



BROWN

# Event Security Planning Guidance

## Purpose

This guidance is for event sponsors, planners, and managers across Brown University. It outlines the resources available to support event planning (including services provided by Event Strategy and Management), explains when security planning support may be needed, highlights the importance of early planning, offers practical tips for supporting event security, and describes the information that should be shared with the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Management (DPSEM) to help ensure events are successful.

## Overview

Brown University hosts a wide range of events that contribute to the intellectual, cultural, and civic life of the campus. While most events proceed without issue, certain characteristics warrant advance security event review to ensure the wellbeing of attendees, speakers, staff, and the broader community. Please be reminded that all events must be conducted in compliance with Brown's [Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#) and applicable nondiscrimination laws. Early planning is critical. Some security measures, partner agencies, and operational resources require advance notice in order to be incorporated into event safety plans. Early engagement allows for better coordination, expanded options, and fewer last-minute changes.

## Assistance in Planning Your Event

The [Event Strategy and Management \(ESM\)](#) team often advises departments and academic units across Brown University to guide and support the planning of strategic events that advance the University's mission of academic excellence and align with institutional priorities. Upon request, ESM provides consultation, planning guidance, and standardized tools and templates to support effective event planning across campus, including for units that do not work directly with the team. The team collaborates on a wide range of high-impact events, from lectures and conferences to virtual events and ceremonies, and plays a central coordinating role in the production of the University's major signature events, such as Commencement, Convocation, Family Weekend, A Day on College Hill, and major lecture series. In addition,

ESM supports a campus-wide [community of practice for event planners](#), sharing best practices and centralized resources to strengthen the quality, consistency, and impact of events across the University.

You may request a [consultation](#) as you think about planning your event. Early planning is critical and it is often useful to contact ESM before you sign a speaker agreement so that the team can help guide a range of considerations. As a first step, review the event planning resources available on the [ESM website](#).

## When to Request Event Security Planning Support

Event sponsors should request security planning support via the [Security Event Review Form](#) **as early as possible**. Below is a list of event characteristics that could warrant a Security Event Review Form. The Event Strategy and Management team referenced above [can also assist event planners](#) in determining when a Security Event Review Form is necessary.

Submitting a request does **not** mean an event is unsafe. It enables appropriate, proportionate planning.

### 1. Event Size & Crowd Dynamics

Events that involve:

- Large (typically defined as 150 attendees or more) anticipated attendance
- Overflow or standing-room-only configurations
- Events open to the public or a broad campus audience
- Multiple entry points, queuing, or significant crowd movement
- High-traffic times on campus, such as regular business hours during the semester, dates with other large events taking place, etc

### 2. Event Access, Visibility, Publicity & Attendance Patterns

Events should engage safety planning support early when they:

- Are open to the general public, or include non-affiliated attendees - event organizers need to take into account and plan for public access protocols if their event is in a building that requires swipe access
- Are advertised broadly beyond the Brown community, or may draw attention beyond the intended audience
- Involve high visibility or high interest, including high-profile guests (regardless of viewpoint or affiliation)
- Have characteristics that may increase attendance variability (e.g., late announcements, external promotion, concurrent events, limited space)

- Require ticketing, registration, or controlled entry
- May involve protest activity (regardless of viewpoint or affiliation)
- Involve minors

Event sponsors should be intentional about whether event information needs to be public, and whether broader visibility is necessary to meet the goals of the event. Public listings, advertising, and open access can significantly affect attendance levels, crowd dynamics, and operational requirements.

Upon request, Event Strategy and Management (ESM) can provide guidance on event format, access decisions, and how to manage publicity and posting. Visit the ESM website to [fill out a request form](#).

Safety planning considerations are based on attendance, visibility, access, and operational impact, not on event content or viewpoint.

### **3. Invited Dignitaries & High-Profile or Protected Guests**

Events involving:

- Elected officials
- Government or foreign officials
- Judges or senior public leaders
- Diplomats or official delegations
- Any guest who may require advance coordination, protective considerations, or heightened security planning

#### **Important Requirement:**

Events involving dignitaries or protected persons require submission of a [Dignitary Form](#) in addition to any other event safety request materials. This allows DPSEM to coordinate appropriately and determine necessary safety measures.

