



CREATE YOUR FSU EXPERIENCE

student activities

# Event Planning Guide

Contact us with all your Event Planning Questions!

Student Activities

Oglesby Union

Florida State University

A305 Oglesby Union

Phone (850)644-6673

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# Envisioning Your Event

Event planning can be as simple or as difficult as you make it. The secret is to have a flexible plan from conception to the birth of the idea that is followed and applied. The key terms to remember are the five Ws: Who, What, When, Where, and What Else. These should be used during each step of the planning process. Before you start planning your event, you should think about what you want your event to look like and how it upholds the mission and goals of your organization. Here are some things to think about.

What is the mission and goals of your organization?

How does the event help you meet your mission?

What are you hoping to accomplish through this program?

## EVENT DETAILS

Date:

Time of event:

Time needed for setup and teardown:

Location:

Rain Location:

What will your event include? (a few ideas are included below)

- Food
- Physical Activity
- Inflatable games or other rentals
- Large crowds
- Outdoor (weather contingencies)
- Music/DJ/Band/Other amplified sound
- Speaker or Performer
- Other:

Equipment you will need (setup and supplies):

# Planning Your Event

1. **Make sure you are currently a Recognized Student Organization** by completing all paperwork. You cannot reserve space or hold events on campus unless you are currently recognized by the Student Activities Center. Visit <http://union.fsu.edu/sac/sos/> for more information.
2. Tentatively **reserve space** for your event. Make sure you have space before you do anything else. You should contact offices about reservations at least 2 weeks in advance of your event, but be aware that space goes quickly, so a couple months in advance is a better idea.
  - [Guest Services - Oglesby Union, Student Services Building, Askew Student Life Center, and academic space](#)
  - [The Center for Global and Multicultural Engagement \(The Globe\)](#)
  - [The Commons Courtyard](#) - Dunlap/Askew/Globe Courtyard (only)  
Contact the Center for Leadership and Social Change
  - [University Relations](#) - Miller Hall, Langford Green
  - [Campus Recreation - Rec SportsPlex, Main Campus Fields, Westside Courts, Tully Gym, Speicher Tennis Center](#)
  - [FSU Reservation](#)
  - [Housing - contact individual residence halls](#)
  - FAMU-FSU College of Engineering - Contact Engineering Student Services [studentsupport@eng.fsu.edu](mailto:studentsupport@eng.fsu.edu)
  - 5k's on the FSU campus – Contact Officer Justin Maloy [jmaloy@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:jmaloy@admin.fsu.edu)
  - For campus spaces not listed above, please contact Dorsey Spencer at [dspencer2@fsu.edu](mailto:dspencer2@fsu.edu) for facility information
3. Fill out an **Event Permit** request.
  - *What is an Event Permit?*  
The Event Permitting (EP) process was created to assist student organizations with event planning, with the hopes to ensure safe and successful events on campus. Once the permit is completed, it is sent out to various campus departments for approval (i.e. Guest Services, Athletics, FSUPD, Environmental Health and Safety, etc.) The permitting process ensures that all stakeholders in the event are informed about the event and can provide the organization/department with the adequate support to make the event both safe and successful. This does not apply to weekly business meetings.
  - *Why is an Event Permit important?*  
Each event is different and has risks associated with it like large crowds, the potential for food-borne illness, injury, financial risks, etc. The Event Permit process allows you to work with campus partners such as FSUPD, The FSU

Medical Response Unit, facility, and SAC staff which can assist you in limiting risk involved with your events. Did you know that as an RSO officer or event coordinator that you can be held legally liable for what happens at your event? We want to help you out with the event planning process so that you can limit the liability for yourself, your organization, and FSU by partnering with us to help your event be safe and successful.

- *Where do I submit an Event Permit request?*

**For Recognized Student Organizations**, create an Event through your RSOs page in <http://nolecentral.dsa.fsu.edu>.

**For FSU departments or outside organizations**, fill out the online EP request form at <https://nolecentral.dsa.fsu.edu/form/start/22918>.

