

Policy: Alcohol at Events with Undergraduate Students

The Alcohol, Cannabis, and Other Drugs Collaborative's Philosophy Statement: A caring, safe, and well-informed community fosters an environment in which we can all live and learn. To that end, the Northwestern community shares responsibility for promoting healthy behavior. In supporting each individual's health and wellbeing, we assist students, staff, and faculty in understanding the risks associated with consuming alcohol while seeking to minimize the harm to self and others caused by the misuse and abuse of alcohol.

This policy reflects one aspect of broader coverage of issues related to alcohol that can be found in the Student Handbook.¹ The University supports strategies to mitigate the negative consequences of alcohol for students, Northwestern, and in the community, and implores students to consider the impacts of their actions in the same way.

With respect to all events for undergraduate students at which alcohol will be present, the following apply:

1. The possession, use and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages by students must at all times be in compliance with applicable local ordinances, laws of the State of Illinois, and the policies of Northwestern University, including the Student Handbook. All of these prohibit the use or possession of alcohol by individuals under the age of 21.
2. Alcohol may not be purchased using University funds (including student group funds held by the Student Organization Finance Office) for undergraduate student events. In no case shall University funds be used for the purchase of alcohol with any intent to be served to those under the age of 21.
3. All events with alcohol at which undergraduate students are present must follow the requirements of section 6, parts 6.g-6.t (see below). Groups of students and student organizations planning such events should attend to those requirements in consultation with their advisors and Student Affairs staff to promote safety, health, and well-being for participants.
4. Violations are grounds for conduct action under Northwestern's Student Code of Conduct.

The remainder of this Policy describes a required approval process for certain events: events planned or hosted by groups of students or student organizations in designated locations, at which alcohol is available for undergraduate student participants over the age of 21. These are hereinafter referred to as "student events with alcohol."

1. Student events with alcohol occurring at the following locations must seek approval:
 - a. Off-campus events occurring at a third-party venue (a private home is not such a venue);
 - b. On-campus group housing (includes fraternity and sorority houses, but not residence halls, residential colleges, or special interest housing);
 - c. On-campus in any other reservable University space.
2. The term "groups of students or student organizations" includes but is not limited to registered student organizations (RSOs), recognized fraternity and sorority chapters, and Northwestern athletic or intramural teams. It also includes unofficial organizations acting in a similar manner to any of the above. The "Groups and Recognized Student Organizations" provisions of the University Hearing and Appeals System will be used to determine whether an event's organizers constitute a group, and that group's responsibility for an event with alcohol under this Policy.²

¹ <https://www.northwestern.edu/communitystandards/student-handbook/student-handbook.pdf>

² Student Handbook Appendix: University Hearing and Appeals System (<https://www.northwestern.edu/communitystandards/student-handbook/student-handbook-documents/uhas-appendix.pdf>), page 9.

3. Student events with alcohol at the designated locations must be approved by the Vice President of Student Affairs or their designee, without respect to the source of payment for the event's venue or services.³
 - a. Where University funds are to be used for the event's venue or services, failure to secure approval will result in a denial of all payment and contractual requests submitted, and may result in the denial of future event requests by the student organization.
 - b. Where a group of students or a student organization self-pays for an event's venue or services, failure to secure approval may result in the denial of present and future event requests by the group of students or the student organization.
 - c. Where an event proceeds without approval, or after notice of non-approval, the student organization or organizers may be referred to the Office of Community Standards for conduct action under the Student Handbook.
4. Approval decisions for a student event with alcohol will be based on review of all necessary contracts including use of the Northwestern Events with Alcohol Rider, as well as risk management plan developed by the student organizers which emphasizes health, safety, wellness, and adherence to the requirements of section 6, below. The Rider, and risk management template, are available at <https://www.northwestern.edu/studentorgs/organization-officers/planning-an-event/>.⁴
5. Exceptions to this policy may be granted for religious observance in accordance with Illinois state law. Event planners must submit a risk management plan, and then submit the documented need for an exception to the Assistant Vice President of Campus Inclusion & Community for approval in consultation with the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance.
6. All approved student events with alcohol must comply with all applicable University policies set forth in the Student Handbook as well as the following requirements:
 - a. Organizers must consult with Student Affairs – and as appropriate, Northwestern University Police – for security needs at on-campus events (<https://www.northwestern.edu/up/community-services/special-event-security.html>). Organizers must arrange and cover the costs of security personnel deemed necessary to ensure attendee safety, policy compliance, and incident management;
 - b. Alcohol must be supplied and served solely by a licensed and insured pourer who is not a member of the organization hosting the event, and has BASSETT certification;
 - c. Alcoholic beverages may not leave the facility, and unconsumed beverages remain the property of the licensed and insured pourer in accordance with the laws of the State of Illinois;
 - d. Alcohol must be sold on a per drink basis (i.e., no open bars; no free drink tickets; no pitchers or common containers).
 - i. If the event is being held at a third-party contracted venue alcohol must be sold on a per drink basis at no less than the published price open to all establishment patrons, or its equivalent. No drink price specials may be part of the event.

