



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

## Office of the President

<b>SUBJECT:</b>  <b>EMERGENCY POLICY</b> Event Planning and COVID-19 Considerations  <b>THIS POLICY IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE</b>  <b>MORE INFORMATION ABOUT UCF RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS AT</b> <a href="https://www.ucf.edu/coronavirus/">https://www.ucf.edu/coronavirus/</a>	<b>Effective Date:</b>  8/11/2020	<b>Policy Number:</b>  EP – 20-2
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	<b>Responsible Authority(ies):</b> President Vice President for Compliance and Risk	

### APPLICABILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

This policy applies to all events to take place on the university’s campuses, or within any facility on a university campus, or within or at any facility controlled by the university (such as UCF leased facilities and UCF Connect Campuses), collectively referred to as “campus” in this policy. This policy applies to all individuals involved in the planning or staffing of any event on campus or attending an event on campus.

### BACKGROUND

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), federal, state, and local agencies have provided guidance on health measures that should be in place for events and gatherings. This policy serves to set expectations for all members of the UCF community, contractors, and visitors to follow when planning, staffing, and participating in events and other gatherings, including guidance to determine when to use some level of informative communication/warning, acknowledgement, or waiver related to COVID-19. This policy anticipates and relies on the cooperation of all members of the university community.

Part of the State of Florida Recovery Plan is reengaging the community through events. Events are not merely recreational in nature; they have important implications for the well-being of a large number of individuals involved in business, academic, and student organizations, can play

an important role in promoting healthy behaviors, provide employment, and can result in the development of improved assets or capacities. Since events have substantial educational, cultural, social, and economic implications, the university will assess the importance and necessity of an event and consider whether it may take place, provided that all associated public health risks are adequately addressed and mitigated.

Currently, Florida is officially in Phase 2 of the State of Florida Recovery Plan. Should the university be forced to limit operations due to changing community conditions, the university may call for all events to be placed on hold or canceled, and not be permitted to occur until state or local conditions have improved and returned to official Phase 2 status. Should an advancement of the state and local conditions result in a movement to Phase 3, the university may reevaluate its ability to safely host events with fewer restrictions, rescind this recommendation, and/or return to pre-COVID-19 status for hosting events.

The directives in this policy are premised, in part, on two points made by the CDC in their Guidance on Events and Gatherings: first, the *more people* an individual interacts with at a gathering and the longer that interaction lasts, the higher the potential risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 and COVID-19 spreading; and second, the *higher the level of community transmission* in the area that the gathering is being held, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spreading during a gathering. The CDC uses “gathering” to refer to “a planned or spontaneous event, indoors or outdoors, with a small number of people participating or a large number of people in attendance such as a community event or gathering, concert, festival, conference, parade, wedding, or sporting event.”

## NOTICE

This policy is subject to frequent change with the introduction of additional public health guidelines from local, state, and federal authorities. Any policy amendments or updates will be communicated through the university policies website ([policies.ucf.edu](https://policies.ucf.edu)) and will take effect as of the date and time of publication. It is expected that this policy, or subsequent versions of it, will be in force through at least the Fall Semester 2020 but may be modified at any time.

The university provides general information on coronavirus and the university’s responses to it at <https://www.ucf.edu/coronavirus/>, which is regularly updated. This website may provide more details on items addressed in this policy.

## POLICY STATEMENT

The resumption of events and gatherings at the University of Central Florida will be gradual and phased based on State of Florida official guidance, local public health conditions, the university’s capacity to execute safety and security protocols, and after the instructional space needs are defined. Events have educational, cultural, social, and economic benefits, but at this time gatherings of people entail certain inherent risks of disease transmission. As a result, this policy outlines those events that may be organized and carried out at the university. Should an

event be proposed that requires additional consideration or an exception to this policy (for example, an indoor event with food), the event will be referred to the Emerging Issues and Crisis Response Team (EICRT), which will assess the importance and necessity of the proposed event and consider whether it may take place, provided that all associated public health risks are adequately addressed and mitigated. Additionally, requests from third parties for use of UCF facilities for events or gatherings should be referred to EICRT for review. In addition to this policy, all existing event requests and approval processes must be observed for all campus events and gatherings (for example, the SAFE Form approval process).

