYOB procedures in place prohibiting access to minors. A member or guest of legal age is limited to one six-pack of 12-ounce beer cans or 750 milliliters of wine. Spirits and liquor are not permitted. NO GLASS containers allowed.
  - Suggested Procedures for BYOB Parties — Once a person of legal drinking age with alcohol has entered the party and obtained a wristband, he/she will immediately take the alcohol to the bar (have a single bar area with attendants of legal drinking age) and exchange it for the proper amount and type of tickets (e.g., a six-pack of beer for six tickets designated for that brand of beer). A person may receive and be in possession

of only one beverage at a time. The hosting organization(s) is responsible for monitoring the party to make sure no one is drinking without a wristband.

➤ **Ending Times and Alcohol Checkout** — All parties should have a designated ending time. Thirty minutes before the designated ending time, an announcement must be made to the effect that the bar will be closing and that persons must start removing their beverages from the bar. During this time, all remaining tickets will be cashed in, and all drinking will cease by the designated ending time. All alcohol belonging to individuals must be removed at this time. If anyone wishes to leave the party prior to the designated ending time, that person may cash in his/her remaining tickets for the rest of his/her alcohol, and must immediately leave the party.

- **MONEY CANNOT BE COLLECTED AT THE DOOR FOR ALCOHOL AT A CHAPTER FUNCTION.** Guests of legal drinking age who choose to consume alcohol must purchase it through a third-party vendor or use the BYOB method.
- **ALL CHAPTER FUNCTIONS MUST COMPLY WITH ALL CAMPUS, LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL LAWS.**

Recommended actions:

- **SET A STARTING AND ENDING TIME.** Guideline: four hours
- **RESTRICT/PARTITION THE PARTY AREA TO MEET FIRE AND SAFETY CODES** (occupancy limits, etc.)—**BOTH INDOORS AND OUT.** In this way, you can control the crowd, identify problems as they develop, etc. Have one entry into the party so uninvited guests cannot gain access without your knowledge.
- **SERVE FREE FOOD** (low salt, high protein) **AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.**

Other considerations for social functions:

An invitation to your function should be an honor.

- Distinguish your chapter; invest your social funds in outstanding entertainment, food, and decorations.
- If a function is held away from the chapter house, rent a bus or arrange transportation with professional drivers. **NO ONE SHOULD DRIVE IF THEY HAVE HAD AN ALCOHOLIC DRINK.**
- Hold “dry” parties that emphasize a theme or event.
- Do not promote alcohol as the center of the party or allow members or guests to engage in drinking games.
- Respect an individual’s right not to drink.
- Inspect the location prior to a party for potential hazards.

- Discourage “road trips.”
- Do the proper campus officials have to be notified?
- How will the activity affect your neighbor relations? Have you alerted your neighbors that a party will be taking place?
- Do you have a clean-up team for after the function? Will the team clean your neighbors’ properties first?
- Will any state laws (e.g., underage drinking) or city ordinances (e.g., noise violations) be violated? (If you answer yes, you need to change your plans.)
- What safeguards have you implemented to prevent these laws/ordinances from being violated?
- Are your officers and members familiar with the chapter’s crisis management procedures?
- Could you convince a “jury of your peers” that your event was not potentially dangerous?
- **Never serve or allow alcohol use with no alcohol controls in place.**
- **Never serve alcohol to any individual who is already intoxicated.**
- **Never serve alcohol to minors.**

In the event a chapter is interested in hosting an event that falls outside the scope of Sigma Phi Epsilon’s policies, the chapter must contact the Director of Risk Management at Headquarters to discuss obtaining SPECIAL EVENT COVERAGE. A special event presents a greater liability exposure on the Fraternity and requires an additional insurance coverage.

## WHAT IS A SPECIAL EVENT?

- Any sponsored athletic event, including philanthropies, other than university-organized intramurals.
- Any event where alcohol will be present and the attendance exceeds three times the membership.
- Concerts and/or musical festivals being sponsored by a local chapter.

Please contact Kathy Johnston at Headquarters, extension 1402, at least 60 days in advance to get information on planning guidelines and obtaining special event coverage.

FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES, you may go to the SigEp website, [www.sigep.org](http://www.sigep.org), and/or the website of SigEp’s insurance broker, Willis North America, [www.kirklin.com](http://www.kirklin.com).