

Salve Regina University

Fire Safety Policy for Events in Assembly Occupancies

(Original 2006 – updated June 2007 – revised & updated January 2010)

Effective January 1, 2004, the Uniform Fire code (NFPA-1) and the Life Safety Code (NFPA-101) of the National Fire Protection Association 2003 Edition with annexes, rules and regulations, were adopted as the Rhode Island Fire Safety Code.

I. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define procedures that will ensure compliance with fire safety rules and regulations for certain events that occur inside a Salve Regina University building and is attended by 50 or more people.

II. Scope

These procedures apply to individuals and the representatives of organizations who sponsor events that take place inside a Salve Regina University building. Whenever 50 or more persons attend an event inside a Salve Regina owned/leased property, the individual sponsor or a representative of the sponsoring organization must review these procedures prior to the event and assure compliance with the specified procedures before and during the event.

III. Definitions

Exit: The term 'exit' shall have the same meaning as 'means of egress.'

Means of egress: A continuous and unobstructed path of travel from any point in a building or structure to a public space outside.

Occupancy: The term 'occupancy' shall mean the use of single space or single room within a building by a person or group of persons.

Place of assembly: The term 'place of assembly' shall mean a room or space within a building/tent in which more than fifty (50) persons assemble for religious, recreational, educational, political, fraternal, social or amusement purposes, or for the consumption of food or drink.

Classes of Assembly Occupancy:

- Class A = capacity one thousand one (1001) persons or more.
- Class B = capacity three hundred one (301) to one thousand (1000) persons.
- Class C = capacity fifty (50) to three hundred (300) persons.

Class A, B & C are applicable to Salve Regina University:

- Salve Regina University Class A Buildings (or tent):

Commencement Weekend:

Baccalaureate Mass	3,000 people
Commencement	5,000 people
Convocation	1,500 people

(“Crowd Managers:” If more than 1,000 people are expected at an event, Salve Regina must have the Newport Fire Department present along with trained “crowd supervisors” or “crowd managers” who must be present throughout the entire event.)

- Salve Regina University Class B Buildings:

Rodgers Recreation Center Gymnasium	550 people
Ochre Court (first floor)	(established by NFD) 400 people

O'Hare Academic Center – Bazarsky Lecture Hall	384 people
Miley Cafeteria	300 people
• <u>Salve Regina University Class C Buildings:</u>	
Pell Center (first floor)	(established by NFD) 200 people
DiStefano Lecture Hall	150 people
O'Hare Academic Center – Room 260	109 people
Rodgers Recreation Center Conference Room	70 people
Megley Theatre	65 people

IV. Determining Occupancy Numbers

At present, only Ochre Court (first floor) and the Pell Center (first floor) are buildings where the Newport Fire Marshall has officially determined the occupancy numbers. The Newport Fire Department has official documents mounted on the walls of these buildings.

Occupancy capacity of a room is based on the net square footage of unobstructed floor space available. The "Net Floor Area" listed in this table is based on an observation of the room set up for normal usage. Usually the "Net Floor Area" represents the total floor area of an empty room. However, if the room contains a stage, a display case, a large table or chair, or any other permanent or semi-permanent fixture, the space occupied by the obstruction must be subtracted from the total area of the room to arrive at the "Net Floor Area".

"Concentrated Use" capacities are based on the number of people standing in a room, and are calculated at 7 square feet of "Net Floor Area" per person. This use applies to parties and dances. Tables, chairs, stages, bars, or any other furnishing placed in the room will reduce the capacity by 1 person for every 7 square feet of floor space taken up by the furniture. "Less Concentrated Use" capacities assume that people are seated at tables. "Non-Fixed Seating" refers to chairs that are easily removed from the room. Folding chairs and tablet chairs in classrooms are examples of "Non-Fixed Seating". "Fixed Seating" refers to seats in auditoriums or gymnasiums, where the seats or bleachers are permanently affixed to the floor.

