

COMMON EVENTS GUIDE

Department of Student Activities
Texas A&M University



Updated Summer 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I: Understanding Organization Events

Section II: Organizational Recruitment, Selection, and New Member Activities

- a. [Recruiting New Members](#)
- b. [Membership and Leadership Selection](#)
- c. [New Member Activities](#)
- d. [Organizational Apparel and Promotion](#)

Section III: Fundraising

- a. [Special Funding Applications](#)
- b. [Fundraising Campaigns](#)
- c. [Sponsorships](#)
- d. [Profit Shares](#)
- e. [Crowdfunding Sites](#)
- f. [Silent Auctions](#)
- g. [Raffles and Door Prizes](#)
- h. [Aggie Athletics Concession Stands](#)

Section IV: Service Events

- a. [On-Campus Sales, Transactions, and Donation Drives](#)
- b. [Blood Drives](#)
- c. [Fun Runs & 5Ks](#)
- d. [Working with Community Agencies](#)
- e. [Programs with Minors](#)

Section V: Events with Alcohol

- a. [Third Party Vendor Events](#)
- b. [BYOB Events](#)

Section VI: Social Events

- a. [Tailgating](#)
- b. [Sports](#)
- c. [Outdoor Activities](#)
- d. [Formals, Semi-formals, and Date Parties](#)
- e. [Overnight Events](#)

Section VII: Other Events

- a. [Domestic Travel](#)
- b. [International Travel](#)
- c. [Performers and Speakers](#)
- d. [Movies and Films](#)
- e. [Retreats](#)

Section VIII: Organization Resources

- a. [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Education](#)
- b. [Leadership Education](#)
- c. [Additional Training & Education Resources](#)

SECTION I: UNDERSTANDING ORGANIZATION EVENTS

Is it an organization event or not?

Review the following questions for help determining if an activity should be considered an “organization event” and/or whether an organization may bear any responsibility for the activities of the organization or its members.

- 1. What is the purpose of this activity?**
 - *Is it planned as a bonding, social, or celebratory event for organization members?*
 - *Could it be associated in any way with the organization, or as an extension of another organization event?*
- 2. What resources are being used to facilitate the activity?**
 - *Are organization or group funds, facilities, or equipment used in any way?*
 - *Are ONLY members of the organization contributing to activity funds or supplies?*
- 3. How is the activity being publicized or communicated?**
 - *Is it advertised on a group webpage, GroupMe, Facebook, or email, or was it discussed or advertised at an organization meeting or event?*
 - *Did officers initiate, participate in, or comment on the advertising or invitation?*
 - *Who is invited to the activity and/or allowed to invite others? Why and how?*
- 4. Who is attending the activity? Why are they attending?**
 - *Are the people invited to and/or attending the activity all (or primarily) affiliated with the organization?*
 - *Are specific groups of organization members attending (e.g., officers, competition team, new member class, or other sub-groups of the organization)?*
- 5. Would a reasonable person think that this activity is associated with the organization?**
 - *If someone asked the friends, roommates, or parents of organization members, would they say the event was coordinated by the organization?*
 - *If the newspaper or a TV news reporter were to report on the event or activity, would they connect it to the organization?*
 - *Is the event or activity known as a tradition in the organization (i.e., it's been done multiple times)?*
- 6. If there were an accident(s) or mishap(s) at or due to the event/activity, would organization leaders feel a responsibility? If not, who would the participants or victims likely hold responsible?**

Be aware, the response to just one or two of these questions may not be a conclusive answer to the question, “Is this an organization event?” Each activity is likely to have a unique set of circumstances, so within an organization, leaders and members should carefully evaluate any planned activity on its own characteristics.

Also, the intent of asking these questions is not so that leaders and/or members of an organization can find loopholes or ways **NOT** to categorize an activity as an organization event. That strategy will likely never work, as the reality is that any “ultimate decision-maker” (national organization, university officials, families, news media, courts) will use a test that takes into account the totality of the circumstances.

Rather, these questions are meant to help educate leaders and members on how to recognize when their activities may involve characteristics that make it more likely that an activity could be considered an “organization event.” This should then lead to notification to organization leadership and evaluation and risk management of the event from the organizational lens.

If you have any questions or want to talk about any of these topics, please [contact](#) a member of the Student Organization Development & Administration team in Student Activities.

SECTION II: ORGANIZATIONAL RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND NEW MEMBER ACTIVITIES

Recruiting New Members

Whether your organization is brand new or well established, recruiting new members is a key component of organizational operations.

University Policies

- [Campus Signage Policies](#)
- [Banners](#)
- [Rudder Plaza & 12th Man Hall Resource Tables](#)
- [Digital Signage in University Center](#)
- [Sandwich Boards](#)

Resources

- [MSC Open House](#)
- [Howdy Week](#)

Important Notes

- Organization recruiting events may not include alcohol (see [TAMU Student Rule Appendix VIII](#) for details).
-

Membership & Leadership Selection

Organizations' constitutions should spell out how the group will select members and leaders. As your organization conducts these functions, ensure that you follow the policies and procedures in your governing documents. There are also several federal, state, and University policies you should factor into your processes.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M Student Rule 41](#)
- [Texas A&M Statement on Harassment and Discrimination](#)

Important Notes

- In all membership and leadership selection processes, organizations **may not** discriminate based on protected classes. These include race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
 - There are **two narrow exceptions**:
 - **Sex or gender**: Organizations may qualify for a [Title IX exemption](#) for social fraternities if they meet federal standards.
 - **Other**: If open membership policies would impair an organization's expressive freedoms (demonstrated concretely), the group may qualify for an open membership exemption.

- Organizations wishing to claim an open membership and/or leadership exemption must contact the [SODA office](#).
- Organizations may include students, faculty, staff, and community members in their organization membership. The group's governing documents should outline who is eligible for membership.
 - Note: Minors who are not students at Texas A&M University are ineligible for membership and may not participate in the regular activities of Texas A&M University recognized student organizations.
- All organization officers must be listed on the organization's StuAct Online roster to check for GPA and conduct eligibility.
 - If your organization needs to add extra spots due to officer team size, contact SODA and we can add up to 30 general officer positions.
- All organization officers must meet minimum GPA, enrollment, and conduct standards, per Texas A&M [Student Rule 41.2](#).

