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How to Implement a BYOB Event

If your national/international organization, your university or governing council (NPC, IFC, NPHC, NALFO, etc.) policy requires or allows you to host BYOB events, the information in this document will help you think critically for HOW to implement the event. The BYOB guidelines provided throughout this resource guide are suggestions for safe and practical implementation.

At its basic function, if members and guests bring their own beverage and consume their own beverage, your chapter has implemented a BYOB event. However, the suggestions below will assist in implementing and executing a successful BYOB event. You do not have to implement every item; however, you can use this resource as a menu. Many of the items listed in this document are prevention strategies that can contribute to a well-managed event.

Individual chapters must still follow their Inter/National as well as institutional policies, if said policies are more specific and/or more stringent. If questions arise, this checklist does not supersede any local, city, state, university, general fraternity/sorority or national laws, statutes and polices, or common sense.

THEME

Event themes should NOT be disrespectful or degrading to any person or population. When selecting a theme, ensure it:

- Does NOT rely on the stereotypes of certain groups.
- Does NOT encourage offensive dress or costumes.
- Does NOT stereotype men or women.
- Is NOT sexist. If you're unsure, try interchanging the word/theme with a racial word/theme.
- Is NOT centered on making fun of a particular group of people, culture, or organization.
- Does NOT lend itself to members, associate members, or guests taking the theme to a place that is disrespectful or degrading.

ENTRANCE

- One well-lit entrance, controlled and monitored by security or older members. We recommend professional security that is contracted, licensed, and bonded.
- Monitors should check to see if those seeking entry are on the guest list.
- If professional security is unavailable, IDs should be checked by older, initiated members, not new members.
- Members and guests with alcohol should show proof of legal drinking age. A picture ID with a birth date should be required.
- A guest's name should be checked off once they have entered the event.
- Several exits should be available due to fire codes and laws; however, exits cannot be used as entrances.

INVITATION GUEST LISTS

- Invitation guest lists with specific names and birthdays of all members and invited guests should be generated for each function.
- Only students from the host institution should be on the guest list.
- The student or Greek directory is not an acceptable guest list. Specific invitations should be issued to the guest(s) that a member wishes to invite to the event.
- Invitation guest lists should be finalized 24 hours prior to the event. After this time, no substitutions or add-ons are permitted. A suggested two to three guests per member is the ratio for the guest list. You should also take into account the fire code capacity for the venue.
- Invitations should have specific start/end times.
- Guests who are already impaired should not be allowed into the event.
- Guests who have caused problems in the past should not be put on future guest lists.

WRISTBANDS

- Members and guests who are of legal drinking age and bring alcohol to the event should receive a non-adjustable, event specific wristband (carnival/ amusement park type is recommended).
- The individual's name should be checked off the invitation guest list and the type of alcohol brought is written by their name.
- Members and guests who are not of legal drinking age or do not bring alcohol should not receive a wristband, but should receive a chapter specific hand stamp after checking in.
- Members and guests without a wristband should not be consuming alcohol.

PUNCH CARDS

- For each and every event, punch cards should be created that are event specific.
- Punch cards should be about credit card size with the following information: name, birthday, type of alcohol / amount brought, date of event, location to punch up to six holes for redemption of alcohol.
- Punch cards, unlike tickets are easy to handle and are a more effective means for proper distribution.
- Punch cards should be collected at the exits when guests leave the event.

TYPES AND AMOUNTS OF ALCOHOL

- The following stipulations should apply per person for a typical four to five hour function: Maximum of six (6), twelve (12) ounce cans/ plastic bottles of beer/ wine coolers/ malt beverages.
- No glass bottles.
- No cases, twelve-packs, or other alcohol containers larger than six 12 ounce beers/wine coolers/ malt beverages.
- No squeeze bottles, water bottles, beer bongs, party balls, pitchers, tumblers, or other containers.
- No kegs or hard alcohol.
- No alcohol for common use in member's rooms.
- Shots, drinking games, or other activities that encourage inappropriate drinking behaviors should be prohibited.

SERVICE DISTRIBUTION CENTER

- One centralized location should be established for the distribution of all alcoholic beverages.
- No other location, especially members' rooms, should be used for the distribution of alcoholic beverages.
- The holding tank, which serves as a cooling area for the alcohol brought to the function by members and guests, can be as simple as a large rubber trash can filled with ice.
- Anyone who wishes to acquire an alcoholic beverage that they brought to the event should present the punch card, show their wristband, and return an empty can if this is not the first request (returning the cans assists the chapter with its recycling efforts and helps ensure that alcohol is not being given away to others once it leaves the service center).
- The service monitors should not serve anyone who is intoxicated, even if the person has alcohol remaining. We recommend service monitors be TIPS trained.
- Only one alcoholic beverage should be acquired at a time.
- Left-over alcohol can be picked up the following day. Otherwise, it should be discarded.

FOOD AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

- The chapter should provide non-alcoholic beverages in an amount at least equal to the total number of people in attendance at the event.
- Breads, meats, cheeses, vegetables, cookies, subs, pizza, brownies, fruits and dips are considered appropriate foods. The chapters should avoid salty foods.
- All food and non-alcoholic beverages should be free to all attendees.
- Food and non-alcoholic beverages should be contained within one centralized location.
- Non-alcoholic beverages should be served from closed containers.
- During the last 45 minutes of an event, alcohol service should stop; a new non-alcoholic beverage and food item should be served for those who wish to switch beverages and begin winding down.

CHAPTER MONITORS AND SECURITY

- Monitors are charged with regulating social events and maintaining the risk management policy of the chapter(s) involved.
- Monitors should not consume alcohol for a reasonable amount of time prior to and during the social event.
- One monitor for every 15 attendees is recommended.
- If the event is co-sponsored between a fraternity and sorority, both male and female monitors should be used to ensure the safety of all guests and that all applicable rules are applied to men and women equally.
- Monitors should be older members of all participating organizations who will serve as general monitors or service monitors working at the service distribution center.
- New members should not be serving as monitors.
- Specialty clothing may be worn by the monitors to set them apart from the rest of the attendees
- Chapter presidents and social chairs should limit their use of alcohol (if consuming at all) during social events so that they can, along with the monitors, ensure that a safe social environment is maintained.
- Monitors have the right to deny access to the event to anyone they think is already impaired by alcohol or other drugs, even if the person is on the invitation guest list.
- Access to private suites should be prohibited during the event.

VENDOR MANAGEMENT

- All contracts should be reviewed.
- Vendors should verify that they have adequate insurance; additional insured certificates should be issued.
- All records should be maintained from the event.

Credit: Adapted from "A BYOB Checklist" from the North-American Interfraternity Conference and the Pi Kappa Phi "Social Event Planning Guide"