- *How far in advance are Event Permits needed?*  
Most events can be approved within 10 business days. However, more complex events may take longer to approve. Please keep this time frame in mind when you are planning events. Plan in advance and be sure to incorporate approval processing time.
- *What kinds of events need an Event Permit?*  
An Event Permit is required for any event which involves one or more of the following:
  - Events held outdoors
  - Events in which food is served to the general public
  - Events in which large crowds are anticipated
  - Events that involve physical activity or in which a waiver is necessary
  - Events involving amplified sound (like DJs or bands)
  - Events that involve performers, speakers, or other acts
  - Events that involve one or more contracts or rentals
  - Fundraisers or events where money exchanges hands
  - Events that involve minors on campus
  - Events in which controversial and/or emotionally charged content may be involved
  - Events in which national, state, or local appointed or elected officials or candidates will be present (not SGA or RSO officers)
  - Events in which media will be on campus
  - Rallies/demonstrations/vigils held in areas other than designated free speech zones
  - Events in which a motion picture is being shown
  - Animals of any kind including therapy dogs

- *Who can help me with event planning, permits, or questions?*

One of your main resources is the Student Activities Center (SAC) and its staff. The SAC can provide assistance with event planning at all stages in the process. From setting event goals and conceptualizing the program to evaluation, the SAC staff can work with you to make your program a success. Contact the SAC staff at (850) 644-6673 to make an appointment to do event planning, or contact Dorsey Spencer ([dspencer2@fsu.edu](mailto:dspencer2@fsu.edu)), Assistant Director of the Oglesby Union- Student Activities.

4. Complete Items Outlined once your Event Permit request has been processed or is “Pending”

- *What happens after I submit an Event Permit request?*

If you are with an RSO, you should log into <http://nolecentral.dsa.fsu.edu> about 24 hours after you enter your request and view your submission. You will find comments posted regarding your event permit submission on the event discussion board. The comments will provide you with a list of arrangements and contacts you must make in order to ensure proper arrangements are made for your event. Campus partners you will need to work with will be added so they can review your submission as well and may have questions for you to answer. A list of contact information for campus partners is listed in this manual.

For departments and outside organizations, you will receive an email from the SAC Event Planning staff with a list of required arrangements you must complete. Campus partners will be copied on that email.

- *How soon do I need to contact people on the list in the email I received to make arrangements or complete required paperwork?*

You should start contacting people and completing paperwork immediately. It takes a while for offices to make arrangements for your event such as staffing from FSUPD, approve a food permit, process an entertainer contract, etc. You should contact offices and put in contracts and paperwork at least ten (10) business days in advance of your event; fifteen (15) business days in advance for any contracts.

- *What kinds of arrangements may be required for my event?*

Each event is different and requires different arrangements or clearances across campus. Most often, groups will contact offices like Union Guest Services, University Relations, FSUPD, The FSU Medical Response Unit, and Environmental Health and Safety. Specific arrangements will be depend on the details of your event. You should be prepared to be flexible and work closely with university staff as they help to make your event a success.

- *How will I know my Event Permit is complete?*  
After the SAC Event Planning staff has received confirmation directly from offices involved in your Event Permit that you have made proper arrangements with them and all contracts/paperwork is signed, you will receive an email generated through <http://nolecentral.dsa.fsu.edu> stating that your Event Permit is “approved”. You must receive an approval email before holding your event. Timely completion depends on how quickly you make arrangements outlined for your event.
- *What if event details change while my event is on Pending status or after it is Approved?*  
You can log into <http://nolecentral.dsa.fsu.edu>, go to “My Submissions”, and then events to click on the event, change details, and re-submit it for Approval. New arrangements or campus offices may need to be contact if you change your event details. The SAC Event Planning staff can help you and will let you know how you will need to proceed through the Event Permit process.

#### 5. Finalize Plans and Execute Your Event

- *How far in advance should I plan aspects of my event?*  
Each event is different, of course, but you should start planning a few months in advance if possible. For a list of things to think about as you plan your event and move into the event execution phase, see the planning checklist we have included in this packet and tailor it to your event.
- *How can I help my event run smoothly?*  
A week or two in advance of your event you should start making lists of items you need to gather for the event. It may also be helpful to make a “day of” schedule that outlines times that items should be started (like setup, what times vendors will arrive, picking up food) and who will be responsible for each item. This can help you to outline your day and use your time wisely so you aren’t rushed. But remember that you will need to be flexible because unanticipated issues will probably come up. Utilize your other organization members and delegate tasks. It will help you out.
- *Who can help me out if I have questions or need advice?*  
Event planning can be hard and overwhelming. Don’t be afraid to ask for help from the SAC Event Planning staff. Drop by our offices in Union A305, call, or send an email.