Considering the CDC Guidance on Events and Other Gatherings and the State of Florida's Plan for Florida's Recovery, the university adopts the following proscriptions, applicable to the current Phase 2 status:

1. Virtual meetings or the addition of an optional virtual forum is encouraged when possible.
2. With the exception of entertainment venues, no gatherings of over 50 persons are allowed while still in Florida's Recovery Plan Phase 2; capacity limits should be reevaluated upon further state-level phased guidance.
3. Entertainment venues may have up to 50 percent of capacity, with physical distancing and enhanced sanitation and safety precautions, for the portion of the venue proposed to be used for the event. Until further notice, entertainment venues will be limited to 100 persons if the event will be indoors.
4. Outdoor events proposed through the SAFE Form process will be evaluated based on the venue location, size, scope, and nature of the event prior to approval.
5. All in-person events must be ticketed **or** RSVP only.
  - i. The ticket process or RSVP must include the appropriate level of warning as defined by university guidance, the requirement to wear a mask, and physical distancing guidelines.
  - ii. Event organizers must maintain event guest lists for 60 days to allow for contact tracing as needed.
6. Any exceptions to these requirements should be approved by EICRT.

## DEFINITIONS

**Camps and Youth Programs.** Academic, recreational, and service programs and campus activities designed for the participation of minors who are not enrolled as UCF students.

**Entertainment Venue.** Areas commonly used for large gatherings and events of 100 persons or more, such as, but not limited to: Athletics spaces, Arena/Venue, Alumni Center, Student Union, and outdoor spaces like Memory Mall, Lake Claire, and the Reflection Pond.

**Event.** Any gathering or assembly of people that requires the reservation of space, which is held in any facility on any campus of the university, or in any facility controlled by the university even if not located on campus. "Event" does not include instructional activities (e.g., classes, labs, etc.), athletic competitions arranged or sponsored by UCF Athletics Association, or day-to-

day activities of the Recreation and Wellness Center that are covered through separate plans approved by EICRT.

**Face Covering.** Reusable cloth face mask or disposable mask. See COVID-19 Return to Campus Policy (EP-20-1) for additional information about face coverings – available at <https://policies.ucf.edu/documents/PolicyEmergencyCOVIDReturnPolicy.pdf>.

**Gathering.** The CDC defines a “gathering” as “a planned or spontaneous event, indoors or outdoors, with a small number of people participating or a large number of people in attendance such as a community event or gathering, concert, festival, conference, parade, wedding, or sporting event.” The defining feature of a gathering is that people are assembled for a particular purpose, such as a meeting, concert, conference, or protest. Gatherings are subject to the requirements of this policy even if they occur in a location that does not require a space reservation. Like “events”, “gathering” does not include instructional activities (e.g., classes, labs, etc.), athletic competitions arranged or sponsored by UCF Athletics Association under their own policy, or day-to-day activities of the Recreation and Wellness Center.

## **PROCEDURES**

The university cannot guarantee a risk-free environment. However, the following precautionary measures and procedures are intended to minimize the spread of COVID-19 at UCF when faculty, staff, students, visitors, contractors, and volunteers participate in, or staff, events on campus. These procedures and precautionary measures are consistent with the guidelines from the CDC and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). They must be followed by all who are involved in events on campus or in university facilities, including those who organize or staff the event and those who attend or participate in the event.

### **A. Required Precautionary Measures – Applicable to All Employees, Students, Visitors, Contractors, Volunteers**

- a. Face coverings are required to be worn during all indoor events and at outdoor events. Wearing a face covering is not required or may not be appropriate while actively eating or drinking (but the person should be stationary and also maintain physical distance), or for children under age 2 or who are unable to comply with mask wearing, or for persons of any age who are developmentally unable to wear a mask. See UCF COVID-19 Return to Campus Policy (EP-20-1) for additional information about face coverings – available at <https://policies.ucf.edu/documents/PolicyEmergencyCOVIDReturnPolicy.pdf>.
- b. Everyone involved in an event is to practice six feet of physical distancing to the greatest extent possible, giving consideration to venue ingress/egress, line queuing, and ticketing logistics. Best practices to aid in physical distancing during events should be utilized, such as: limiting the number of participants; staggering arrivals and departures; removing or distancing tables, chairs, and other furniture in common areas; and installing protective shields at reception areas.

- c. Everyone involved in an event is to follow good hygiene guidance such as frequent and thorough hand washing, avoiding touching of the face, and disinfecting touched items.
- d. No person should come to campus or participate in or staff an event if they have tested positive for COVID-19, even if they are asymptomatic, until such time as they are cleared to return to normal activities. No person should come to campus (or, if they live on campus, leave their residence hall room):
- if they are ill, or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or
  - if any person living in the same residence has tested positive for COVID-19 or is sick with or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or
  - for the advised period after close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is ill with COVID-19 symptoms, or
  - until released by a healthcare provider or a public health official after receiving a positive COVID-19 test result, even if asymptomatic, or
  - for the period advised by a healthcare provider or public health official while waiting for COVID-19 test results.