Best Practices

- Ensure the organization's constitution thoroughly articulates its selection processes. For additional assistance, see the [Constitution Checklist](#).
- Be transparent in your member and officer selection processes and share evaluative rubrics or point structures with applicants
- Utilize rubrics and well-defined criteria for selection to minimize bias
- For assistance with interview questions, see the "Interview" section of the Texas A&M Career Center's [Career Guide](#).

New Member Activities

Once new members are selected, it's time to include them in the organization's activities. We have a few suggestions for ways to safely and successfully integrate new members into your organization!

University Policies

- [Texas A&M Student Rules, Appendix VI](#)
- [Texas A&M Student Rules, Appendix VIII](#)

Guidelines

- [Hazing education and prevention](#)

Important Notes

- All recruiting and new member education guidelines, event examples, and/or onboarding schedules should be laid out in the organization's operations manual and be cleared with an advisor.
- No new member events may include alcohol (see [TAMU Student Rules Appendix VIII](#)).
- Be aware of what constitutes an organizational event - even informal gatherings are often the organization's responsibility to manage. See [Section I](#) of this guide for more details.

Best Practices

- Make sure that all new member activities exemplify and support your organization's mission and purpose and that they aim to create a positive and inviting atmosphere for new and returning organization members.
 - Consider whether new member activities based on tradition are beneficial for the new member, returning member, and organization as a whole.
-

Organization Apparel and Promotion

During organization advertising and recruitment efforts, as well as when planning other events, the group may decide to create organizational apparel.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M Trademarks and Brand](#)
- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 42](#)

Helpful Contacts

- [Texas A&M Office of Business Development](#)

Important Notes

- Unique logos for student organizations MAY NOT include or incorporate trademarks licensed by Texas A&M University including logos, icons, or taglines without approval from the Office of Business Development.
- In some instances, the Texas A&M logo may be used, but with strict limitations. The TAMU logo must be separate from the organization's logo (i.e., on a t-shirt, the block ATM logo may appear on the sleeve or the opposite side of a shirt from the organization's logo). There must be plenty of clear space around the logo.

Best Practices

- Consider working with a vendor with a pre-established relationship with Texas A&M (visit trademarks.tamu.edu for a full list) to ensure all guidelines are met.
- Involve your organization's advisor in the design process to ensure that you're effectively managing reputational risk.

SECTION III: FUNDRAISING

Special Funding Applications

The Association of Former Students at Texas A&M University has partnered with Student Activities to issue two types of special funding for recognized student organizations.

Student Organization Funding Assistance

Through the generous support of The Association of Former Students (The Association) and in conjunction with the Division of Student Affairs, the Student Organization Funding Assistance Board (SOFAB) has established a limited supplemental funding pool to provide support to Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs) and their activities. Due to the limited availability of these funds, an application & evaluation process has been established.

All [applications](#) MUST be turned in no less than seven (7) calendar days prior to the next committee meeting for review. Please view the News section of the [SOFAB MaroonLink Page](#) for the meeting schedule or email sofab@dsa.tamu.edu.

Eligibility

Recognized Student Organizations may request supplemental funding if your organization is in good standing with the University.

Funds may be requested for, but are not limited to, the following purposes:

- New Student Organization startup funds (one-time)
- One time purchase that supports the mission and/or operations of the organization
- Travel expenses for events where the organization is representing Texas A&M
- Funds for events that will serve the Texas A&M community (no more than three occurrences)

Funds must be used to support events taking place in the fiscal year they are awarded.

Restrictions

1. Funds must be used for the purpose for which they were granted as indicated in the approval documentation.
2. Funds will not be granted for food, clothing, gifts, awards, and honorariums, nor personal expenses for individuals not affiliated with TAMU. SOFAB funds may not be donated.
3. Funding requests must be submitted before the event. Retroactive requests will not be reviewed.

Application Process

SOFAB has determined that eligible student organizations may submit funding assistance applications in accordance with the published calendar on the [SO FAB MaroonLink page](#). Meetings will be held on a bi-weekly basis as needed.

Risk Initiative Funding

Risk Initiative Funding (RIF) is available to help Recognized Student Organizations at Texas A&M manage risk for events and programs. RIF is generously provided by the Association of Former Students and allocated by a board of staff and students. Applications will be evaluated based upon the criteria below:

- The organization is “recognized” and is in good standing with the university;
- The organization has submitted a MaroonLink event form for the event or program;
- The money requested will specifically be used for costs associated with risk management;
- The circumstance for the request is a unique, unforeseen expense; and
- The organization has not received Risk Initiative Funding in the current academic year.

You can learn more and access the applications [here](#), and direct any further questions to soda@stuact.tamu.edu.

Other Funding Opportunities

Occasionally, community organizations reach out to Student Activities with grant funding opportunities for recognized student organizations. These will be shared out via the Student Activities website under the [“Funding and Banking” page](#).

Fundraising Campaigns

When raising larger sums of money, student organizations may want to consider creating a fundraising campaign. Several resources exist for Texas A&M’s student organization community, as detailed below.

Tax-Deductible Donations through the Texas A&M Foundation

If your organization has identified a donor who would like to contribute to your organization, but would also like it to be a tax-deductible gift, consider utilizing the Texas A&M Foundation’s services. The Foundation will handle gift processing and tax receipting in exchange for a 5% overhead fee. More information can be found in the [SOFC Instructional Guide](#).

Texas A&M Foundation’s annual *Student Organization Advancement Conference*

Each spring, the Texas A&M Foundation hosts a one-day Student Organization Advancement Conference, intended to assist student leaders in fundraising. Speakers include development officers from Texas A&M Foundation staff, who can give professional insight into donor drives, endowments, sponsorships, alumni relations, marketing, and brand development. Check <https://txamfoundation.com> for more information.

