



**The University of Texas at Dallas  
Office of Legal Affairs  
Special Event Risk Assessment (SERA) Guidelines**



## **The University of Texas at Dallas SERA Guidelines**

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## **I. SERA Guidelines Overview**

The University of Texas at Dallas hosts a wide variety of events. Events that meet the qualifications of a Special Event (defined below) require a Special Events Risk Assessment Form to be completed and approved before the event can be held. Events that do not qualify as Special Events, such as business meetings, do not require a SERA form to be completed.

The SERA form must be submitted ten business days prior to the Special Event. Failure to do so could result in rejection of the Special Event.

Special Events can take a wide variety of forms and include a wide range of special considerations depending on the details of the event. Below you will find information about the things to consider and departments you may need to consult with when planning your event. Not all of these will apply to every event. The Office of Legal Affairs can guide you through the event-planning process.

### **a. Office of Legal Affairs**

The Office of Legal Affairs is responsible for administering the SERA program which includes the SERA form, associated processes, guidelines, and event approval or denial. The Office of Legal Affairs works in conjunction with the Vice-President and Chief of Staff and the Office of the President to approve certain campus events. [Special Events Risk Assessment | Office of Legal Affairs \(utdallas.edu\)](https://www.utdallas.edu/office-of-legal-affairs/special-events-risk-assessment)

### **b. Risk Management**

Risk Management reviews SERA forms for high-risk events and to make sure that appropriate insurance coverage is in place.

### **c. Facilities Management**

Facilities Management (FM) reviews all SERA forms and works with departments to make sure that appropriate custodial services and moving services are provided. Cost centers are required from each department to cover the cost of FM services. [Facilities Management | Event Planning Guide \(utdallas.edu\)](https://www.utdallas.edu/facilities-management/event-planning-guide)

**d. Police**

Upon receipt of an event registration: [Event Registration | UT Dallas Police Department](#) the UTD Police event coordinator works with departments to ensure safety, crowd control and parking availability for all events.

**e. Parking & Transportation**

Parking & Transportation collaborates closely with the police department to ensure appropriate parking for all events. An event planner does not need to contact Parking & Transportation directly. Parking requests flow through the Police event coordinator. [Special Events - Auxiliary Services - The University of Texas at Dallas \(utdallas.edu\)](#)

**f. Purchasing**

The UTD purchasing department reviews all quotes and catering invoices. A list of approved catering suppliers can be found here: [Preferred / Approved Suppliers | The Office of Budget and Finance \(utdallas.edu\)](#)

**g. Student Organizations**

Student Affairs staff completes and submits SERA forms for all Student Organizations registered with the Student Organizations Center. [Chapter 1 - Student Organization Manual - Student Organization Center - The University of Texas at Dallas \(utdallas.edu\)](#)

**h. Programs for Minors**

Programs for Minors is the primary point of contact for all events, camps and clinics involving minors. [Programs for Minors - The University of Texas at Dallas \(utdallas.edu\)](#)

**II. AUTHORITY AND POLICIES**

**Related Rules and Regulations of The University of Texas System Board of Regents:**

Regents' Rule 80101 Category of Facilities and Authorized Users [Rule 80101: Category of Facilities and Authorized Users | University of Texas System \(utsystem.edu\)](#)

Regents' Rule 80102 Alcoholic Beverages [Rule 80102: Alcoholic Beverages | University of Texas System \(utsystem.edu\)](#)

Regents' Rule 80104 Use of Facilities [Rule 80104: Use of Facilities | University of Texas System \(utsystem.edu\)](#)

Regents' Rule 80105 Joint Sponsorship of the Use of Property of Buildings [Rule 80105: Joint Sponsorship of the Use of Property or Buildings | University of Texas System \(utsystem.edu\)](#)

Regents' Rule 80106 Special Use Facilities [Rule 80106: Special Use Facilities | University of Texas System \(utsystem.edu\)](#)

### **Related Policies, Procedures and Forms of The University of Texas at Dallas**

UTDPP1105 Special Use Facilities [UTDPP1105 :: Special Use Facilities:: UT Dallas Policy Navigator :: The University of Texas at Dallas](#)

