

As a community of scholars, Emory University is committed to an environment where open expression of ideas is valued, promoted, and encouraged. To read more about Emory's Respect for Open Expression, [visit here](#).

## WHERE TO GATHER

COVID-19 has changed the way events can be held on campus. For up-to-the-minute guidance on in-person events, [please visit here](#).

### Virtual Events

- Note: at this time the majority of on-campus events will only be able to be held virtually for the safety of our campus community. The office of Student Involvement, Leadership, and Transitions can work with you to develop innovative and meaningful experiences while utilizing virtual settings
- Emory provides Zoom and Teams licenses for free to all students/staff/faculty [please visit here for assistance](#).

### In-Person Events

- **If you believe your event meets the criteria for in-person gatherings:**
  - Request approval for an in-person event through OrgSync event calendaring function.
  - Once approved for an in-person event, decide where you will host it.
  - Things to consider when selecting your space for an in-person event:
    - How will you ensure guests follow Public Health and Emory guidelines regarding COVID-19 safety?
    - How will you manage the flow of traffic?
      - Where will you station a check-in table to greet attendees and capture attendance information? Will you use Corq for touch-free check-in?
      - Where do you want audience to wait prior to the event?
    - Do you want a physical barrier (for example, a stage) between the speaker and your audience, or would you prefer a more intimate environment, such as a campus life pavilion?
    - Will you need amplified sound to ensure all of your attendees can hear? (For example, if you use Harland, please be sure to reserve a microphone.)
    - Do you need an additional space to serve as a green room for your speakers or planning team?
    - Will you have an overflow space featuring a live-broadcast?
      - If yes, how will this be managed by your organization?
      - If yes, who is permitted to come in?
      - If yes, you will need to reserve a room with A/V capabilities.
  - Once you identify what your space needs are, reserve a location for your event to suit your needs.

- Go to 25Live to reserve space in Emory Student Center, Cox Hall, and Alumni Memorial University Center (AMUC).
- For space within White Hall, contact Brian Falgout ([bfalgou@emory.edu](mailto:bfalgou@emory.edu), 404-727-4342)
- For Harland Cinema, contact Student Center Operations and Events..

## PLANNING FOR A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

- Ahead of the Event
  - Get a signed contract.
    - It is important to have a contractual relationship if you are engaging a person (i.e. a speaker or entertainer) or company for your event.
    - If a speaker/entertainer/vendor provides a contract to you, submit via OrgSync in order to obtain an authorized signature from a University official.
    - If a speaker/entertainer/vendor does not have a contract or prefers to use Emory's generic contract provided through Student Involvement, Leadership, and Transitions.
    - Only designated officials from the University can sign contracts; under no circumstances should a student sign a contract – this would make them personally liable for the terms of the contract
  - Make an advertising plan.
  - Determine who will be invited to attend:
    - Emory ID only? Students only? Open to the public?
    - If an event is open to the public, is there a pre-determined number of participants? Do you need to set up an evite to provide tickets if you are only reserving a specific amount for an outside audience?
  - List your event on OrgSync.
  - Consider whether you wish to have Open Expression Observers at your event.
    - Open Expression Observers serve as a resource to support community members' rights to open expression and protect the rights of the community members to express their opinions in non-disruptive ways.
    - To request an Open Expression Observer for your event please complete this [form](#).
  - Determine pre-event attendee flow.
    - For virtual events, what time will you open up the virtual room? Will you have content playing while guests are waiting for your program to begin?
    - For in-person events, where will you allow attendees to line up ahead of the event? What social distancing precautions will you prepare in order to keep guests safe? What time will doors open? Will entrance to the event be first-come/first-served, or will you ticket specific seats?

- Will you reserve spaces for your organization's leadership, membership, or people affiliated with your speaker/entertainer/vendor?
    - Is there a specific time when you will no longer allow attendees to join even if the (live or virtual) room is not full?
    - How will you keep a running count of audience members?
    - How will you communicate with people who wish to attend if the event fills up? What messages will you use?
  - For virtual events, determine which features of the platform you will enable or disable.
  - Identify potential safety considerations for your event (both live and virtual). Contact Captain Burt Buchtinec ([bbuchti@emory.edu](mailto:bbuchti@emory.edu), 404-727-2679) with Emory Police Department to discuss details and reserve officers).
  - In the event your event is interrupted by protesters, decide who will explain protesters' rights and responsibilities during the event and help maintain order?
- During the Event
  - Decide how you will manage the audience during the event.
  - What will be the schedule for the evening with specific times?
  - Will there be a welcome, and if so, who will do this?
  - Will there be an introduction, and if so, who will do this?
  - Will there be an emcee or moderator, and if so, who will do this?
  - If virtual, will you use the breakout room function for discussion?
  - If you are having a Q&A session, how will this be managed? Will you collect questions ahead of time and have them read by a student leader? Will you have an open mic? Will questions be submitted online?
- If You Experience a Protest or Dissent During the Event
  - First, recall that members of the Emory community welcome to protest and dissent on campus per the Open Expression policy, however no one is permitted to interrupt the flow of a program, for example by using physical presence or sound.
  - Forms of protest you might see:
    - Audience members walking out / logging off at the start of the event: permitted but discouraged if disruptive.
    - Audience members standing up with signs in the room or on-camera, using virtual backgrounds with dissenting messages, or posting dissenting comments on a chat: this is permitted as long as audience members can see and hear the speaker. For an in-person event, you may suggest people hold signs move to the back of the room.
    - Community members holding signs outside the event space: this is permitted as long as attendees are able to access the room

- Community members holding a counter event at the same time: this is permitted as long as your event is able to continue without interruption
- Upon request, Emory can provide faculty or staff Open Expression Observers ([learn more here](#)) who will support your event by doing the following:
  - Protect the rights of the community members to express their opinions in non-disruptive ways
  - Serve as resources to community members regarding the policy and policy violations
  - Act as liaisons between community members and Emory Police and/or university administrators
  - Protect the right of community members to pursue their day-to-day activities
  - Provide information on how to avoid violating the policy.