Sponsorships

As a means of bolstering their operations, student organizations frequently rely upon sponsors, whether businesses or individuals. Consider the following campus policies and suggestions.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 42](#)
- [Texas A&M University Student Rules, Appendix VIII](#)

Important Notes

- Recognized student organizations may not enter into sponsorship agreements with:
 - An alcohol distributor; or
 - Charitable organization or tavern (tavern is defined as an establishment generating more than half of the annual gross sales from alcohol) where alcohol is given away, sold, or otherwise provided to those present.
- Organizations may not enter into sponsorships or contractual agreements on Texas A&M University's behalf.

Best Practices

- Utilize a contract to determine the terms of your sponsorship agreement. Student Activities and/or Student Legal Services is available to student organizations for contract review.
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Profit Shares

Student organizations may work with local businesses to create profit share events. Typically, these involve the student organization promoting a business's patronage on a less-crowded date and time in exchange for a percentage of its profits during that time period. Businesses usually conduct profit shares as a form of charitable giving and, therefore, will ask the organization for its tax documents.

Important Notes

- Many times, the business hosting the profit share will require the participating student organization to have tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- Unless the organization has already filed for tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), it will need to request a [W-9 Form](#) from the Texas A&M Foundation.
 - Note: Gifts processed through the Texas A&M Foundation are subject to a 5% overhead fee.
- Student organizations may not host profit shares with bars, taverns, or any business that makes over 50% of their revenue from alcohol sales, per [Texas A&M Student Rules Appendix VIII, item #5](#).

Best Practices

- When considering whether to participate in a profit share, it is important to think about the terms of the agreement with the restaurant or business to ensure that the fundraiser will be beneficial for the group.
 - Focus on marketing the event and inviting participants far beyond your organization, so that you're bringing in money from outside the group.
 - Evaluate reputational risks when planning a profit share, such as that posed by alcohol sales or consumption.
-

Crowdfunding and Mobile Payment Sites

While sites like GoFundMe or Kickstarter can be great for businesses as they get started, they are not always compatible with recognized student organization finances. The same concept is true for applications like Venmo or PayPal. Marketplace is the approved method of taking online payments.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 41](#)

Resources

- [Marketplace Training module](#)
- [SOFC Instructional Guide](#)
- [Spirit of Giving](#) (Texas A&M University's Crowdfunding site)

Important Notes

- Any funds collected must be deposited into student organizations' SOFC accounts within one business day after collection. This means that only sites that are willing to **hold the funds and send a check** at the conclusion of the fundraiser are compatible.
 - Consider utilizing Spirit of Giving, Texas A&M's new crowdfunding site, created to aid current faculty, staff, and recognized student organizations in soliciting donations to support university programs and/or projects. Gifts made on Spirit of Giving are tax deductible for donors.
 - If you have questions about whether a service is permissible, contact the SOFC at sofc@stuact.tamu.edu.
-

Silent Auctions

Silent auctions are often popular components of organizational banquets and galas, where the organization auctions donated items in exchange for monetary donations. When incorporating a silent auction into your event, consider the following policies and best practices.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 41](#)
- [Texas A&M University Student Rules, Appendix VIII](#)

Important Notes

- Student organizations must deposit the funds collected within one business day after they are received.
- No alcoholic beverages or products may be sold in the silent auction.

Best Practices

- Start early! Often, it's best to begin the donation acquisition process at least eight weeks in advance.
- Items unique to Texas A&M tend to be popular. [Texas A&M Athletics](#) can donate signed memorabilia through their charity request. The [Benjamin Knox Gallery](#) also takes donation requests for artwork.
- Create a plan for collecting payments and distributing auction items.
- Please consider the safety involved with the amount of money you will be collecting. The SOFC rents out lockboxes for free and, for on-campus events, the [University Police Department](#) will provide a security guard, by request, for a small fee.
- Think about checking out a wireless credit card terminal from the SOFC, so that you are able to take on-site credit card payments. Email sofc@stuact.tamu.edu to begin the reservation process.
- If physical point of sale use of credit cards is not important to your organization, consider accepting credit cards as payment by offering merchandise or services via Marketplace.

Raffles and Door Prizes

Student organizations may also want to promote their events via raffles or door prizes. Charitable raffles, though, are governed by state law, so make sure that you are aware of all parameters!

State Law

- [Texas Attorney General's Guidance for Charitable Raffles and Poker Nights](#)

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 42](#)

Resources

- [Gambling at Organization Events module](#)

Important Notes

- Unless your organization qualifies under state law (see the Texas Attorney General's website), charitable raffles are a form of illegal gambling and carry criminal penalties for both operators and participants.
- If your organization wants to play bingo where prizes are awarded, you must do so through a licensed and authorized organization. Brazos Bingo is a great local organization to go through, and they are able to obtain temporary licenses to host bingo at locations other than their bingo hall. You can find more information at <https://brazosbingo.com> or <https://txbingo.org>.
- The same policies apply for both virtual and in-person events.

Best Practices

- Door prizes are often a similar activity but do not involve an exchange of money. Your organization may want to consider utilizing door prizes as an alternative fundraising or promotional strategy, instead of a raffle.
 - Create a plan for distributing prizes to winners at the conclusion of your event.
 - Don't forget to thank donors!
-

Aggie Athletics Concession Stands

Texas A&M University contracts with Levy Restaurants for the operation of concession stands in its athletic venues. Levy frequently recruits Texas A&M recognized student organizations and other community organizations to work in these concession stands in exchange for a monetary donation.

Forms Needed

- [Special Event Insurance Request](#)

Helpful Contacts

- Traci Brown, Levy Concessions Staffing Coordinator
 - trbrown@levyrestaurants.com
 - 979.862.6402

Important Notes

- If interested in this fundraising opportunity, contact Levy Concessions directly.
- Pay special attention to the contractual agreement with Levy, as it will detail potential risks to the organization, the formula for the monetary donation, and penalties for missing inventory/uniforms/etc.
- As part of the contractual agreement with Levy, student organizations will agree to secure special event insurance coverage for all individuals working.
 - To secure special event insurance coverage, complete the Special Event Insurance Request linked below. In the "Notes" section, you'll need to include:
 - The purpose of this request (Levy Concessions);
 - The date(s) your organization will be working; and
 - The formula for determining cost:

- (Number of days insurance needed) x (Number of individuals working) x (Current insurance premium) = \$XX.XX
- Reach out to soda@stuact.tamu.edu for the most up-to-date insurance premium. This is typically \$0.50 per person/day or less.