UTDBP 1048 University Policies of Reservation and Use of Facilities [UTDPP1048 :: University Policies for Reservation and Use of Facilities :: UT Dallas Policy Navigator :: The University of Texas at Dallas](#)

UTDBP 3057 Purchasing Policies [UTDBP3057 :: Purchasing Policies :: UT Dallas Policy Navigator :: The University of Texas at Dallas](#)

UTDSP5015 Programs for Minors [UTDSP5015 :: Programs for Minors :: UT Dallas Policy Navigator :: The University of Texas at Dallas](#)

UTDSP 5002 Use of University Facilities [UTDSP5002 :: Use of University Facilities :: UT Dallas Policy Navigator :: The University of Texas at Dallas](#)

UTDBP 3011 Alcoholic Beverages Policy [UTDBP3011 :: Alcoholic Beverages Policy :: UT Dallas Policy Navigator :: The University of Texas at Dallas](#)

### **III. Definitions & Explanations**

**a. Special Events:** For the purposes of completing a SERA form, a special event is defined as a gathering that includes at least one of the following conditions:

- Advertised and/or open to the public.
- Alcohol will be served.
- Food will be catered.
- Outside supplier utilized, such as entertainer, speaker, musician, animals, etc.
- High attendance or potential for high attendance.
- Income-producing; fees or admissions collected.
- Media contact or involvement.

- Minors involved or invited.
- Outside normal business hours, including weekends, unless solely for academic purpose.
- Overnight stay.
- Outside entity using UTD property or facilities for event. (Use of University Facilities and/or Joint Sponsorship).
- Potential for significant disruption.
- Controversial speaker or subject matter.
- Requires Facilities Management, Parking, Police, or Fire & Life Safety involvement.
- Requires insurance.
- Utilizes release and/or waiver.
- University sponsored event at off campus location(s), including personal residences.

- b. Regular Business Meeting:** Regular business meetings are conducted on university property by UTD Faculty, Staff or Students. This includes after hours meetings for purely academic purposes. This also includes regular student organization gatherings with no outside contracted service. Meetings are closed to the public and meeting attendees are solely responsible for clean-up.
- c. Food Delivery:** As defined by purchasing: [Preferred / Approved Suppliers | The Office of Budget and Finance \(utdallas.edu\)](#)
- d. Caterer:** As defined by purchasing: [Preferred / Approved Suppliers | The Office of Budget and Finance \(utdallas.edu\)](#)
- e. RUO – Responsible University Official:** For purposes of these guidelines, an RUO is defined as a Department Head or higher.

For events involving alcohol, an RUO must sponsor or co-sponsor an event and must attend the entire event. If the RUO is unable to attend the event, they must designate someone else to attend in their place.

Monitoring of compliance with [UTDBP3011 :: Alcoholic Beverages Policy :: UT Dallas Policy Navigator :: The University of Texas at Dallas](#) is the responsibility of the RUO.

An Event coordinator as described on the SERA form:

1. Must be an employee; students are not allowed to complete SERA forms; and
2. Can be the RUO delegate to attend events.

Events that do not involve alcohol, do not require an RUO.

- f. Supplier:** A business entity or individual that has a contract to provide goods/services to an institution. [Supplier Management | The Office of Budget and Finance \(utdallas.edu\)](https://utdallas.edu/supplier-management/)
- g. TABC (Texas Alcohol Beverage Commission) License holder:** A person who holds a current license, granted by the TABC, to serve alcohol.
- h. On-Campus event:** An event that occurs in a UTD owned or leased building space, including outdoor spaces.
- i. Off-Campus event:** An event that occurs in a non-UTD owned or leased space, including a restaurant, event facility or private residence.
- j. University Sponsored Event:** A University-sponsored event is defined as an event that is organized by, paid for and invitations delivered by a budgeted office, department, or division of the University. (Regents' Rule 80102)

When an outside entity pays for the food and beverages, an event is still considered University-sponsored, if the budgeted office, department, or division of the University plans or organizes the function. (Regents' Rule 80102)

- k. High Risk Activities**
  1. Inflatable Amusement Devices,
  2. Carnival Rides,
  3. Knocker ball/Bubble Soccer,
  4. Bungee Devices,
  5. Fireworks,
  6. Mechanical Bucking Devices,
  7. Rock Wall Structures,
  8. Trampolines and
  9. Zip Lines.