#### 6. Publicize Your Event

- *How should I plan to publicize my event?*  
Publicity is important to the making sure you get the turnout you want at your event. Plan your publicity plan in advance to make sure you have time to get the

word out. You should also think about the audience you are trying to reach with your program and use that to guide your publicity plan.

- *Are there any campus policies about publicizing events?*  
For FSU's Posting Policy and posting locations, please refer to <http://posting.fsu.edu>

- *How can I publicize my event?*  
There are several methods to publicizing your event. The best bet is to use a combination of methods tailored to your audience. Here are some ideas.

### **PRINT PUBLICITY**

Posters (11" x 17") and Flyers (8.5" x 11")

- Departmental Mailings
- RSO Mailboxes in the SAC
- Campus Buildings
- Campus Bulletin Boards
- Residence Halls

Table Tents (Fill out a table tent request form through Seminole Dining)

FSView ads and announcements

Special Invitations – Direct Mail

- Special Guests (faculty, staff, administrators, community leaders, etc.)
- Departments/Faculty/RSOs

Public ads (Bus ads, billboards, Tallahassee Democrat, etc.)

### **ELECTRONIC PUBLICITY**

Email Listserves

- RSOs and Leaders Listserv, email [leaders@lists.fsu.edu](mailto:leaders@lists.fsu.edu)
- The Center for Leadership and Civic Education

Facebook Event

Twitter

WVFS – FSU's student radio station, email [wvfpsa@wvfs.fsu.edu](mailto:wvfpsa@wvfs.fsu.edu)

### **PERSONAL PUBLICITY**

Promotional Table in Union (contact Union Guest Services to reserve tables)

Announcements at RSO Meetings (contact individual RSOs)

Announcements in Classrooms (contact individual professors)

Word of Mouth

### **OTHER PUBLICITY**

Banner (contact Union Guest Services for sizes and locations)

