



Rutgers University Guidelines for Free Expression on Campus

1.0 Guiding Statement

Rutgers University is proud of its long history of activism in which members of the community have engaged in peaceful protests and demonstrations. With a population of over 100,000, consideration must be given to the spaces and guidelines for expressive activities at Rutgers to provide for the safety of participants and to avoid disruption of educational, clinical, research, or business functions of the University. All activities are subject to the Rutgers University Policy on Disruptions (50.3.5).

All members of the Rutgers University community – including students, faculty, staff, alumni, visitors, and external groups – are free to express their viewpoints in public forums as private citizens. These rights of free expression are guaranteed by the First Amendment. It is a fundamental tenet of a liberal arts education that students be exposed to a marketplace of ideas and be able to discern for themselves what they believe. At Rutgers, we strive to teach students how to think, not what to think. As such, we will not move to silence or endorse any viewpoints on any issues, as long as they are within the bounds of the law. Our University is a community of diverse ideas, organizations, and perspectives. The wide variety of programming at Rutgers highlights that not all our university community members share the same background, beliefs, opinions, or interests. Embracing this diversity, we strongly support the right of free speech – including the right to express views that seem offensive to others – but expect all community members including visitors and external groups to obey the law, comply with university policies, engage in civil discussions, and treat each other with dignity and respect. These guidelines apply to all members of our community, including visitors and external groups, wishing to participate in free expression.

2.0 Time, Place, and Manner

The University maintains the right, and the responsibility, to determine the appropriate time, place, and manner to ensure that expressive activities do not interfere with or disrupt educational, clinical, research, or business functions of the University, as well as to provide protections for public health, safety, and welfare.

The following general conditions apply to all Rutgers University campuses:

- Activities must be conducted in a way that is consistent with federal, state, and local laws.
- Activities must be conducted in a way that is consistent with the rules, regulations, and policies of Rutgers University, including the University Code of Student Conduct and the Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment.
- Activities must provide for the safety and well-being of individual members and the campus community. This includes abiding by guidelines established by the State of New Jersey and/or the Federal Government.
- Activities must allow for the continuation of academic activities, university operations, and university-sponsored events.
- Activities are subject to all lawful orders and safety directives issued by the Rutgers University Police Department, Rutgers Office of Emergency Management, Rutgers Division of Emergency Services, respective Divisions of Student Affairs, and other university officials acting in the performance of their duties. This may include orders to disperse should a demonstration become unlawful, unsafe, or noncompliant with guidelines and/or the Free Expression Permit.

3.0 Designated Public Forum Areas

The following designated public forum spaces have been approved for demonstrations and expressive activities on the Rutgers University campuses.

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY–NEW BRUNSWICK

- **College Avenue Campus**
 - Records Field
- **Busch Campus**
 - The lawn adjacent to the Paul Robeson Cultural Center and Busch Student Center
- **Cook Campus**
 - Cook Student Center Patio
- **Livingston Campus**
 - The grass area surrounded by the bus loop in the front of the Livingston Student Center
- **Douglass Campus**
 - The patio and grass area on the Nichol Avenue side of the Douglass Student Center

RUTGERS BIOMEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES (Rutgers Health)

- **Newark Campus**
 - The open quad between NJMS and the School of Dental Medicine
- **New Brunswick Campus**
 - The open area behind the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute and the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY–NEWARK

- In front of Norman Samuels Plaza on the brick walkway or lawn
- In front of the Robeson Campus Center – not blocking the entrance

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY–CAMDEN

- Campus Center Quad (grass area next to entrance)
- The Camden Gym and Recreation Center quad (grass area next to entrance)
- The Law School West (picnic area across from Classroom Penn 401)
- The Fine Arts Building (grassy area to the right of the Gordon Theater entrance)

Public Safety will evaluate and assess locations required for counter-demonstrations.

Alternative venues may be assigned by the administration for the proposed activity. Consideration will be given to the number of anticipated participants, the type of activity, the anticipated time and duration, and proximity to other university-sponsored events and educational activities to avoid disruption. Individuals taking advantage of the designated public forum areas may not impede normal operations nor interfere with the free movement of anyone navigating through the campuses.