Close contact means any of the following applies: you were within six feet of someone who has COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes; you provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19; you had direct physical contact with an infected person (touched, hugged, or kissed them); you shared eating or drinking utensils with an infected person; or an infected person sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you.

Persons testing positive for COVID-19 may not return to campus or leave their residence hall rooms until released by a healthcare provider or a public health official. CDC guidance as to COVID-19 symptoms is found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>. The CDC offers detailed guidance on ending home isolation at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>.

## **B. Event Locations and Facilities**

- a. As much as possible, events should occur using virtual platforms (e.g., Skype, Teams, Zoom, etc.).
- b. If an in-person event is necessary, the event planner must structure the event to conform to space capacity limits, physical distancing, and other health measures. The addition of an optional virtual forum for in-person events is encouraged.
- c. Outdoor in-person events are preferred to indoor in-person events, and those outdoor events anticipated to involved 50 or more people will be evaluated through the SAFE Form process, including consideration of venue location, size, scope, and nature of the event prior to approval.
- d. Outdoor entertainment venues may have up to 50 percent of capacity, as long as physical distancing can be maintained, and enhanced sanitation and safety precautions can be

followed. Until further notice, indoor events in any entertainment venue are limited to 100 persons.

### **C. Event Process Requirements and Enhancements**

a. Until further notice and improvement in the health and well-being of the community related to COVID-19 as determined by federal, state, and local officials, no indoor events of over 50 persons are allowed while still in Florida's Recovery Plan Phase 2; capacity limits will be reevaluated upon further state phased guidance.

b. For the duration of this policy, all events over 50 people are considered to be 'potentially hazardous events' that must be vetted and pre-approved through the UCF SAFE Form process (University Regulation UCF-4.0292). SAFE forms must be submitted 15 days in advance of the event, but organizers are encouraged to submit requests as early as possible to allow for extra time that may be needed for documentation prior to approval. The Office of Student Involvement will administer the submission process in conjunction with designated building management, and each venue's ability to safely host the requested event. The SAFE form process is being amended to reflect additional COVID-19 requirements.

c. All events of under 50 people should work with the designated building manager (venue location) to ensure compliance with the new COVID-19 safety guidelines for all facets of the event process. If the event organizer is seeking to hold an event of under 50 people in a facility or grounds space that does not permit reservations, then the event organizer should follow the guidelines of this policy in organizing and holding the event, including but not limited to all the required precautionary measures listed in this policy. The university reserves the right to require an event organizer to modify an event in process (including, if appropriate, halting the event), if the event is not complying with the requirements of this policy, including but not limited to the required precautionary measures.

d. All in-person events must be ticketed or RSVP only. The RSVP must include the appropriate level of warning as defined by university guidance, the requirement to wear a mask, and physical distancing guidelines. RSVP'd event organizers must maintain event guest lists for 60 days.

e. Consult the appropriate UCF units before implementing safety measures designed to mitigate transmission, such as physical distancing, which may have unintended consequences, like Environmental Health and Safety, Emergency Management, and Building Department.

### **D. Food and Beverage**

Until further notice, no food or beverage is allowed at indoor events at UCF. Food and beverage for outdoor events must be proposed through the SAFE Form process (or, if being arranged at an entertainment venue, be approved by the entertainment venue management), regardless of planned size of the event, and will be evaluated based on the venue location, size, scope, and nature of the event prior to approval.

If food and beverages are approved for an outdoor event, all catering services must be provided by internal third-party contractors (e.g., Aramark) or approved external providers. Exceptions may be granted outside of the approved caterers for cultural and ethnic considerations and must be approved in advance through the event approval process (SAFE Form process or through entertainment venue management). For an event involving a caterer not on the approved caterers list, the event organizer must submit the caterer's COVID-19 operational plan as part of the event approval process in advance for exception approval. Further, any catering provider must abide by the policies and procedures adopted by UCF as well as any applicable federal, state and CDC recommendations related to food and beverage service.