### **4. Location & Physical Considerations**

Events that:

- Take place outdoors or in non-traditional venues
- Occur in spaces with limited egress or complex layouts
- Require temporary staging, tents, barriers, or equipment
- Take place after normal business hours
- Share space with academic, residential, or operational functions

### **5. Operational Complexity**

Events involving:

- Crowd management or access control
- Alcohol service
- Accessibility or medical considerations
- Sound amplification, lighting, or production equipment
- Complex coordination across multiple University departments

## 6. History or Elevated Concern

Events where:

- Similar events have required intervention in the past
- There are emerging or known concerns
- Event planners are uncertain about safety needs

**When in doubt, engage early.** Early planning preserves flexibility and supports safer events. The [Event Disruption Protocol Policy](#) provides additional information.

## Why Early Planning Matters

Early engagement allows the University to:

- Conduct thorough threat and risk assessments
- Coordinate with internal and external partners
- Incorporate agencies or entities that require advance notice
- Ensure appropriate staffing and resources are available
- Reduce last-minute constraints or required changes

Late requests may limit available options or require modifications to event plans to ensure safety. Brown reserves the right in its sole discretion to deny late or incomplete requests or to require modifications to ensure safety.

## Required Submissions to the Department of Public Safety

The Department of Public Safety coordinates safety planning and determines whether security support is needed for events.

Event sponsors may be required to submit one or more of the following, depending on the nature of the event. See guidance above for more information. ESM can also advise event planners about the appropriate forms based on the nature of their event.:

- **Security Event Review Form ([link](#))**  
Used to assess whether a security detail or additional safety planning is needed. This form includes information such as:
  - Event location, date, and time
  - Event description, speakers, and topics
  - Whether the event is open to the public
  - Anticipated attendance
  - Presence of alcohol or financial transactions
- **Invited Dignitary / Protected Person Form ([link](#))**  
Required for events involving dignitaries, elected officials, foreign officials, or protected persons.

Requests should be submitted **as far in advance as possible**, consistent with DPSEM guidance. Highly complex events or events with high profile speakers often take months to plan effectively. Organizers should submit their security event review form a minimum of 30 days in advance of their event, and earlier for complex events.

**Department of Public Safety – Event Security Information:**  
<https://publicsafety.brown.edu/programsservices/event-security>

## Roles & Responsibilities

### Roles and Responsibilities for Event Planning and Safety

Role	Responsibilities	Not Responsible For
<b>Event Sponsors and Planners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide accurate and complete event information</li> <li>• Arrange on-site staffing to manage event logistics and operations</li> <li>• Identify anticipated attendance, audience, and event format</li> <li>• Share known sensitivities, history, or concerns related to the event</li> <li>• Make intentional decisions about publicity and access</li> <li>• Submit required DPSEM forms in a timely manner</li> <li>• Partner with appropriate offices to review and execute speaker contracts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining security staffing levels, the number or type of security personnel, nor the security staffing mix or deployment locations</li> <li>• Access control or patrol strategies</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure management of event costs and budgets (including security)</li> <li>• Adhere to applicable university policies - <a href="#">linked here</a></li> <li>- Understand disruption protocols</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Event Strategy and Management (ESM)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide strategic guidance and consultation on event planning</li> <li>• Support alignment with University priorities and institutional standards</li> <li>• Provide guidance on applicable university policies</li> <li>• Advise on event structure, format, logistics, timing, location, and event staffing mix, depending on agreed-to scope of work</li> <li>• Provide planning tools, models, templates, and best practices</li> <li>• Support coordination for high-impact and University “signature” events</li> <li>• Serve as a resource and connector through a campus-wide community of practice</li> <li>• Collaborate with central communications and marketing teams as needed to support event promotion and positioning</li> <li>• Collaborate with DPSEM and other stakeholders to ensure appropriate planning pathways for events requiring safety or security review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event ownership and/or event execution or staffing in cases where there is not an agreed upon scope of work with ESM</li> <li>• Determining if security support is required</li> <li>• Threat or risk assessment outcomes</li> <li>• Security staffing levels, deployment, or posture</li> <li>• Access control, patrol strategies, or security protocols</li> </ul>