4.0 Procedures for Scheduled Demonstrations

Individuals wishing to hold public forums at Rutgers are required to submit the Free Expression Notification Form at least three (3) business days in advance of the scheduled demonstration and obtain a Free Expression Permit. Hyperlinks to the Free Expression Notification Form can be found in Section 8.0. Free Expression forums with an anticipated attendance of more than 10 may require advanced planning with the University and may include the Student Affairs staff and/or Rutgers University Police Department, or other offices as necessary or directed, to ensure participants' safety and adherence to fire/safety regulations. We cannot assure the availability of the space or approve the expressive activities desired without proper notice.

The areas designated for expressive activities have been identified for their visibility on each campus and as locations where the activities are least likely to disrupt educational, clinical, research, or business functions of the University; however, there are physical space considerations associated with some of the designated locations (see Section 3.0).

To ensure that the space can safely accommodate the anticipated numbers of participants and to allow the

University to coordinate the use of any services, including Public Safety, Facilities, and other departments as necessary, the use of the designated areas needs to be requested formally so it can be reviewed for approval. Requests must be made by filling out a Free Expression Notification Form at least three (3) business days in advance.

5.0 Spontaneous Demonstrations or Demonstrations Taking Place with Fewer Than Three (3) days notice

For those situations in which advanced planning is impossible, Rutgers University community members, including students, faculty, staff, visitors, or external groups, are required to speak with a Student Affairs representative and fill out the Free Expression Notification Form so that efforts can be made to ensure the safety of participants and allow for the continuation of educational, clinical, research, and business functions of the University without disruption. Contact details can be found in Section 8.0.

6.0 Operating Procedures for All Demonstrations

- All demonstration organizers, consistent with Section 4.0, must apply for and receive an approved Free Expression Permit in advance.
- Free Expression demonstrations that occur on city property or involve marching in New Brunswick, Newark, and Camden require permits from the host cities. Hyperlinks or addresses can be found in Section 8.0.
- Event organizer must have possession of the Free Expression Permit and produce it when asked.
- Consistent with University Policy 20.1.9, amplification of sound to include megaphones or bullhorns is not permitted.
- Consistent with University Policy 20.1.9, demonstrations must not disrupt the academic, clinical, research, and business mission of the University and may only be held between the hours of 9:00am and 4:00pm.
- Individuals may not block or interfere with vehicular, bicycle, or pedestrian traffic.
- Individuals may not block or prevent others from entering and exiting university buildings.
- Individuals may not engage in behavior that obstructs, disrupts, or attempts to force the cancellation of any event or activity sponsored by the University or by anyone authorized to use university facilities.
- Individuals shall not harass or threaten and shall not engage in intimidating conduct.
- Individuals shall not disrupt or interfere with any academic, clinical, or administrative buildings at any time or prevent their use for university business.
- Individuals shall comply with the directions of Division of Student Affairs representatives, law enforcement officers, or other university officials acting in the performance of their duties.
- University property must be protected at all times.
- Placing or building of structures is prohibited without express permission by Rutgers University. Structures established without permission will be removed and the sponsoring organization, department, and/or individual will be responsible for all related costs. No inflatable structures are permitted.
- Overnight camping, placement of tents, or encampments will not be permitted.

- Events of a commercial, private, profit-making, or fundraising nature are prohibited at all public forum spaces. Rutgers University community members, to include visitors and external groups, are required to request programming space and follow guidelines for hosting these events.
- Demonstration/protest organizers are responsible for the Free Expression Notification Form in addition to the posting of damage deposits and satisfaction of insurance requirements, the associated administrative costs for the purposes of event set up/clean up, security measures, and traffic control. The requisite staffing and costs for each event will be determined by Rutgers Facilities, Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD), and Rutgers Emergency Services.

7.0 Procedures for Protesting a Campus Speaker or Event

When an invited speaker or event is the focus of the protest, individuals may demonstrate and/or leaflet outside the location of the scheduled program within a designated area established by the RUPD to prevent disruption to the scheduled speaker or event. Those who enter the scheduled event as audience members must not disrupt the program. Demonstrators may not hinder the ability of participants to enter or exit the event. Individuals whose actions disrupt a program will be asked to leave and may be subject to penalties for violations of university policy and State of New Jersey criminal code. Signs or placards may only be permitted in the back of the room/facility and may not exceed 8.5" x 11" so as to not impede the sightline of audience members.