Sidewalk Chalk

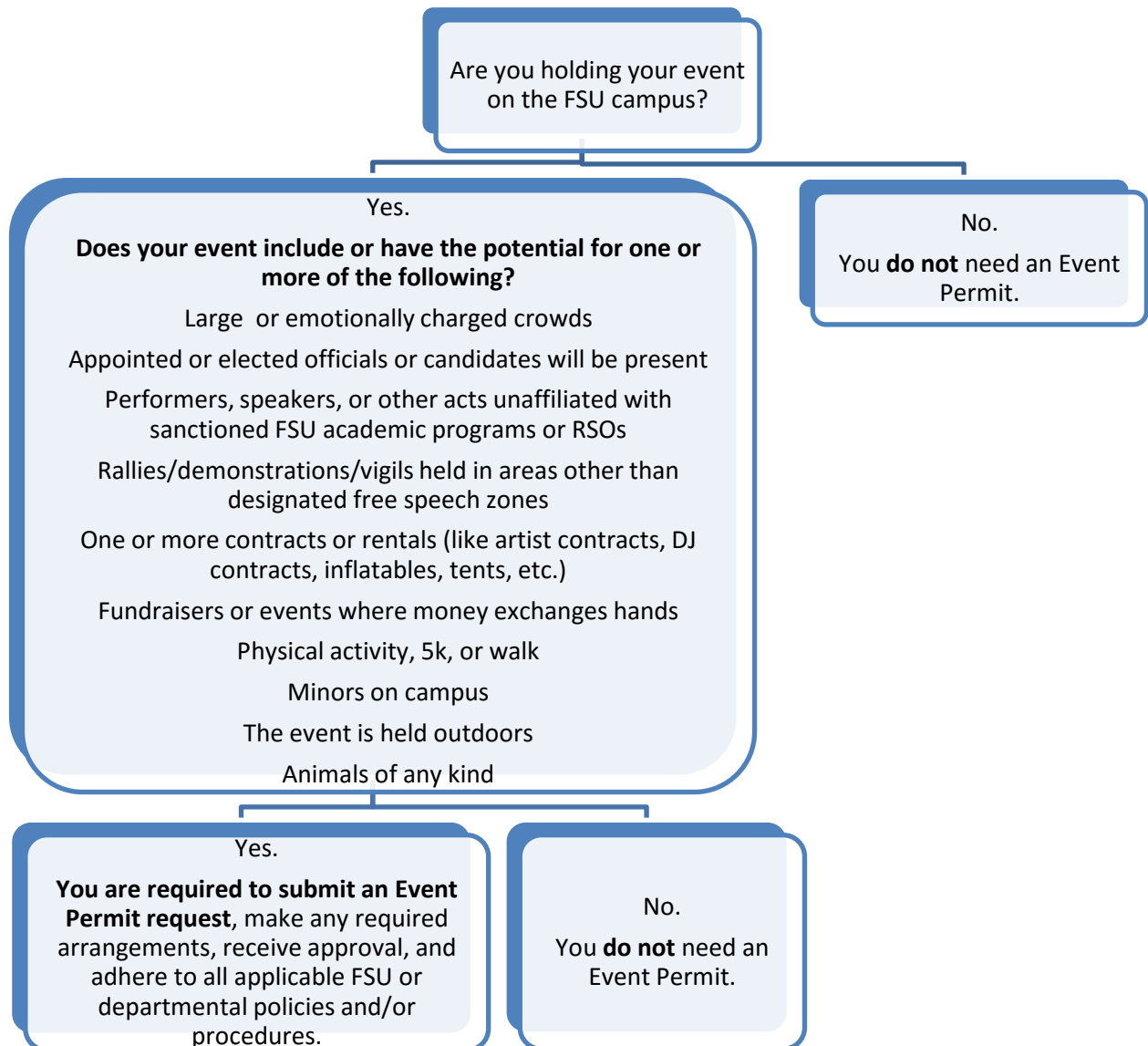
T-Shirts



# Event Permit Flow Chart

Do you need an Event Permit for your event?  
Follow the flow chart to find out.

Please note that this document is not a substitution for Event Permit requests and approvals through the Student Activities Center. Please contact the Student Activities Center Event Planning staff or visit <http://union.fsu.edu/sac/eventplanning/> for more information and policies.



# Event Planning Checklist

## **SEMESTER BEFORE EVENT:**

- Envision your event and start making plans.
- Meet with the SAC Event Planning staff for an event consultation.
- Develop a master plan and set possible event dates.
- Reserve a room and/or facility.
- Prepare the event budget.

## **SIX WEEKS OR MORE BEFORE EVENT:**

- Determine your co-sponsors and invitees.
- Select the event chair and members of your planning committee.
- If you would like to apply for funding from SGA, contact their offices for details.
- Contact speakers or participants and discuss time, date, place, method of payment, dietary requirements, travel arrangements, and media venue.
- Book travel arrangements and/or send travel reimbursement guidelines to speaker as necessary.
- Select menu and order catering.
- Establish a publicity plan for the event and order professionally printed materials such as brochures or posters; mail printed invitations.

## **TWO WEEKS OR MORE BEFORE EVENT:**

- Submit an Event Permit request by visiting <http://union.fsu.edu/sac/eventplanning/>.
- Make sure all necessary forms are turned in and you have contacted individuals listed in on your Event Discussion Board or filled out proper paperwork and contracts.
- Contact the venue to ensure adequate equipment, cleaning supplies, furniture, etc. are available for event.
- Send event notices to media. (Contact University Communications for assistance and clearance before you send out notices.)
- Start working on your “day of” schedule (outline items to be completed, delivered, and volunteer responsibilities).
- Send draft of program to speakers or performers.
- For speakers, DJs, or entertainers, contact them to get their contract to be processed by the university if funded by A&S fees. These must be signed **prior** to the event starting.
- Contact the FSU Police Department and/or another security agency to discuss a security assessment if security is deemed necessary for your event.
- Execute your publicity plan, send invitations (VIP invitations should be sent earlier.)

**ONE WEEK BEFORE EVENT**

- Confirm with all participants and vendors.
- Prepare name tags, speakers’ table tents, and any other materials to be distributed at the event.
- Schedule a media run-through if media is provided.
- Meet with all involved event staff to discuss logistics for the day of the event.
- Be sure your Event Permit reflects any changes from the original entry.