V. Procedures

The following procedures are established to assure compliance with the state fire code and university fire regulations during events in assembly spaces on campus. The event sponsor is responsible for complying with the following requirements:

Obtain the "Fire Safety Checklist"

Obtain a copy of the "Fire Safety Checklist." The form is available from the Salve Regina Office of Safety & Security (Appendix A).

Appoint a Responsible Person

Appoint a person from your organization who will be responsible for complying with all applicable requirements specified in the "Fire Safety Checklist."

Attendance

The responsible person shall attend and be present throughout the duration of the event to assure compliance with all specified rules and procedures.

Planning the Event

Determine the occupancy capacity of the space you plan to reserve for your event. The space must be large enough to safely accommodate the expected number of attendees. The listed occupancy capacity assumes no furnishings in the room. The use of chairs, tables, bars, stages, etc. will reduce the capacity of the space.

If you expect more than 300 people at the event, we must have a Newport Firemen present. The larger the number of people will require additional firemen. The Office of Safety & Security (Administrative Coordinator) will make the request with the Newport Fire Department. It is important to notify Safety & Security within at least a week of the event. It should be noted that the fire department may require their presence at any event.

- All decorations for the event must be pre-approved by the Salve Regina Director of Facilities or the Director of Safety & Security well in advance.
- Open flames are generally prohibited in assembly spaces. Section VII of this policy outlines guidelines for the safe use of candles in religious services and the safe use of sterno by Dining Service. Any other use of open flames must be approved by the Director of Facilities or the Director of Safety & Security well in advance.

VI. Responsibilities

Event Sponsors

Individuals or groups that sponsor events in University buildings must appoint an individual who will be responsible for fire safety procedures, whenever attendance at the event will exceed 50.

The responsible person must obtain a copy of the "Fire Safety Checklist". This form describes the necessary procedures that will assure compliance with all fire safety rules and regulations.

Whenever a firefighter detail is required (300 or more persons), the responsible person must schedule the detail at least a week prior to the start of the event by contacting the Salve Regina Security Administrative Coordinator.

The responsible person shall perform an inspection of the space before the start of the event and shall be present throughout the duration of the event to assure compliance with fire safety rules.

At the completion of the event, the responsible person shall complete and sign the "Fire Safety Checklist" to verify that all appropriate fire safety measures have been completed. Forward the completed form to the Office of Safety & Security via campus mail.

Facilities Office

Assure that the set-up of tables and chairs is done in accordance with fire code specifications. See Section VI for details.

Be responsible for the installation and/or maintenance of fire safety equipment (fire alarms, sprinklers, ancel systems, halon systems, emergency lighting, exit signs, doors and emergency hardware). Maintain inspection forms of fire safety equipment required to have certification by current fire codes (smoke detectors, sprinklers, halon, and ancel systems).

VII. References

Setting Up Tables and Chairs – Aisle Requirements

"In each place of assembly where seating is provided, except where assembly is seated at tables, the seating shall be arranged in an orderly manner with ample provisions made for aisles leading to exits, and no aisle forming a part of the egress system of the place of assembly shall be obstructed or encumbered. No longitudinal aisle serving seats on one side shall be less than thirty inches (30") in width, and no aisle serving seats on both sides shall be less than thirty-six inches (36") in width and shall be increased one inch (1") for every five feet (5') of travel toward main exits according to the number of seats served thereby. Ample front, rear, or through-section cross aisles at least thirty-six inches (36") in width shall be provided where necessary for access to exit openings. Rows of seats between aisles shall have not more than fourteen (14) seats. Rows of seats opening onto an aisle at one end only shall have not more than seven (7) seats."

“The spacing of rows of seats from back to back shall be not less than thirty inches (30”). There shall be a space of not less than twelve inches (12”) between the back of one seat and the front of the seat immediately behind it as measured between plumb lines. In every place of public assembly used principally for the presentation of theatrical performances or exhibitions, all seats in each row shall be fastened together and secured firmly to the floor.”

