

Sorority and Fraternity Life

What Constitutes a Chapter Social Event?

Any social activity or social event sponsored or endorsed by the organization, including those that occur on or off chapter premises.

Determining a “Social Event” of the Chapter

The following factors are considered when determining whether a social activity or social event could be considered a social event of the organization. Be honest and go through the list. The more your answers lean to yes, the more this is likely considered a chapter social event. That doesn’t mean you can’t host the social event, that simply means you host the social event in compliance with the policy.

SOCIAL EVENT PLANNING

- Is the social event being planned by one or more members/new members?
- Are the officers aware of the social event being planned?
- Are any officers involved in social event planning?
- Do the officers have prior knowledge of the social event?
- Is the social event actively or passively endorsed by a majority of the active chapter?
- Have members of the chapter lied about the social event?
- If no members attended the social event, would the social event still happen?
- If a crisis occurred, would the chapter president take charge?
- Is the social event a chapter tradition?

TERMINOLOGY

- Are members attempting to rename the social event in order to give the appearance that it isn’t associated with the chapter?
- Is the social event being coined as “unofficial” or “unregistered”?
- Is the social event occurring before or after an event (“pre-game” or “after party”)?

COMMUNICATION

- Is the social event listed on a chapter calendar (public or private)?
- Is the social event listed or advertised on the chapter website (public or private)?
- Is the social event listed or advertised on social media accounts?
- Do online invitations refer to the organization?
- Will the social event be announced at a chapter meeting?
- Will the social event be marketed over the chapter texts/list serves?

Sorority and Fraternity Life

- Is there a theme for the social event?
- If guests were stopped on their way to the social event, would they say they were going to a the “XYZ” social event?
- If guests posted on social media, would they say they were at the “XYZ” social event?

FUNDING

- Is the social event financed by the chapter?
- Is the social event being financed by collection of funds from a group of members?

LOCATION

- Is the social event being hosted on chapter property?
- Is the social event being hosted in a house/apartment/chapter annex/live outs where multiple members live?
- Is the social event being hosted in a university provided meeting space?
- Is the social event being hosted in a location where you traditionally hold your social events?

ATTENDANCE

- Is the entire chapter invited?
- Are new members invited to attend?
- Are certain pledge classes invited to attend?
- Is a majority of the chapter invited?
- If a member/new member showed up, could he/she attend the social event?
- Will officers be in attendance?

This guidance has been adapted, with permission, from Holmes Murphy’s “What Constitutes and Event?” one-pager, linked below.

<https://www.holmesmurphy.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/What-Constitutes-an-Event-one-pager.pdf>