

# EVENT PLANNING AT UVM – Tips & Best Practices

## New for Fall 2024

- All event planners are required to answer questions about events that may attract a high-profile guest, a high volume of attendees, or potential disruption due to a sensitive topic.
- **New default set up in John Dewey Lounge!** The default setup for this room is now banquet round tables that seat 64 people. It includes a table that can be used for materials and food service in the back of the room. Click to view a [diagram](#) of the new default setup.

## Things to Consider When Planning

- **Need help?** Contact the UES or Davis Center Ops & Events Scheduling Teams. We are the event experts on campus! You can consult with us about options for your event such as dates, locations, catering, and other event details.
- **Plan early** – don't wait to start the conversation, reserve spaces, and assemble your event plans. Depending on your event's size and scale, you may need to plan 6-12 months in advance.
- **Know the deadlines** – when do you need to have your final catering counts to UVM Dining, when do you need to submit your final details, what is the last date to cancel? If you cancel, some charges may still apply.
- **Create a planning timeline** – know the deadlines for submission of requests for spaces, and services such as tech or production set up, catering, and parking. Work backward from the date of your event to create a planning timeline and stick to it.
- **Make a Request** - your EMS submission is a request and is not a guarantee of space, services, or approval of the event. Approval for events may require multiple levels of approval depending on the complexity. Confirmation of the space availability is only one step required in the event approval process.
- **Good Communication is key** – a well-planned event requires effective communication. Planning meetings, written and oral communication, and post-event feedback are critical in making events successful for the event planners, teams supporting the event, and your attendees.
- **Ask questions** – event planning can be complicated on campus. Ask questions and get others involved in your plans as early in the discussion as possible.
- **Be flexible** – your 1st choice of spaces, dates, or ideas may not be available. Plan flexibility into your event details.
- **Less swag, more experiences** – Consider the environmental footprint of your event. Don't give out unnecessary items that will generate trash or recycling (think stickers, plastic items, single-use items...). Understand the impact the event will have on the space.

## Event Plan

**Have a well-developed event plan** – A good event plan includes:

- **Staffing Plan** – who from your team is designated as the 1<sup>st</sup> point of contact for the event for vendors and other UVM departments?

Who will be on-site before the event to oversee the setup?

Who will be on-site during the event?

Who is responsible for the breakdown and cleanup after the event?

- **Production & Tech Plan** – what inventory, set up, tech support, and breakdown does your event need?
- **Vendor Plan** – Have you made all the proper arrangements for your vendor (directions to the event site, parking, power, tables, chairs, etc.)? Who is responsible for communicating with the vendor and who will check them in upon arrival to ensure they are set up in the correct location and follow any relevant University policies or rules?
- **Food & Drink Plan** – what are you doing for catering? Know that any orders from a vendor that is not UVM Dining may require a catering waiver.
- **Waste Management Plan** – will your event generate waste, and if so what kind (trash, recycling, compost, other)? How will you handle proper disposal of the waste and clean up after the event?
- **Safety Plan** – What is the protocol in the event of an emergency?
- **Emergency Plan** - what is the plan in the event of an emergency? Who is in charge of making decisions during an emergency and how will they be communicated to staff and attendees?
- **Parking Plan** – do you need parking permits or locations for your guests, staff, or vendors?
- **Communication Plan** – how are you going to communicate the details of your event to other UVM departments who will be supporting your event or impacted by it?  
How will you communicate and advertise your event to your audience?

## Responsibilities

- All groups using space are required to leave the area as they found it. This includes returning furniture such as chairs and tables to their original locations and picking up any waste generated by the event.
- Failure to pick up after the event may result in additional charges, or no longer being able to reserve an outdoor space for events.

## UVM Policies & Procedures

Be familiar with university policy, procedures, or guidelines that may impact your event. To include, but not limited to:

[Free Expression; Campus Speakers: Response to Disruption](#)

[Facilities and Grounds Use for Events and Activities](#)

[Business Meal, Hospitality and Amenity](#)

Visit the [UVM Policies page](#) for a full list.



## Safety Requirements

- You must have a designated event planner on-site during the event who will be in charge in case there is an emergency or if evacuation is needed.
- If your event is expected to need enhanced safety/security planning and measures, such as hosting a member or candidate for public office, presenting on a topic that is controversial/sensitive, or may attract uninvited attendees, or a large number of attendees you must notify UES.
- If your event involves minors (individuals under 18 that are not enrolled UVM students). You must notify Risk Management.
- If your event involves activities that are physical in nature, and/or may have a higher than typical risk for injury (Example: a 5k run, climbing, jumping, Bounce House, Rail Jam, Zip Line, outdoor obstacle courses, etc.) you must notify Risk Management.