In addition to the above, for events at which food and beverage will be provided as part of the event, the following considerations apply, and the event organizer should outline their food and beverage service for the event as part of the SAFE Form process:

- a. If food is offered at any event, pre-packaged boxes or bags should be provided for each attendee instead of a buffet or family-style meal. Avoid sharing food and utensils and consider the safety of individuals with food allergies.
- b. Grab-and-go options for meals should be provided when possible. If a cafeteria or group dining room is typically used, then, if possible, serve individually plated meals (versus buffet or self-serve stations).
- c. Disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes) should be used. If disposable items are not feasible or desirable, ensure that all non-disposable food service items are handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher. Individuals should wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.
- d. Individually packaged food items must be commercially pre-packaged. No self-prepared or self-packaged food items are permitted. Event organizers may purchase commercially pre-packaged items (e.g., bottled water, canned soda, individually portioned snacks, etc.) to self-cater for events.
- e. Any catering services must have adopted updated health and safety standards to address COVID-19 concerns, including such things as appropriate PPE training for staff, provision of appropriate PPE and hand sanitizer to staff, staff hygiene and food handling rules, ongoing cleaning of the food service space, appropriate pre-event staff screening, use of disposable food service items as appropriate, appropriate physical barriers (e.g., sneeze guards or acrylic shield protection).

Entertainment venues operated by third parties or by the UCF Athletics Association will provide to the university EICRT return to campus sub-group detailed operational plans for reopening their venues, including their policies for handling food and beverage during events.

## **E. Student-Organized Events**

As stated above, all events and other gatherings should continue to occur in virtual platforms, rather than as physical groupings, as much as possible, and all events must incorporate and abide by the required precautionary measures. These rules apply equally to student-organized events as to university-organized events. Students are advised to plan any events or gatherings with all

of these precautionary measures and requirements in mind (including wearing of facial coverings, maintaining physical distancing, abiding by capacity limits for the space, and encouraging hand washing or use of hand sanitizer). Students must also abide by local or state guidance on physical distancing, including directives related to size of events or gatherings.

Registered student organizations must take the following actions to hold in-person events:

- a. Maintain active registration with the Office of Student Involvement.
- b. Submit an RSO COVID-19 Safety Plan.
- c. Authorized officers must complete the COVID-19 Safety Module.
- d. Comply with all university policies and procedures.
- e. Utilize KnightConnect or similar application for event disclaimer/RSVP/attendee verification.
- f. Utilize the SAFE Form event procedure for any event with anticipated attendance of 50 persons or more.

Organized student groups that are not registered student organizations (RSOs) may organize events on campus and, if they do, will be expected to abide by the requirements of this policy. Requests for space from such groups will be handled as requests from the public or, if a university department is co-organizing the event with the group, as a campus department request.

## **F. Camps and Youth Programs**

All camps and other youth programs must continue to comply with the university's Youth Protection Policy 2-005, register with University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk, and abide by all university-approved event standards as listed within or in relation to necessary safety measures for COVID-19. University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk may update its processes and forms for approval or attendance to reflect changes to university policies and procedures in light of COVID-19.

## **G. Communication**

All in-person events must display university-approved health and safety guidance (such as reminders to physically distance and wear face coverings) in prominent locations, as well as any applicable warnings, as appropriate. Event organizers are encouraged to communicate university policies and procedures to participants in advance of and, as applicable, during the event. Specifically, event organizers should communicate information about the following to attendees: university policies and procedures; mandatory face coverings; physical distancing; handwashing; cleaning and disinfection; respiratory etiquette and hygiene; COVID-19 precautions on campus; food and beverage; encouraging those that are feeling unwell (or who are waiting for COVID-19 test results, or who have tested positive for COVID-19 and have not yet been released to return to normal activities) not to attend or to participate in the event virtually; and encouraging those that are at higher risk to participate in the event virtually.

Depending on the nature of the event, event organizers should consider providing additional messaging through websites; social media channels; ticket purchasing sites; emails and push



notifications; mobile apps; signage; event registration and check-in; and event organizers and volunteers. The goal is to provide notice to all participants of applicable health and safety precautions that will be in place for the event.

## H. Warnings - Disclaimers, Waivers, Releases, and Similar Written Instruments

As the UCF community returns to a full range of campus operations, it is important that members of the campus community, visitors, and contractors understand the risks posed by COVID-19 in all facets of public life, including as individuals partake of different services offered by the university or participate in different activities/events at the university. To do that, event organizers or venue operators at the university should develop and utilize appropriate warnings to ensure event attendees, activity participants, and venue visitors understand the risks of such attendance, participation, or visitation.

To assist campus event organizers and site managers with devising and publishing appropriate warnings, the university developed Guidance on Drafting and Use of Warnings (disclaimers, assumption of risk, waivers, releases, and similar written instruments) for the COVID-19 era, available at <https://generalcounsel.ucf.edu/> (direct document link: <https://generalcounsel.ucf.edu/files/2020/07/COVID-19-Era-Guidance-on-Drafting-and-Use-of-Warnings.pdf>). Event organizers should refer to this document to determine what kind of warning would be appropriate for the event in question and whether it can be drafted using the guidance provided.