#### **I. High-Profile or Controversial Event:**

Includes, but is not limited to events that include the following:

- a) UTD cabinet members, donors, or benefactors;
- b) UT System Chancellor or Executive Vice Chancellors; or
- c) International, Federal, State, or local elected officials or other political leaders.

#### **IV. Alcohol**

All events that involve alcohol must comply with: [UTDBP3011 :: Alcoholic Beverages Policy :: UT Dallas Policy Navigator :: The University of Texas at Dallas](#)

A SERA form is required for all events that involve alcohol.

#### **V. Animals**

Animals are allowed at events as long as they meet the guidelines listed below. These guidelines are subject to change. The appropriate Dean or Vice President must approve exceptions.

- 1. Dogs, Cats, Goats and Miniature Horses are permissible upon approval from the SERA Coordinator.
- 2. All animal owners must provide proof of vaccination and registration.
- 3. All animal owners must provide proof of general liability insurance that includes personal injury protection; and
- 4. Event coordinators are responsible for making sure all animal waste is removed at the end of the event.

#### **VI. Excluded Events**

- 1. High-Risk Activities are not insurable and will not be approved without an exception. Depending on the circumstances and activity, exceptions can be made by Risk Management, the appropriate Dean, Vice President, or their designee.
- 2. Raffles or other cash equivalent prize events are prohibited

**Raffle:** Award of one or more prizes by chance at a single occasion among a single pool or group of persons who have paid or promised a



thing of value for a ticket that represents a chance to win a prize.  
[OCCUPATIONS CODE CHAPTER 2002. CHARITABLE RAFFLES \(texas.gov\)](#)

These exclusions are subject to change.

## **VII. Event Capacity**

These guidelines do not address event capacity, number of persons allowed at any event, whether on or off-campus or at a private residence.

## **VIII. Fire & Life Safety**

Fireworks of any kind, including sparklers, are prohibited without approval from the Assistant Director of Fire & Life Safety.

Hot plates are prohibited from use at any event.

Charcoal grills are prohibited from use at any event.

Gas grills are acceptable upon approval from the Assistant Director of Fire & Life Safety.

## **IX. Insurance**

**Camp & Clinic** Provides general liability and accident insurance for UT Dallas owned and operated camps. This coverage includes day camps, overnight camps, on-line camps, and camps involving minors. Certain high risk sporting activities are excluded from coverage.

**TULIP** Tenant Users Liability Insurance Policy (TULIP) includes general liability coverage and host liquor liability for external Tenant Users that cannot provide general liability or host liquor liability coverage. Certain high-risk activities are excluded from coverage.

**Host Liquor Liability** Required when a department “hosts” an event, purchases alcohol and has a licensed TABC server serve the alcohol to guests free of charge. This coverage is available through our TULIP program and provides general liability insurance limits of \$1M per occurrence and \$2M in aggregate.

**Liquor Liability** Required when a department pays a catering service for the alcohol and that catering service uses a licensed TABC server to serve alcohol to guests. The catering service must provide a Certificate of Insurance with general liability insurance limits of \$1M per occurrence and \$2M in aggregate.

**Homeowner's Liability Insurance** If an event involving alcohol is approved to take place at a private home, the homeowner is liable for any injury or property damage that could be sustained by the guests. The homeowner's insurance would provide primary coverage. If the homeowner does not have insurance, then the homeowner may be held personally liable for any injury or property damage sustained by the guests.

**The Certificates of Insurance must list the following entities as additional insureds:**

- 1. The Board of Regents of The University of Texas System;**
- 2. The University of Texas System; and**
- 3. The University of Texas at Dallas.**

**Release and Indemnification Agreements** Recommended on a case- by- case basis. Consult with Risk Management for analysis.

#### **X. Virtual Events**

All virtual events involving minors must be processed through Programs for Minors. Insurance may be required. Releases specific to virtual programming may be required.