## Choose a Date & Location

Things to consider when deciding on a date and location for your event:

- We encourage you to plan as early as possible. Event space, resources, and staffing is limited.

There may be services that are not available or additional fees that apply for late requests.

- What kind of event do you want to have? (Ex. a lecture, reception, conference, or an outdoor event)
- What kind of space do you need? (Ex. classroom, meeting room, ballroom...).
- Be flexible on your date and time. There are days during the academic year when spaces are full and services such as catering and production support are at capacity. Check with the Scheduling Team before you commit, if in doubt.
- Not sure? Contact our Scheduling Teams. You can consult with us about what spaces are options and which might work best. We are space experts!

**PRO TIPS:** Check the UVM Campus Calendar and UVM Bored to avoid conflicts and know your academic, administrative, religious, and cultural holiday dates.

## Submitting a Request

It all starts by making a request through the [EMS Portal](#). It's important to request your space or event as early as possible. There is a minimum of 10 business days' notice required to submit your request through EMS.

**PRO TIPS:** Know the guidelines for scheduling spaces on campus and who the teams are that schedule these spaces.

## Deadlines



13 months in advance, the earliest you can create a reservation in the EMS Portal for spaces.  
 10 business days in advance, the last day to create a reservation in the EMS.

## Event Details

**The information that you give us about your event matters!**

- When requesting a space be sure to answer all of the Event Details questions if they pertain to your event. The best way to ensure a successful event is to give us good details about it. This helps us help you avoid common event mistakes, incur additional costs, and be compliant with university policies.
- If you don't know the answers to the questions at the time you reserve, you can come back to your reservation and update them or email our office to help.

**PRO TIPS:** Most services come with some charges. Know what the estimated cost of your event is.

## Request Services & Event Support

### Production & Technical Support

Do you need a specific setup in your space, or do you have tech needs such as sound and video?

Events that require labor for setup or tech support must submit their requests for support more than 14 business days in advance. Complex events must request services more than 30+ days out.

### Transportation & Parking Services

Requests for services such as parking permits and shuttle service can be requested through the EMS Portal and must be arranged for in advance.

### Food & Drink

All events having food need to notify the Scheduling Team. Custodial fees may be incurred in spaces where food or drink is served.

### UVM Dining

All events having food need to notify the Scheduling Team.

UVM Dining Services is the university's on-campus caterer. They can design a catering menu to fit a variety of event types and budgets. Visit [UVM Dining Service's website](#) for more information.

Have a catering-specific question about menu selection or pricing? Call a UVM Dining Catering Coordinator at 802-656-2287 or email [catering@uvm.edu](mailto:catering@uvm.edu).

To place a catering order log into the EMS Portal and go to My Events, click on the name of the event, then Add Services.

Need help using EMS to place your catering order? Contact our Scheduling Team at Campus Events [campusevents@uvm.edu](mailto:campusevents@uvm.edu).

## UVM Dining Exclusive Locations

The following locations are exclusively catered by UVM Dining:

- The Dudley H. Davis Center (*Exceptions: Any pizza and Vermont Kosher with a Catering Waiver*)
- The Howe Library Cyber Café
- The Atrium in the Given Courtyard
- Harris-Millis Dining Hall
- Alice's Café
- University Marche
- Northside Café in McAuley Hall
- Redstone Unlimited
- Waterman Café
- Patrick Gymnasium
- Cat's Den
- Gutterson Rink
- Indoor Track
- Gutterson Multipurpose Facility
- Soccer Field at Centennial
- Turf Fields

## Deadlines

13 months in advance, the earliest you can submit a catering order in EMS.

10 business days in advance, the last day to submit a catering order in EMS for Dining.

## Preferred Caterers

You may work with any of the caterers who are a part of UVM's preferred caterers' program. You will be responsible for working directly with the caterer to order food and arrange delivery.

To notify us of which caterer you are using log into the EMS Portal and go to My Events, click on the name of the event, then Add Services. Need help with this? Contact us.

For a current list of [Preferred Caterers List](#) on our website.

## Request a Catering Waiver

If you want to use a catering option other than UVM Dining Services or an approved caterer, you will need to complete a catering waiver request in the EMS Portal.

To request a catering waiver log into the EMS Portal and go to My Events, click on the name of the event, then Add services.