<p><b>Department of Public Safety and Emergency Management (DPSEM)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct threat and risk assessments</li> <li>• Determine whether security support is required</li> <li>• Establish security staffing levels, deployment, and posture</li> <li>• Determine security staffing mix, which may include DPSEM personnel, external law-enforcement partners, and approved private security firms</li> <li>• Incorporate event-planner-provided information into professional assessments</li> <li>• Provide cost estimates for security coverage</li> <li>- Assist with disruption protocols and planning when needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event content, format, or academic/programmatic decisions</li> <li>• Event publicity or access intent beyond security considerations</li> </ul>
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## Tips for Advancing and Supporting a Safe Event

These best practices are intended to help event sponsors and planners support safe, well-coordinated, and successful events at Brown. Safety planning is most effective when it is thoughtful, early, and collaborative.

### 1. Start Planning Early

Early planning is one of the most important contributors to event safety.

- Begin planning as soon as event details are known (most well-coordinated events are planned one year in advance)
- Allow sufficient time for coordination, review, and adjustments
- Early engagement preserves flexibility and avoids last-minute constraints
- The ESM page contains [helpful timelines](#) to take into consideration when planning your event. Some complicated events take a year in advance to plan.

### 2. Coordinate Early with Event Strategy and Management

With advance notice, Event Strategy and Management partners can help advise on high-profile events including topics such as:

- Logistics, venue suitability, and timing
- Event format and operational considerations
- Crowd flow, access needs, and production impacts

Early alignment helps ensure safety planning is integrated into overall event execution.

### **3. Engage the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Management (DPSEM)**

DPSEM is a key partner in safety planning.

- Share accurate and complete information about the event
- Engage DPSEM early if there is uncertainty about safety needs
- Allow time for review and coordination, especially for larger or more complex events

Event organizers are not expected to determine security needs on their own.

### **4. Be Intentional About What Information Is Public**

Consider carefully:

- What event information needs to be shared publicly
- Whether the event is intended for the Brown community, the general public, or both
- How publicity may affect attendance size and dynamics

Public listings and external promotion can meaningfully influence safety planning and operational needs. Share information intentionally and aligned with the event's purpose.

### **5. Use Ticketing or Registration**

Ticketing or registration can be helpful tools to:

- Anticipate attendance
- Manage capacity and entry flow
- Communicate expectations to attendees
- Support a positive event experience

These tools are often useful even for free events and do not need to be burdensome.

### **6. Choose the Right Venue for the Event**

Match the event to the space.

- Consider capacity, layout, and accessibility

- Think about entry points, egress, and nearby activity
- Account for concurrent events or campus traffic

Venue selection plays a major role in safety and crowd management.

## **7. Plan for Staffing, Roles, and Communication**

While security staffing is determined by DPSEM, planners should:

- Ensure event staff and volunteers understand their roles
- Identify clear points of contact during the event
- Plan how information will be shared with attendees if needed
- Ensure attendees know who to contact in event of safety concerns (e.g. DPSEM, use of RAVE Guardian app, etc.)

Clear roles and communication reduce confusion and improve responsiveness.

## **8. Plan Event Flow and Attendee Experience**

Consider:

- Arrival and departure patterns
- Lines, queuing, and waiting areas
- Accessibility and accommodation needs
- How attendees will receive information or assistance

Good event flow supports both safety and hospitality.

## **9. Build in Flexibility**

Even well-planned events can evolve.

- Be prepared to adjust timing, format, or logistics if needed
- Leave room for real-time coordination with campus partners

Flexibility supports both safety and event success.

## **10. Ask Questions Early**

If you are unsure about any aspect of event planning:

- Reach out early rather than waiting
- Share what you know and what you are still deciding
- Reach out to ESM prior to signing contracts or committing university resources

Early questions lead to better outcomes.