**DAY(S) BEFORE EVENT:**

- Send a reminder e-mail to invitees.
- Buy food, drinks, ice, tablecloths and utensils not supplied by caterer.
- Obtain parking passes for speakers.
- If you have a performance, do you need to have a dress rehearsal or sound check the day of event?

**DAY OF EVENT:**

- Check room to make sure it is clean and holds the necessary equipment and furniture.
- Post directional signs to the room, if event is open to the public.
- Have catering and/or prepared food items in place at least one hour prior to event.
- Place water and a glass at the podium for each speaker or make sure any artist rider requirements are met.
- If there are pre-event preparation activities, have staff in place at least four hours before the event.

**ONE WEEK AFTER EVENT:**

- Send the speakers, sponsors, and other individuals who helped thank-you notes.
- Submit any required paperwork to SGA if you received funding.
- Plan a follow-up session with staff to discuss event and possible improvements in the process.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

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# Event Planning Contact List

Click hyperlinks to go directly to websites or email addresses

## FACILITY RESERVATIONS

- **Union Guest Services - Oglesby Union and academic space**  
[http://union.fsu.edu/guest\\_services](http://union.fsu.edu/guest_services)  
644-6083  
[GuestServices@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:GuestServices@admin.fsu.edu)
- **The Center for Global and Multicultural Engagement (The Globe)**  
<http://theglobe.dsa.fsu.edu/>  
645-2112  
[cge-reservations@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:cge-reservations@admin.fsu.edu)
- **The Dunlap/Askew/Globe Courtyard (only)**  
<http://union.fsu.edu/sac/eventplanning/documents/Student-Commons-Courtyard-Policy-and-Application.pdf>  
644-2450
- **University Relations - Miller Hall, Langford Green**  
<http://unirel.fsu.edu/Space-Reservations>  
644-1000
- **Campus Recreation - Rec SportsPlex, Main Campus Fields, Westside Courts, Tully Gym, Speicher Tennis Center**  
<http://campusrec.fsu.edu/sports/facilities/rentals>  
644-0551
- **FSU Reservation**  
<http://campusrec.fsu.edu/outdoors/reservation/rentals>  
644-6892  
[rezoffice@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:rezoffice@admin.fsu.edu)
- **Housing - contact individual residence halls**  
<http://www.housing.fsu.edu/>  
644-2860
- **5k's on the FSU campus - Officer Justin Maloy**  
644-1234  
[jmaloy@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:jmaloy@admin.fsu.edu)
- **FSU/FAMU College of Engineering**  
Contact Engineering Student Services [studentsupport@eng.fsu.edu](mailto:studentsupport@eng.fsu.edu)
- **Landis Green (restricted use space)**  
Matt Watson in Guest Services  
644-6063  
[mwatson2@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:mwatson2@admin.fsu.edu)

## EVENT PERMITS

- **Student Activities Center – Event Planning and Permitting**  
<http://union.fsu.edu/sac/eventplanning/>  
644-6673

## OTHER CAMPUS CONTACTS

- **Business Services – Food and Merchandise sales permission**  
Sherrell Cork  
[skcork@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:skcork@admin.fsu.edu)
- **The FSU Medical Response Unit – First Aid**  
<http://www.tshc.fsu.edu/fru/>  
644-3349 or 644-0009  
[medicalresponse@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:medicalresponse@admin.fsu.edu)
- **Food Permits – required for food unless purchased through Seminole Dining**  
<http://www.safety.fsu.edu/foodevent.html>  
644-9117
- **FSU Police Department – 5k's and staffing requests**  
Lt. Justin Maloy  
644-1234  
[jmaloy@fsu.edu](mailto:jmaloy@fsu.edu)
- **Security (if not provided by FSUPD)**  
CSC Security – Luis Uribe  
850-438-5150  
[luribe@csc-usa.com](mailto:luribe@csc-usa.com)
- **Seminole Dining – catering from the FSU contracted food service provider**  
<https://seminoledining.sodexomyway.com/catering/index.html>  
Nick Segretario, Director of Catering  
850-228-1727  
[legacycatering.fsu@sodexo.com](mailto:legacycatering.fsu@sodexo.com)
- **University Communications – for media requests**  
Dennis Schnittker  
644-1360  
[dschnitt@fsu.edu](mailto:dschnitt@fsu.edu)