“Tables arranged for dining or other purposes in places of assembly shall be so located in respect to exit openings, and so spaced apart, that sufficient means of access to exit openings is provided. Aisles in the direction of exits shall be at least three feet (3') in width. Suitable access to aisles shall be provided from all tables.” Brown University Fire Safety Office

VIII Use of Open Flames

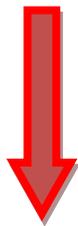
Candles (Candles may be used for religious ceremonies if the following guidelines are observed):

- Under NO circumstances can candles be used inside any student residence hall or student apartment regardless of the event.
- A candle is an open flame that can easily ignite any combustible nearby. No combustible materials (paper, cloth, baskets, table decorations, etc.) may be placed within 6 inches of a candle flame. Candles with combustible items embedded in them are not permitted.
- Use candle holders that are sturdy, won't tip over, are made from a material that can't burn and are large enough to collect dripping wax. Place candle holders on a sturdy, uncluttered surface in a place where there is little chance the holder could be knocked over.
- Never leave a burning candle unattended.
- Keep candle wicks trimmed to one-quarter inch and extinguish taper and pillar candles when they get to within two inches of the holder or decorative material. Votives and containers should be extinguished before the last half-inch of wax starts to melt.

Food Service Warming Dishes

- Food service workers must be trained in the proper use of “Sterno” type fuels.
- No combustible materials (paper, baskets, table decorations, table linens, etc.) may be placed within 6 inches of a burning fuel container.
- A Type “ABC” fire extinguisher must be on hand whenever “sterno” type fuel is used. Never use water to extinguish a fire involving “sterno” fuel. Water will actually spread the fire.

~ Fire Safety Checklist Below ~



Salve Regina University

Fire Safety Checklist

Event Date →		Event Time →	
Event Location →			
Occupancy Capacity of Reserved Space →		Number of People Expected →	
Sponsoring Organization →			
Responsible Person → (print name)		Phone Number →	

PLANNING THE EVENT:

- Read the Salve Regina 'Fire Safety Policy for Events in Assembly Occupancies'
- Determine that the occupancy of the building does not exceed the number of people expected
- If you expect more than 300 people at the event, you must contact the Office of Safety and Security (Administrative Coordinator at 341-2323) at least a week prior to the start of the event.
- All decorations, wall coverings or sound insulation must be approved by the Salve Regina Director of Facilities or the Director of Safety & Security
- Open flames are generally prohibited in assembly spaces. See policy for exceptions with religious ceremonies and Dining Services with the use of sterno

90 MINUTES PRIOR TO THE START OF THE EVENT:

- Check the panic hardware on all exit doors to assure smooth operation
- Open all exit doors to check the door swing, and remove any obstructions
- Confirm that there are at least two clear exits
- All halls, egress passageways must be clear and unobstructed
- Fire doors must never be blocked open or chained shut
- Stairways must be clear
- Confirm that exit signs are present, visible and appear to be operating properly.
- Confirm that adjoining spaces present no obvious fire hazards.
- Fire extinguishers must be available for use. Check to be sure the pressure gauge is in the green zone
- Know the location of fire alarm pull stations and assure that they are visible and easily accessible.
- The following announcement must be made at the start of the event:

- **“In the event of a fire alarm, please proceed calmly to a nearby exit, leave the building and move away from the doorway”**
- **“Please note the location of nearby exits”**
- **“Be aware that the way you entered may not be the most direct way out”**
- **“Sitting or standing in the aisles and doorways is not permitted”**
- **“Smoking is not allowed inside any University building”**
- **“Please turn off or silence all pagers and cell phones”**

DURING THE EVENT:

- Assure that the occupancy capacity of the space has not been exceeded
- Continue to monitor all exits, halls and stairways to be sure they are maintained clear and unobstructed
- Ask anyone blocking an aisle or a doorway to move

AFTER THE EVENT:

- When each applicable task has been completed, place a check mark in the space provided.
- Sign and date the form in the space below
- Within 48 hours, return the completed form to the Salve Regina University Office of Safety & Security Office via campus mail

Signature of Responsible Person

Date

Salve Regina University
Office of Safety & Security