In addition, you will be responsible for providing a copy of the caterer's certificate of insurance meeting UVM's requirements, and a copy of their state board of health license to operate. **DO NOT WAIT**, it can take your caterers some time to get the paperwork in order.

## Events That Require a Catering Waiver

- Using donated food for a specific event
- Fundraising and selling food for a group/cause.
- Providing food (potluck) for a specific event that is open to non-members of a group or department.
- Events using food trucks or other food vendors who are not approved, caterers.
- Concession requests

## Events that Do Not Require a Catering Waiver



- If you are serving only pizza, you may use any restaurant of your choice. Ordering anything other than pizza (salad, wings, bread, etc.) will require a catering waiver.
- Events held off-campus (i.e., area hotels and event locations, UVM Colchester Offices, Fort Ethan Allen, off-campus Extension offices)
- Departments and Student Groups requesting a potluck or BBQ event for their group that is only open to members of that group; (self-prepared items by the members of the group); using either UVM or Non-UVM funds.
- Trainings or meetings for students and staff that are providing individually prepackaged snack items (chips, snack bars, bottled/canned beverages) purchased from a store
- Mosaic Center for Students of Color monthly breakfasts, using either UVM or Non-UVM funds.
- Hillel Friday night Shabbat Dinners held throughout the academic year.

If you are less than 10 business days from your event date, you must call the Campus Events Scheduling Team in University Event Services at 802-656-5667 or email [campusevents@uvm.edu](mailto:campusevents@uvm.edu)

## Deadlines

13 months in advance, the earliest you can submit a catering waiver request in EMS.

14 business days in advance, the last day to submit a waiver request in EMS.

5 business days before the event, the deadline for submission of required paperwork if using a non-approved caterer.

## Costs

- Charges will be automatically charged to the chartstring assigned to the EMS reservation.
- UVM Departments and Recognized Student Organizations do not pay a room charge for internal UVM events.
- Production and Technical Costs: Labor for setup, breakdown, technical, and on-site support are charged by the hour. Labor estimates for your event are available by request.
- Scheduling and Coordination Costs: One hour of scheduling/coordination services is included with each reservation. After one hour, an hourly scheduling fee will be charged.
- Groups are responsible for paying for any damage to the room or outdoor grounds, and/or excessive cleaning that is required.
- If there is food at your event, a post-cleaning will be required. Custodial Services charges an hourly rate.
- You will be charged for services rendered such as catering, police support, transportation & parking services, etc. For an estimate of services contact the appropriate service provider.
- Groups that rearrange the furniture will be charged to reset the room.
- If an event with services is canceled late, the department or group will be charged for any costs incurred.
- Additional fees may apply to late requests.
- In some spaces there may be equipment use or rental fees.

## Event Planning Timeline

The complexity of the event will dictate the timeline needed for planning.

If you are having a meeting and need only a room, are flexible where you are scheduled, and don't need any services, you can request up to 10 business days in advance.

If your event involves specific setup or technical needs, a specific location, vendors, or service needs from UVM departments such as UES, Davis Center, UVM Dining, Transportation & Parking, etc., you should begin planning as early as possible. A minimum of 3 months may be required for some events.

| <b>TIMING</b>                  | <b>TASK</b>  | <b>DONE</b> |
|--------------------------------|--|-------------|
| As early as possible           | Reach out to UES or the Davis Center to discuss your event ideas early. Ask what the best way to request, plan, and execute your event is. Know what you need to know before you make arrangements, set dates, and hire vendors.   |             |
| 13 months – 30 days in advance | Make a request through EMS for the space, resources, and event.  |             |
| 12 months – 6 months out       | Schedule planning meetings with the scheduling team, and production & tech teams that will support your event (Davis Center or UES). Be sure those teams are aware of all your event plans and details. Begin communicating with UVM departments such as Risk Management, Safety & Compliance, Emergency Management, Police Services, Custodial, Physical Plant, UVM Dining... |             |
| 4-8 weeks out, or more         | Know your event details and plans and communicate those to the areas supporting your event. What is your Staffing Plan, Tech & Production Plan, Vendor Plan, Food & Drink Plan, Waste Management, Safety Plan, Severe Weather Plan, and Parking Plan? Communication Plan?  |             |
| 4-8 weeks out or more          | Place an order for catering and higher your vendors. Make sure to start all paperwork required.  |             |
| 4-3 weeks out                  | Know your final event details, guest counts, vendor details, and catering counts.  |             |
| 10 business days               | The last day to make requests in EMS for events that do not require a specific setup can be flexible on location and don't need services such as food, drink, setup, or technical support.   |             |