
Standard Operating Procedure: **Hosting Social Events at Private Residences**

Approval Authority: **Director, Risk Management Services**

Effective Date: **March 2013 (revised March 2020)**

I. INTRODUCTION

In general, York University's General Liability policy will defend all members of the University community against claims in which their actions cause bodily injury, personal injury or property damage as third parties, as long as the staff or faculty member is acting within the scope of employment at York University.

II. GUIDELINES

Those who serve and those who consume alcohol on University premises and at University-associated functions must act in a responsible manner, with due regard to the safety of all concerned. This includes following the [University's Policy and Procedure for the Sale, Service, and Use of Alcoholic Beverages on Campus](#).

In addition, the person organizing the function should be aware that based upon recent court decisions, they, as well as the University, could be held liable for injury, death, or property damage caused by the consumption of alcohol at such a function. There is also the risk of damaging the University's reputation which must be considered when choosing to include alcohol as part of the social activity.

If your own office or subordinates decide to host a social function on behalf of the University in a private home, the following procedures are recommended to mitigate exposures:

1. The event should be approved in writing and signed off by an officer of the University (i.e., President, VP, AVP, Dean, Principal or Executive Officer) so that the approval is documented. The approval process substantiates the fact that the event is related to University business.

2. For events involving alcohol, it is strongly recommended that the host always engage the service of professional servers so as to limit the University's liability.
3. To avoid problems with "other insurance" namely the host's personal coverage, the written approval must contain a clause that states the University coverage applies (as per section 6.1 (d) of the CGL). Wording to be supplied by Risk Management Services.
4. Copies of all agreements must be forwarded to Risk Management Services for verification.

The reason for the approval requirement is to differentiate between an event held on behalf of the University, and an event where there is no benefit to the University. Clearly, the University wishes to ensure that events held on behalf of the University are adequately insured. If the University is unaware of the event, the host is not acting on behalf of the university. This is per section 6.1 (a) of the York University General Liability policy.

Additional information on reducing the liability of such events is available on the Risk Management website or by contacting riskmgmt@yorku.ca.