SECTION IV: SERVICE EVENTS

On-Campus Sales, Transactions, and Donation Drives

The Concessions Permitting process governs all public on-campus sales, transactions, and solicitation of donations. If your organization is hosting a bake sale, publicly selling t-shirts, conducting a blood drive, or collecting used clothing for a non-profit, it will need this form.

Forms Needed

- [Concessions Permit Form](#)

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 39](#)
- [Texas A&M University Rule 21.99.09.M1](#)

Important Notes

- Concessions Permits must be submitted two (2) full business days before the event.
 - Additional permissions or forms may be needed, based upon the type of activity the organization will be hosting. See the Concessions Permit Form for additional details.
 - Private organizational events, meaning those where transactions are not marketed to the public, do not require a Concessions Permit Form (ex: t-shirt sales at an organization's general meeting).
 - Tabling activities do not necessarily require Concessions Permit Forms, unless there are transactions, exchanges (ex: physical goods, money, or personal information), or collection of donations.
-

Blood Drives

Blood Drives are a form of Concessions activity that frequently occur on Texas A&M's campus. Additional paperwork and safety protocols are needed to ensure that these activities are done safely.

Forms Needed

- [Blood Drive Guidelines Form](#)
- [Concessions Permit Form](#)

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 39](#)
- [Texas A&M University Rule 21.99.09.M1](#)

Important Notes

- All blood drives must be conducted by a licensed and approved agency.
- The hosting recognized student organization must provide staffing at each of the blood collection locations during the entire duration of the campus blood drive.

- Blood collection agencies will be responsible for collecting as well as disposing of all utensils used by their workers (needles, gloves, bandages, etc.). Texas A&M University's facilities may not be used to dispose of the items used by the blood companies.
 - Before the blood collection agency's departure from Texas A&M University's campus on the last day of their respective Blood Drives, a recognized student organization representative must walk over all the sites with an agency representative to inspect the premises. Agencies will not be allowed to leave the campus until all facilities have been cleaned (trash picked up, furniture put back in place, all supplies collected, etc.).
-

Fun Runs and 5K Races

Organizations may wish to host fun runs or races as a way of raising benefit money, bonding with friends, getting good aerobic exercise, and campus or city sightseeing with members and guests. While planning, consider the information below.

Forms Needed

- On Campus:
 - Register with [Texas A&M Transportation Services](#)
 - If collecting funds on-site: [Concessions Permit Form](#)
- In the Community:
 - [City of College Station Special Event Application](#)
 - [City of Bryan Special Event Permit](#)

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 39](#)
- [Texas A&M University Rule 21.99.09.M1](#)

Important Notes

- Pay special attention to the physical risks associated with such events, such as injury, heat exhaustion, dehydration, crossing traffic, inclement weather, etc. For these reasons, it may be wise to consider hiring an EMS staff member to be present.
- If your route will cross any intersections, work with Transportation Services and/or the Cities of Bryan and College Station to ensure proper safety officials' presence.
- Consider purchasing special event insurance as an extra risk management effort.

Best Practices

- Visit the Transportation Services' website for a list of approved on-campus routes.
- Consider routes and locations that minimize the use of streets, driveways, and parking lots, to ensure participant safety.

Working with Community Agencies

Organizational service projects are an excellent way to give back to the community. In particular, deferring to the judgment and expertise of community agencies can be an excellent choice, as they typically have worked closely with the specific cause and community for many years. The Texas A&M Leadership & Service Center also offers many great resources for partnering with community agencies.

Forms Needed

- [Travel Information Form](#) (if traveling more than 25 miles)

Resources

- [Leadership & Service Center](#)
- [Aggie Serve](#)
- [Community Engagement & Impact Summit](#)
- [Volunteer Opportunities Fair](#)

Important Notes

- Ask community agencies about their greatest needs before volunteering your organization's time or services. This will ensure that you're helping meet a community need, rather than creating additional work or processing for that agency to accomplish.
 - Ensure that your organization has researched the service activity thoroughly and consider if it fits your organization's mission and values well.
 - Above all, keep safety in mind. Make sure that your members are equipped with proper safety materials for the activity, are fed and hydrated, and periodically rest while donating time and effort.
 - Consider utilizing MaroonLink's Service Tracking feature to keep a record of members' volunteer hours.
-

Programs with Minors

If your organization is planning to work with individuals under the age of 18, there are some added protections that need to be put into place for their safety. All programs with minors, whether on- or off-campus, **must** adhere to University Youth Programs' protocol, as outlined below.

Resources

- [University Youth Programs](#)

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Rule 24.01.06.M1](#)

Important Notes

- Commonly referred to as CPMs, Campus Program for Minors are events and activities which are hosted, sponsored, and/or operated by a university entity, including recognized student organizations. These events or activities include:
 - A participant group made up, in whole or in part, of individuals under the age of 18 who are not current Texas A&M students, and

- The RSO is responsible for care, custody, and/or control of the participants.
- Forms for Campus Programs Minors undergo a review process facilitated by University Youth Programs. While this process is automated, there are several levels of review and approval, so advance planning is key.
- To provide a safe environment and meaningful experience for all involved, Texas A&M University and the Texas A&M University System have created requirements that not only meet the minimum legal expectations but also reflect the institution's core values of Excellence, Integrity, Leadership, Loyalty, Respect, and Selfless Service. Below are examples of the different areas of compliance you will potentially need to complete:
 - CPM Forms
 - Child Protection Training
 - Background Checks
 - Waivers
 - Purchasing Insurance
 - Safety & Medical Care
 - Submit a roster of participants, staff, and volunteers
- To get started with your plans to work with youth, contact University Youth Programs at uyp@tamu.edu to set up a meeting.

