

Event Security Planning – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The University remains committed to supporting events, free expression, and community life while ensuring thoughtful, proactive safety planning. The guidance here is intended to respond to the questions of event organizers as they plan spring 2026 events following the tragedy of December 13, 2025. The list may expand as additional questions arise.

Please refer to the [Event Security Planning Guidance](#) document available on the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Management (DPSEM) event safety website.

The [event planning process and timeline](#) page provides helpful information about the lead time to plan events, and the [DPSEM event security page](#) provides additional considerations regarding security planning.

Where can I find guidance about event security?

Event security information and forms are available at:

- **University-wide Event Policies:** <https://event-strategy.brown.edu/event-policies>
- **Event Planning Guide and Timeline:** <https://event-strategy.brown.edu/plan-your-event/planning-guide-and-timeline>
- **Event Security Planning Guidance:** <https://publicsafety.brown.edu/sites/default/files/Event%20Security%20Planning%20Guidance.pdf>
- **Department of Public Safety and Emergency Management Event Security:** <https://publicsafety.brown.edu/programsservices/event-security>
- **Invited Dignitary Form:** <https://event-strategy.brown.edu/plan-your-event/invited-dignitaries>

Will the process for planning events look different now?

The fundamentals of event planning remain the same following December 13, 2025. The University's goal is to support events safely, not to discourage them.

What *does* matter more than ever is early engagement with the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Management (DPSEM). Early planning allows safety considerations to be

reviewed thoughtfully and proportionately and helps ensure that appropriate resources can be coordinated in advance.

Who determines whether my event has enough security coverage?

The Department of Public Safety and Emergency Management (DPSEM) determines security staffing needs.

Event organizers provide information about the event (location, size, format, access, timing, etc.), but DPSEM is solely responsible for assessing risk and determining:

- Whether security support is needed
- The appropriate staffing level
- The staffing mix and deployment approach

In addition, DPSEM is solely responsible for implementing these determinations, with appropriate input from organizers.

Will there be changes to who hires external security for events?

No. Event organizers are not authorized to hire external security for University events without coordination with DPSEM.

If additional security resources are needed, DPSEM will determine:

- Whether external law enforcement partners (such as Providence Police) are involved
- Whether approved private security firms are used to supplement staffing

This coordination continues to be handled centrally through DPSEM. Student organizations should continue to coordinate with the [Student Activities Office](#).

Who pays for event security? What if I don't have funding?

Cost considerations vary depending on the event and circumstances.

If security is identified as necessary:

- DPSEM and University partners will work with event sponsors to understand funding implications.
- Organizers should not cancel or abandon events due to uncertainty about cost.
- Early engagement is essential so options can be explored and addressed appropriately.

Are there new security guidelines or best practices I should consider?

There are no one-size-fits-all requirements. Instead, planners should:

- Engage DPSEM early
- Think intentionally about event format, access, and publicity
- Ensure event details are accurate and up to date
- Allow sufficient time for safety planning and coordination

Safety planning is event-specific and based on objective, operational factors.

How should I advise students who are planning events?

Students should be encouraged to:

- Start planning early
- Be thoughtful about event size, access, and publicity
- Submit required forms in a timely way
- Reach out to the Student Activities Office or affiliated department for guidance. Staff members who are supporting students may also reach out to ESP for guidance

Students are not expected to assess risk or security needs on their own. DPSEM are there to support them. Student groups should continue to work directly with the [Student Activities Office](#).

Should I cancel my event if I am worried about security?

No. Concern about safety should prompt conversation, not cancellation.

If you have questions or concerns:

- Engage DPSEM early
- Share what you know about the event
- Allow time for safety planning to occur

The University's goal is to support events safely.

Will there be more security during Commencement and Reunion Weekend than in years past?

Commencement and Reunion Weekend are large, complex events that always involve extensive safety planning.

Security planning is reviewed annually and adjusted based on:

- Event size and scope
- Operational needs
- Current conditions

Planning for these events is ongoing and coordinated centrally.

Will the University ticket Commencement?

Ticketing proposals are still under review. If any changes are made, they will be communicated broadly, clearly, and well in advance.

With most buildings requiring card swipe access, will those without a Brown ID be able to attend events?

Yes. Events may still include attendees who do not have a Brown ID, but event organizers are responsible for planning how non-Brown ID holders will enter the building and check in.

Because many facilities require card swipe access, planners should develop a clear entry and admission plan that supports both access and security. This may include practices such as a staffed check-in point, registration or ticket verification, guest lists, and clear instructions for arrival and entry.

Event Strategy and Management (ESM) and DPSEM are available to help event planners develop protocols that are appropriate for the venue, audience, and event format, promoting security while ensuring the event remains accessible to invited guests and members of the public when applicable.

Will outdoor events still take place?

Yes. Outdoor events will continue to take place. As with any event, the location, including whether the event is outdoors, will be considered as part of event planning and security coordination.

Outdoor venues can involve different operational considerations (such as open access, crowd flow, and multiple points of entry). DPSEM and ESM will take these factors into account when ESM advises event planners and DPSEM determines appropriate security measures.

Will there be extra security for events taking place at Barus and Holley, Lassonde, and/or the Engineering Research Center?

We understand the heightened concern about these buildings, given the events of December 13. However, all events are assessed using the same content-neutral, objective criteria, such as:

- Attendance size
- Event format and location
- Public access and operational complexity

If an Engineering-related event has characteristics that warrant additional planning, DPSEM will address that in the same way it would for any other event, with a focus on safety and security as an utmost priority.

What is the most important thing I can do as an event organizer right now?

The most important step is early planning and early engagement. Event planners should reach out to ESM prior to signing contracts or committing university resources.

Sharing information early gives DPSEM and ESM the time they need to:

- Review safety considerations
- Coordinate resources
- Provide appropriate guidance and support for your event