There are different types of events, activities, and spaces where an attendee/user/participant (individually and collectively referred to throughout this document as “participant”) can or should be warned or required to acknowledge risk or waive rights. For example:

- a. events/activities that are **non-academic and voluntary** which involve close contact (e.g., intramural sports, adventure trips offered by RWC) and/or involve readily identifiable risk (e.g., Rec & Wellness, staff gym, certain volunteer activities, challenge course);
- b. events/activities that are **academic and voluntary** but which involve identifiable risk (e.g., field training in healthcare setting where alternate assignment is available; field trips; other field/service learning experiences);
- c. events/activities that are **academic and mandatory** (e.g., mandatory field training such as clinical training assignments in healthcare setting);
- d. services that the university **provides to the community** (e.g., Creative School, camps); and
- e. **traditional campus services** that involve close contact and likely congregation of users (e.g., housing, dining) or **campus events** that involve close contact for extended periods (e.g., commencement).

There are three warning levels discussed in more detail in the Guidance document. In summary, they are: (1) disclaimer/subject warning – a general statement articulating identifiable risks and advising the participant of the risks and that the participant may choose to proceed; often combined with a repudiation of responsibility for the participant’s choice; (2) assumption of risk – a statement of warning about event risks that typically states that the participant has been put

on notice of the risks and has, with that knowledge, chosen to proceed; often accompanied by language indicating that the participant agrees to assume the risks of participation; and (3) waiver/release – an agreement between the parties which releases claims of liability, will typically include strong language about both the risk of the event and the knowing relinquishment of potential legal claims arising out of injury/damage alleged to be due to that risk; often includes assumption of risk language with waiver of claims language. Examples of each kind of warnings are provided in the Guidance.

The Guidance also discusses some options for how to communicate such warnings to participants. For example, a disclaimer or subject warning is easily communicated through passive channels, such as signage or as part of event documentation (or a webpage). An assumption of risk may be a mix of passive (e.g., signage, ticket or event confirmation) or active (e.g., active RSVP) delivery means. A waiver is a more significant level of warning – an event organizer who feels that the event being planned requires such a document, the event organizer should consider how best to succinctly explain the event and the risks entailed and then contact the Office of the General Counsel ([gcounsel@ucf.edu](mailto:gcounsel@ucf.edu)) to finalize a document for the event. A waiver should only be delivered in writing and must require signature or other active acknowledgement by the recipient.

## **I. Enforcement**

All events must comply with this policy. All event organizers must be familiar with the requirements of this policy and any university requirements for health and safety generally and events specifically. All individuals involved in a campus event – whether organizing it, staffing it, or participating in it – must comply with the requirements of this policy and applicable requirements of the COVID-19 Return to Campus Policy (EP-20-1). While the goal of the university is that all individuals will cooperate and voluntarily comply with these requirements, should there be a failure to do so, the university may take action against the noncompliant individual or group. Such action may include education and training, or disciplinary action, or removal from the event or the campus with or without a trespass warning. Groups or individuals that organize an event and then fail to comply with this policy may be restricted from organizing further events. Contractors and contractor employees who fail or refuse to comply with the university's policy may be asked to leave the university, may be in breach of contract, or may be trespassed from the university if non-compliance continues.

## **RELATED INFORMATION**

UCF Coronavirus Information page (regularly updated):  
<https://www.ucf.edu/coronavirus/>

UCF Emergency Policy (EP-20-1.) – COVID-19 Return to Campus:  
<https://policies.ucf.edu/documents/PolicyEmergencyCOVIDReturnPolicy.pdf>


UCF Regulation UCF-4.0292 Potentially Hazardous Events – the SAFE Form process:

<https://regulations.ucf.edu/chapter4/documents/4.0292PotentialHazardousEventsFINALJune18.pdf>

UCF EICRT Guidance Drafting and Use of Warnings for the COVID-19 era:  
<https://generalcounsel.ucf.edu/>

CDC Guidance on Events and Other Gatherings  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html> (page last updated July 7, 2020)

**INITIATING AUTHORITY:** President

<b>POLICY APPROVAL</b> <b>(For use by the Office of the President)</b>	
Policy Number: EP-20-2	
President or Designee: _____	Date: _____
Alexander Cartwright	 Digitally signed by Alexander Cartwright Date: 2020.08.11 10:07:01 -04'00'