SECTION V: EVENTS WITH ALCOHOL

Student Rules

All Texas A&M University recognized student organizations are responsible for adhering to Texas A&M University student rules. In particular, [Student Rule Appendix VIII](#) applies to student organization events with alcohol. If any organization fails to adhere to all of the points within this rule, they risk consequences through the student organization accountability process.

This standard applies for any activity that could be considered a student organization event, as elaborated in the [Student Organization Manual](#) and in this guide. Student organizations may, at times, consider events “unofficial,” but this does not exempt them from accountability if they meet one or more event criteria.

Types of Events with Alcohol

Student organizations may choose to host one of two types of events with alcohol, as described below.

1. **Third Party Vendor** - The organization contracts with a vendor that provides and serves alcohol. This may include:
 - a. Paying for the services of a person licensed to sell and dispense alcohol during the event; OR
 - b. Reserving or renting out an establishment (e.g., bar or tavern) that is licensed to sell and dispense alcohol during the event.
2. **Bring Your Own Beverage (BYOB) Event** - The organization hosts an event where attendees provide their own alcohol.

The next section will elaborate on how to host a Third Party Vendor event and the following section will focus on BYOB event policies and recommendations.

Third Party Vendor Events

Using a third party vendor for an event can mean one of two things. First, an organization can utilize a third party vendor by paying for the services of a business licensed to sell and dispense alcohol during recognized student organization events. A second method to using a third party vendor includes reserving or renting out an establishment (e.g., bar or tavern) that is licensed by the State to sell alcohol drink-by-drink to individuals invited to the party and on a guest list.

If a recognized student organization chooses to host an event with a third party vendor, they must adhere to the following standards.

NOTE: It is recommended that the group utilize a contract to put these standards in writing.

Requirements for the Vendor or Bar

The bartending service or venue must:

1. Be properly licensed by the appropriate local and state authorities. The vendor should agree to make a copy of the TABC Caterer's Permit and submit it to the organization for their record keeping.
2. Be properly insured with a minimum of \$1 million (or greater if required by an affiliate) of general liability insurance. This coverage is evidenced by a properly completed Certificate of Insurance prepared by the third party vendor's insurance provider.
 - a. If the student organization is hiring a vendor to sell alcohol in a place other than a bar or tavern, the Certificate of Insurance should show evidence that the vendor has, as part of coverage, "off-premise liquor liability coverage and non-owned and hired auto coverage."
 - b. The Certificate of Insurance should name as an additional insured (at a minimum) the recognized student organization hiring the vendor.
3. Agree in writing to cash or credit card sales only, collected by the vendor, during the function.
4. Assume in writing all the responsibilities that any other purveyor of alcoholic beverages would assume in the normal course of business, including but not limited to:
 - a. Checking identification cards upon entry;
 - b. Not serving minors;
 - c. Not serving individuals who appear to be intoxicated;
 - d. Maintaining absolute control of ALL alcoholic containers present;
 - e. Collecting all remaining alcohol at the end of the function. No excess alcohol - opened or unopened - is to be given, sold, or furnished to the organization;
 - f. Removing all alcohol from the premises.
5. Receive money from the organization only for the service of utilizing the vendor's service and/or rental of the facility (bar, tavern, etc.). Individual

participants/attendees will be responsible for the purchase of alcoholic drinks. No money will be received from the organization for the purchase of alcohol.

6. Agree that only individuals named on the guest list will be admitted to the bar, tavern, etc., for the duration of the time the facility has been rented by the organization.
7. Agree not to publicize or advertise the organization's use of the facility/service.
8. Not rent the facility at a reduced rate in exchange for anything provided by the organization (i.e., anticipated alcohol sales, percentage of sales, advertisement, etc.) or set drink specials for the event.

Requirements for the Student Organization

The student organization must:

1. Provide your university advisor an opportunity to review the organization event details.
2. Obtain event approval from the organization's university advisor(s).
3. Pay for the bartender's services and/or facility rental fees **ONLY**. Student organization funds must not be used to purchase alcoholic beverages.
4. Not coordinate the purchase of alcoholic beverages for members or guests. This includes coordinating the purchases of drinks from the third party vendor/bar, as well as a "pass the hat" method or "paying a tab."
5. Designate one well-lit entrance to the event that will be monitored by the vendor/bar and the student organization.
6. Develop a guest list at least 24 hours prior to the event and enforce this guest list at the entrance of the event involving alcohol. Persons not on the guest list must not be admitted to the event.
7. Not have alcohol present at any recruitment or new member activity.
8. Ensure non-alcoholic drinks and non-salty foods are available and free-of-charge throughout the function.
9. Provide event monitors for the event. One event monitor should be designated for every 1-15 attendees. Monitors are not to consume alcohol prior to and during the event. New members should not be serving as monitors.

Recommendations and Best Practices

In addition to the items listed above, the SODA team recommends including the following best practices for student organization events with alcohol.

1. Submit a MaroonLink event form for your event at least two weeks in advance. This will allow for feedback and recommendations by Student Activities and campus partners.
2. Develop a written agreement signed and dated by the organization president and the vendor or bar, stipulating their agreement to all standards listed in this document.
3. Service of alcohol should stop at least one hour before the scheduled ending time. It is highly advised that alcohol not be served after 1:00am.
4. The maximum number in attendance at any function should not exceed the number of organization members plus two guests each.
5. Professional security should be hired to work the door and check IDs. The preferred method of security is contracted, licensed, and bonded.
6. Promote responsible driving decisions (e.g., CARPOOL, ride sharing services, taxis, and/or designated drivers). Have a plan for getting guests home safely, as needed.
7. Educate members and guests on behavioral standards for the event. Remind all that the organization may be held accountable for their actions.
8. Have a plan to address and/or respond to issues such as members or guests arriving intoxicated, becoming intoxicated during the event, passing or sharing drinks with underage attendees, underage consumption, or other behavior violations.
9. Ensure a clear method of identifying those of age and underage (e.g., wristbands). If the vendor does not implement, the organization should.