8.0 Other Forms of Promotion and Engagement – Tabling, Posting of Flyers, Outdoor Programs, and Fundraising

- **Tabling at a Student Center:** Recognized and registered student organizations wishing to promote a program, their organization, or a particular initiative may request a table by contacting the appropriate Division of Student Affairs listed below.
- **Tabling at a Dining Hall:** Recognized and registered student organizations may reserve tables for the distribution of information relevant to the organization's mission. Requests should be directed to the appropriate Division of Student Affairs listed below.
- **Posting of Flyers:** Bulletin boards in the student centers, recreation centers, dining halls, residence halls, and university buildings are for the purpose of promoting Rutgers University departmental, registered student organization, and fraternity and sorority programs and events, unless expressly stated otherwise. The departments operating these spaces should be contacted directly for their specific posting policies. In accordance with University Policy 20.1.9, all divisions and department administrators are responsible for effective use of all spaces assigned to them.

No flyers or stickers may be placed outside of authorized areas on university properties. All unauthorized signage or posters, regardless of message, will be removed. This includes outside of buildings, bus stops, light poles, and associated areas.

- **Chalking Policy:** Chalking on university property is allowed if approved in advance on the Free Expression Permit. All approved chalking will be removed by Rutgers Facilities after a period of 24 hours. Unauthorized chalking will be removed immediately by Rutgers Facilities. Approved chalking must be of a temporary nature, soluble with water, and which does not permanently adhere to any structure. Marker, paint, ink, or other non-chalk materials are prohibited. In accordance with University Policy 20.1.9, all divisions and department administrators are responsible for effective use of all spaces assigned to them.
- **Leafletting:** Rutgers University students may distribute, without registering or advance approval, university-sponsored announcements or statements in any outdoor area which is not restricted or scheduled. Materials should include the name(s) of the sponsoring organization or departments. Leafletting of university-sponsored materials is defined as the handing out of materials. Such actions should not block or otherwise interfere with individuals entering or exiting university buildings, force individuals to accept materials, or result in litter. Individuals or organizations may be held responsible for costs incurred with the clean-up of litter. Materials may not be left at bus stops, tabletops, counters, etc. Distribution of commercial materials or selling of items requires a table reservation at a Student Center. Reservations may be made by contacting the appropriate Division of Student Affairs listed below.
- **Outdoor Programming:** Recognized student organizations may request to use outdoor space for programs. Requests for outdoor programming can be made by contacting Student Affairs.
- **Fundraising:** Recognized student organizations may solicit funds for sponsored events or charitable organizations. Tables may be reserved for bake sales, fundraising, or similar activities by contacting the appropriate Division of Student Affairs listed below.

NOTE: Fundraising tables will be available for organizations on a first-come, first-served reservation basis and are available in all Student Centers. Fundraising is not permitted at tables at Public Forum locations. Cash handling requires that all funds be deposited at the Student Center with no cash leaving the premises. **NOTE:** Fundraisers that involve dunk tanks, pie eating/throwing, etc. are considered programs and must go through the event planning process with the corresponding department/advisor. Such fundraisers that are held outside will need to reserve an appropriate space.

Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Division of Student Affairs – New Brunswick
126 College Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
848-932-8576

[Free Expression Notification Form](#)

City of New Brunswick Permitting – in person only:
78 Bayard Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Rutgers University-Newark

Division of Student Affairs – Newark
350 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Newark NJ 07102
973-353-5063

[Free Expression Notification Form](#)

[City of Newark Permitting](#)

Rutgers University - RBHS

Division of Student Affairs - RBHS
Stanley S. Bergen, Jr. Building
65 Bergen Street
Newark, NJ 07101-1709
973-972-5374

Free Expression Notification application – telephone only

[City of Newark Permitting](#)

Rutgers University–Camden

Division of Student Affairs - Camden
Camden Campus Center, Third Floor
326 Penn Street
Camden NJ, 08102
856-225-2825

[Free Expression Notification Form - Camden](#)

[City of Camden Permitting](#)