³ Events with alcohol hosted or planned by groups of students or student organizations at other locations are not required to seek Student Affairs approval. However, student planners are nevertheless expected to follow the requirements of section 6 (6.g-6.t), in consultation with their advisors and Student Affairs staff to promote safety, health, and well-being for participants.

⁴ Obtaining approval of contracts, riders, and risk management plans typically takes approximately six weeks from the time of submission. The Executive Director of Campus Life or the Associate Vice President for Operations and Services may permit a shortened timeline based on event characteristics.

- ii. If the event is *not* being held at a third-party contracted venue, alcohol must be sold on a per drink basis at market rate, or its equivalent.
 - iii. The use of “its equivalent” is included to permit groups of students or student organizations to plan events, with the assent of the licensed pourer, for which of-age participants pre-purchase tabbed wristbands for themselves instead of buying each drink separately at the event. These wristbands’ cost to participants must be consistent with the market rate for the alcohol made available at the event.⁵
- e. Alcohol service may not exceed 3 hours unless otherwise approved. Alcohol service must conclude at a point when the event’s scheduled runtime is 2/3 completed, unless otherwise approved;
- f. Events occurring more than two miles off-campus (measured from the nearest campus boundary) must have contracted transportation for all attendees to and from the event. All events off campus must have a contingency plan for weather risks.
- g. Organizers and organizations are prohibited from receiving payment for alcohol;
- h. Alcohol may only be purchased and consumed by attendees who are 21 years of age or older;
- i. Controls must be in place to prevent the purchase or consumption of alcoholic beverages by attendees under the age of 21;
- j. High-proof alcohol (i.e., 30 proof and above) may not be served to attendees at the event;
- k. Drinking games and devices intended to accelerate the consumption of alcohol are not permitted on University property, or at any University-sponsored or -related events;
- l. Trained student sober monitors are required at a ratio of 1:25. Sober monitor training typically consists of Red Watch Band training through Northwestern’s Center for Student Advocacy and Wellness (CSAW) department (or an equivalent program reviewed and approved by CSAW);
- m. Individuals serving in event oversight roles and present at the event (e.g., event chairs, risk managers, or designated executive officers) must complete Red Watch Band training and a risk management training offered or approved by Campus Life;
- n. Individuals responsible for event oversight, and trained sober monitors, are prohibited from consuming alcoholic beverages prior to or during the event;
- o. Organizers must ensure implementation of a screening process to identify and address any attendees arriving already intoxicated. To “address” such attendees includes considering, with appropriate consult and for the safety of the attendee and the event as a whole, a) whether to grant entry and under what conditions, and b) how to ensure the attendee’s safety and well-being if entry is not permitted;
- p. Water must be available to attendees, free of charge, for the duration of the event;
- q. Food, free or for sale, must be available to attendees for the duration of the event. Snack machines do not satisfy this requirement;
- r. Advertising of events must emphasize the event’s purpose and may not be related to alcohol;
- s. The number of people in the event at any given time may not exceed the fire capacity for the venue. For on-campus events, student organizers must work with Student Affairs and/or Environmental Health and Safety to verify the compliance of attendance plans.

⁵ This item is not intended to make tabbed wristbands the sole alternative to a cash bar. Other proposed mechanisms will be evaluated as to their effectiveness in 1) identifying of-age persons, 2) preventing access to alcohol by underage persons, 3) limiting alcohol consumption to pre-purchased amounts, and 4) encouraging a pace and volume of consumption that reduces the potential for harm.

- t. Any emergencies shall be immediately reported to 911 first, and then to the Administrator on Call. Non-emergency incidents involving student safety or misconduct shall be reported to the Administrator on Call.

An individual, group, or organization may be held responsible for the actions and behaviors of guests; groups and organizations may be held responsible for the actions of individual members. Failure to follow this policy will result in the cancellation of the planned event, and may affect eligibility to host future events.

Student Affairs reserves the right to approve or disapprove events based on the University's academic and events calendar, volume of similar events on the same day, and volume of similar events in proximity to each other. Student Affairs also reserves the right to approve or disapprove events based on City of Evanston requirements for the number of liquor licenses that can be issued to any one sales address, or applicant (see license requirements at https://www.cityofevanston.org/business_detail_T7_R375.php).