Bring Your Own Beverage (BYOB) Events

Organizations may also choose to host events in which members and guests provide their own alcohol. In these scenarios, strict control of the alcohol must be established in order to create a safe and manageable environment.

NOTES: It is recommended that the group utilize an event policy to put these standards in writing. Additionally, this is the policy for Bring YOUR OWN Beverage events; while brotherhood, sisterhood, chivalry, etc., are all fine things, you should not be buying anyone's alcohol for that event. Everyone should purchase and bring the alcohol they intend to imbibe.

Requirements for the Student Organization

The student organization must:

1. Check identification cards upon entry. IDs must be checked by security or members of the organization. Members and guests with alcohol are required to show proof of legal drinking age.
2. Designate one well-lit entrance to the event that will be monitored by the student organization and/or event security.
3. Develop a guest list at least 24 hours prior to the event and enforce this guest list at the entrance of the event involving alcohol. Persons not on the guest list must not be admitted to the event.
4. Attendees must check in all alcohol upon arrival, at the start of the event. All alcohol must be logged upon entry. No additional alcohol can be brought to the event after this time.
5. Establish one centralized location for the distribution of all alcoholic beverages. This location must be controlled and monitored. A second centralized location must be established for the distribution of all non-alcoholic beverages.
6. Only distribute alcohol through a Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) licensed bartender or an individual licensed in the state where the event is being held. This individual must be covered by their own liability insurance. **Bartenders cannot be affiliated with the organization, including, but not limited to, members, former members, family or guardians, and partners.**
7. Only permit the following alcohol allowances per person:
 - a. One six-pack of beer (12 ounces each, with a 5% alcohol-by-volume); or
 - b. One four-pack of wine coolers or malt beverages (12 ounces each with 5% alcohol-by-volume); or
 - c. Four individually packaged wine containers (4-6 ounces each with under 13 percent alcohol-by-volume).
8. Only one alcoholic beverage may be checked out at a time, only by the person who brought it.
9. Require that all beverages be sealed and in their original container.

10. Not permit any liquor or spirits at the event.
11. Not coordinate the purchase of alcoholic beverages for members or guests. This includes coordinating the purchases of drinks from an external entity, as well as a "pass the hat" method.

Recommendations and Best Practices

In addition to the items listed above, the SODA team recommends including the following best practices for student organization BYOB events.

1. Submit a MaroonLink event form for your event at least two weeks in advance. This will allow for feedback and recommendations by Student Activities and campus partners.
2. Develop a written agreement signed and dated by the organization president and the bartender, stipulating their agreement to all standards listed in this document.
3. Service of alcohol should stop at least one hour before the scheduled ending time. It is highly advised that alcohol not be served after 1:00am.
4. The maximum number in attendance at any function should not exceed the number of organization members plus two guests each.
5. Professional security should be hired to work the door and check IDs. The preferred method of security is contracted, licensed, and bonded.
6. Promote responsible driving decisions (e.g., CARPOOL, ride sharing services, taxis, and/or designated drivers). Have a plan for getting guests home safely, as needed.
7. Educate members and guests on behavioral standards for the event. Remind all that the organization may be held accountable for their actions.
8. Issue wristbands at the ID checkpoint to demonstrate which attendees are of legal drinking age.
9. Punch cards should be created to manage the check-in/check-out process for alcohol:
 - a. Anyone who wishes to acquire an alcoholic beverage that they've brought to the event should present their punch card, show their wristband, and return an empty can (if not the first request).
 - b. Punch cards should be event-specific.
 - c. Punch cards should be about credit card-size with the following information: attendee name, birthday, type of alcohol/amount brought, date of event, and space to punch up to six holes.
 - d. Punch cards should be collected at the exits when guests leave the event.

10. Have a plan to address and/or respond to issues such as members or guests arriving intoxicated, becoming intoxicated during the event, passing or sharing drinks with underage attendees, underage consumption, or other behavior violations.

SECTION VI: SOCIAL EVENTS

Tailgating

Tailgates are a common way to celebrate athletic events and bring your organization together. As your organization considers hosting a tailgate, make sure you keep in mind the items below.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M Tailgating Policies and Guidance](#)
- [Texas A&M University Student Rules - Appendix VIII](#)

Guidelines

- Events with Alcohol:
 - [Bring Your Own Beverage Guidelines](#)
 - [Third Party Vendor Guidelines](#)
- [Concessions Permit Form](#)
- [University Tent Application](#)

Important Notes

- Tailgating events with alcohol must comply with **all** provisions outlined in Section V (Events with Alcohol).
- Organizations are responsible for compliance with local and state laws, as well as University Student Rules.
- Any public, on-campus transactions (monetary or otherwise) and solicitations require approval through the University Concessions Permitting process (see link above). Note that approvals are not typically given for tailgating areas on game days.
- No overnight occupancy is allowed in tailgating areas.
- Tents or canopies over 400 square feet require advance inspection and approval (see form linked above).
- All barbecue grills must be attended to at all times. Fires built on the ground and open fire pit devices are prohibited. All devices must have a cover for safety.
- If you are only serving food to members and invited guests, there are no specific forms required. However, consider the following:
 - Keep dietary restrictions and food allergies in mind when ordering or preparing food;
 - Keep temperature-sensitive food at the prescribed cold or hot temperature; and
 - Ensure meat is cooked to the proper temperature.

Sports

The Department of Recreational Sports provides both general and specific guidelines for sports activities (see link below).

University Policies

- [Rec Sports Intramural Sports Rules](#)
- [Event Expectations](#)

Resources

- [Risk Waivers](#)
- [Rec Sports Facility Reservations](#)
- [Sport Clubs](#)
- [Equipment Request Form](#)
- [Rec Sports App](#)
- [Concessions Permit](#)
- [Special Event Insurance Request Form](#)

Important Notes

- For tournaments and/or multiple match competitions, consider hiring [Emergency Medical Services \(EMS\)](#) to be on-site.
- If the activity is held outside, take the weather into account when planning. In the case of adverse weather conditions, consider rescheduling rather than risking injury to participants.
- Provide time for participants to warm up before the activity begins, as well as periodic breaks for them to rest and hydrate (this is especially important in the hot months!). The guidelines for hydrating are to drink 4-6 ounces for every 15-20 minutes.
- Designate a referee for the duration of the activity.
- If spectators or players become overly excited and/or threatening to one another, have a designated organization representation intervene.
- Adhere to the rules of the venue (for example, vacate the venue within 20 minutes of the game).
- If a participant is injured, assess the injury and determine if 911 should be called. If you are unsure of the injury's seriousness, call 911.
- When scheduling and requesting access to use a facility, take into consideration the set-up and take-down process when allocating the time, not just the actual game play times.
- For larger events, please contact/update [Transportation Services](#) about parking lot usage.
- Consider purchasing [Special Event Insurance](#) coverage for your event.

Best Practices

- Ensure the participants are aware of the physical demands of the activity beforehand. Consider including descriptions of the activity (running for two miles, ability to lift 30 pounds, flexibility-based, etc.) when advertising.
- Go over the rules of the activity beforehand, unless all participants regularly play the sport in question.
- We highly recommend not publicizing any event until you have received confirmation of your facility reservation.

- When planning an event, look at the university and athletics calendar to avoid conflicting with larger events on campus.
-

Outdoor Activities

Many organizations participate in outdoor activities, like hiking or camping, for retreats or organization trips. While planning, consider the policies and recommendations below.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Travel Rule](#)

Forms Needed

- [Risk Waivers](#)
- [Travel Information Form](#) (if traveling more than 25 miles)

Resources

- [Outdoor Adventures Skills Videos](#)
- [Texas A&M Outdoor Adventures Certification Classes and Clinics](#)
- [Trip Personal Gear Checklist](#)
- [Rent Outdoor Equipment](#)

Helpful Contacts

- [Texas A&M Outdoor Adventures](#)

Important Notes

- It is recommended that all trip participants have their own medical insurance policies.
 - Develop a plan for inclement weather, including how your organization would modify or cancel plans under different circumstances.
 - Create a crisis response plan for the event that includes information for the nearest hospital and/or urgent care and communication chain (including your organization's advisor).
 - Make sure that organization leaders are properly trained and equipped for all outdoor activities. Some may require technical skill, such as coastal kayaking, whitewater paddling, remote backpacking, and rock climbing. For these more intensive activities, consult your advisor or the Outdoor Adventures team before participating.
 - Consider purchasing [Special Event Insurance](#) coverage for your event.
-

Formals, Semi-Formals, and Date Parties

Student organizations may choose to host formal, semi-formal, or date party events where members invite one or more guests. These events often have several different layers for consideration when planning. See below for more information.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Rule, Student Travel](#)
- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 45 - Discrimination](#)
- [Texas A&M University Student Rules, Appendix VIII](#)

City Policies

- [City of College Station Special Event Application](#)
- [City of Bryan Special Event Permit](#)

Important Notes

- If a theme is present, ensure that it is not disrespectful or degrading to any person or population.
 - Calculate the number of guests per member (suggested organizational guidelines are 2-3 guests per member) and establish a guest list.
 - If there is alcohol present at the event, there should be designated organization representatives who are sober monitors. The suggested ratio is one sober monitor per every 15 attendees.
 - Consider training members in bystander intervention techniques prior to the event to help create a safe environment for all members and guests.
 - Determine whether or not you will provide transportation to and from the event. This can be a helpful risk management strategy, particularly if the event is in a remote location.
 - Consider eliminating glass bottles from the event.
 - It is recommended to end any alcohol service at least one hour before the event ends.
 - Ensure no illegal drugs or controlled substances are at the event.
 - Ensure there are no tables or paraphernalia within the event to be used for drinking games.
-

Overnight Events

Whether for retreats, road trips, date parties, or other activities, student organizations may choose to host events with an overnight stay component. There are a few unique considerations that should be planned prior to these events. Review the points below.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 45 - Discrimination](#)
- [Texas A&M University Student Rules, Appendix VI](#)
- [Texas A&M University Student Rules, Appendix VIII](#)

Resources

- [Green Dot Bystander Intervention Training](#)
- [Stand Up Workshops](#)

Important Notes

- Think through sleeping arrangements prior to the event and ensure that your accommodations have adequate space for your attendance. The number of attendees should not exceed space capacity.
- Decide in advance of your event whether participants will be sharing sleeping space. Ensure that you are gauging participant comfort levels with accommodations.
- If those in romantic relationships will be sharing accommodations and/or sleeping space, the organization should do some extra planning around sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Arranging for one or more extra hotel rooms that participants can opt into, should they no longer feel comfortable with their date or partner.
 - Have couples share sleeping space (such as a hotel room) to limit one-on-one interactions.
 - Facilitate bystander intervention training prior to your program to teach intervention techniques.
 - Establish and communicate behavioral expectations of members and guests at the event and share university reporting mechanisms.
- Create a plan for providing care to any sick attendees. This could include separate sleeping space, knowing the location of the nearest urgent care or hospital, and a plan for who would accompany the sick individual to seek medical care.
- Ensure that participants are getting adequate sleep (6-8 hours). Sleep deprivation could cause a range of issues, including drowsy driving, hazing done by emotional manipulation, and potentially creating emotionally volatile environments.
- Be on guard against activities that could be considered hazing. New members should not be asked to complete different tasks or functions than returning members, apart from some very basic educational programs. At all costs, avoid inflicting physical or emotional distress.

SECTION VII: OTHER EVENTS

Domestic Travel

Organizations choose to travel for many reasons - service projects, retreats, social activities, and more. When an organization travels more than 25 miles domestically, additional planning and documentation is necessary.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Rule, Student Travel](#)

Forms Needed

- [Travel Information Form](#) (if traveling more than 25 miles)
- [Risk Waivers](#)

Guidelines

- Each traveler should complete a risk waiver, to be collected and brought during travel, then kept by the coordinating organization for three years. Consider a secure, yet accessible storage location for these waivers.
- The coordinating student organization is responsible for confirming each driver's automobile insurance coverage, valid driver's license, and current inspection/registration.
- The [Travel Information Form](#) should be completed at least 48 hours prior to departure.

Important Notes

- If your organization plans to travel regularly, consider collecting member information for easy upload into the Travel Information Form. Required fields include traveling member names, UINs, cell phone numbers, emergency contact names, and emergency contact phone numbers.
- If driving, ensure that all drivers have had adequate sleep prior to getting behind the wheel and consider creating a driver rotation for longer trips.
- If driving, it is recommended to have a driver and navigator in each vehicle to avoid distracted driving.
- Create a crisis response plan that addresses how the organization would respond in the case of a car accident, adverse weather conditions, or other emergencies.
- Renting vehicles can be a helpful risk management strategy for domestic travel, as the rental company ensures that the vehicle is in good working condition at the time of travel. Additionally, the organization can purchase insurance through the rental company, so that the driver's insurance will not individually bear costs associated with any accidents or issues.
- If lodging will be needed, the organization should coordinate and confirm rooms and arrangements prior to departure. Additionally, the organization should be prepared for last-minute adjustments with extra rooms if necessary.

- Hotels are recommended for lodging for many of the same reasons. Hotels take safety precautions, including thorough cleaning of guest rooms, keys for room entry, and insurance for their facility.
 - For large group travel, consider the use of rental vans or charter buses.
-

International Travel

As with domestic travel, recognized student organizations are required to report any international travel done as a group and to work with the Education Abroad office.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Rule, Student Travel](#)
- [Texas A&M Student Travel Procedures](#)
- [Texas A&M Foreign Travel Procedures](#)

Guidelines

- [Education Abroad - Student Group Programs](#)

Important Notes

- Student organizations traveling abroad must register with the Education Abroad office at least six weeks prior to departure.
 - Student Organizations are not permitted to travel with their recognized student organizations to countries or regions included in the US State Department's [Travel Advisory List](#).
 - Trip leader(s) will work with the Education Abroad office to conduct risk management, procure health insurance and emergency service coverage, and participate in mandatory training sessions.
-

Performers and Speakers

Whether hosting a benefit concert, a lecture series, or a small performance, organizations should keep some of the guidance below in mind.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Student Rule 42](#)
- [Texas A&M University Student Rule, Appendix XI](#)

Bryan/College Station City Policies

- [City of College Station Special Event Application](#)
- [City of Bryan Special Event Permit](#)

Helpful Forms

- [Contract Review Form](#)

Important Notes

- Student Activities provides courtesy contract reviews for recognized student organizations. If your performer or speaker has a contractual agreement that you'd like help with, complete the form above. Please note that the contract review process takes approximately 4-6 weeks to allow time for multiple drafts.
 - The organization's advisor must have an opportunity to review any contracts and provide feedback prior to the organization executing the contract.
 - If an organization contractually agrees to any provisions that violate student rules, the individual who signed the contract may be personally responsible for paying that portion of the contract.
 - Recognized student organizations may not enter into a contract on behalf of Texas A&M University.
-

Films and Movies

Any showing of a film, movie, or documentary outside of the classroom (as part of an academic course of study) requires licensing and permission from the production company. Licensing costs vary per film and scale of audience. Consider utilizing the resources below.

Federal Law

- [Federal Copyright Act](#)

Resources

- [SWANK Motion Pictures](#) or [Criterion](#) for licensing films
- [Copyright Law FAQ](#)
- [SWANK Exhibition Request Form](#)

Important Notes

- Work with a licensing agency well in advance of your intended showing date.
 - When working with a licensing agency, movies will arrive two business days before your show date. Consider testing your movie in its entirety prior to showing to ensure that things will go smoothly on the big day.
-

Retreats

Organizations often host in- and out-of-town retreats to build camaraderie and conduct organization business. Depending on the activities, these may involve various levels of risk. Utilize the information below to plan your next organization retreat.

University Policies

- [Texas A&M University Rule, Student Travel](#)

Helpful Forms

- [Travel Information Form](#) (if traveling more than 25 miles)
- [Risk Waivers](#)

Important Notes

- For retreats with overnight stays, make sure that all participants have a safe place to sleep. Ensure that your organization is not exceeding space capacity limits.
- If traveling, utilize travel forms and processes listed earlier in this guide.
- Be aware of how lack of sleep may affect your programming. For example, it may cause heightened emotions, poor driving, and worsened ability to think strategically.

SECTION VIII: ORGANIZATION RESOURCES

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Education

As you work to make your organization a more inclusive and equitable space, consider working with many of our campus partners who specialize in specific types of diversity, equity, and inclusion education.

Resources

- [Department of Multicultural Services](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Pride Center](#)
- [Disability Services](#)
- [International Student Services](#)
- [Women's Resource Center](#)
- [Counseling & Psychological Services](#)
- [Texas A&M Office for Diversity](#)

University Policies

- [Texas A&M Statement on Harassment and Discrimination](#)
 - [Texas A&M University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#)
-

Leadership Education

High functioning organizations work to train and develop both their leadership and membership. The Texas A&M Leadership & Service Center has several different resources available to help in these efforts, as listed below.

Resources

- [Leadership & Service Center \(LSC\) Consultation](#)
- [Leading with Student Activities Podcast](#)
- [Gallup Strengths Presentations and Codes](#)
- [Leadership & Service Center's Leadership Library](#)
- [Maroon & White Leadership Program](#)

Additional Training & Education Resources

Many other training and educational opportunities exist across campus. Consider working with one of the programs below.

Student Organization Training & Development

- [StuAct Online Training Center](#)
- [YouTube Tutorial Videos](#)
- [Student Activities Forms Page](#)

Health Promotion

- [Alcohol Education Program](#)
- [General Wellness Programs](#)
- [Green Dot Bystander Intervention Training](#)
- [Stand Up Workshops](#)

Law & Policy Guidance

- [Student Legal Services](#)

Assessment

- [Student Life Studies](#)