

RIT Demonstration Protocols

PURPOSE:

RIT vigorously supports the rights of all members of the RIT Community to freely express their views and to peacefully and lawfully protest against actions and opinions with which they disagree. Outdoor picketing, marches, rallies, protests, and other demonstrations are traditional and legitimate forms of speech and expression. Such activities are allowed provided that they occur in accordance with the principles outlined in the Policy on Freedom of Speech and Expression C11.0 and its procedures, including but not limited to, time, place, and manner restrictions¹. These Demonstration Protocols are incorporated into and made part of the C11.0 Procedures.

Maintaining business operations and general security within critical buildings and spaces is necessary in order to provide key services to students, faculty, staff, and community members. Any decision that RIT might take to regulate the time, place or manner of speech or expression by members of the RIT Community, shall be based on RIT's commitment to foster a safe and civil environment where differing views and opinions are expressed and adherence to Policy C11.0. Open-mindedness, civility, respect, decency, and sensitivity for the opinions and rights of others, however different from one's own, are crucial to fulfilling the university's academic mission ².

The purpose of this protocol is to outline the procedures for both planned demonstrations and unplanned demonstrations, as well as the procedures for demonstrations that become, or may become, disruptive, violent, or unlawful. These protocols will apply to demonstrations (picketing, marches, rallies, protests, etc.) on RIT property or as part of official RIT sponsored activities. Any capitalized term not otherwise defined herein shall have the same definition as C11.0 and/or its Procedures.

RELEVANT POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

[RIT C11.0 Policy on Freedom of Speech and Expression](#)

[RIT C11.0 Freedom of Speech and Expression Procedures](#)

[RIT C10.0 Political and Legislative Activities Policy](#)

[RIT Political & Legislative Activities Procedures for Student Organizations](#)

[RIT Campus Life Student Event Approval Process](#)

¹ RIT C11.0 Policy on Freedom of Speech and Expression. Demonstrations, Protests, and Rallies shall be collectively referred to in this document as demonstration(s).

² RIT C11.0 Freedom of Speech and Expression Procedures

Faculty/Staff Planned Event Procedures for Demonstrations:

- Faculty/staff Planned Events are overseen by the appropriate department and/or division leadership. Please contact your division Vice President/Dean for guidance on protocols.*

External Visitors Planned Event Procedures:

- All external visitors who wish to utilize RIT's campus, including its facilities, for a demonstration event are required to contact the Office of Special Events and Conferences. This office will provide comprehensive event management services including: budget development, facilities reservations, coordination of logistics and service needs, and onsite event management.*

Student Planned Event Procedures:

- Demonstration events sponsored by student clubs, organizations, chapters, and groups shall utilize the standard event procedures established by the division of Student Affairs. Events that involve a demonstration will be tagged for support by the Demonstration Response Team and subject to the Demonstration Response Protocol. This designation is not designed to limit or curtail event planning but to provide the appropriate guidance and support to ensure the event follows all RIT policies and procedures. This tagging process occurs for other event types that require additional review due to security, contract management, risk management, youth protection, or use of alcohol.
- Student events, including demonstration events, may only be sponsored by official RIT student organizations. If an unrecognized student organization or individual student wish to plan a campus event they will need to identify and receive support from a sponsoring organization (recognized clubs/org) that will be designated to manage all event management procedures on behalf of that student(s).
- Demonstrations or events that have completed the standard event procedures process are referred to as a planned demonstration or event.

* Employees (including faculty/staff) and external visitors must also comply with the RIT Solicitation Policy, available here: (<https://www.rit.edu/humanresources/policies-procedures>). Contact Human Resources for additional information.

DEMONSTRATION RESPONSE TEAM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The **RIT Demonstration Response Team (DRT)** will work to ensure and preserve the safety and security of the entire campus as such relates to demonstrations. The DRT will be comprised of Campus Life, Center for Leadership & Civic Engagement, Public Safety, Marketing & Communications, Government & Community Relations, and a representative from University Leadership. This group may be augmented to include other units (Residence Life, Division of Diversity & Inclusion, Student Government, Academic Affairs, etc.) depending on the nature or make-up of the demonstration.

Where practical and possible, the DRT meets in advance of a potential demonstration to review and advise on any demonstration-related steps the university may take in order to ensure the demonstration does not impact RIT's responsibility to provide a safe and civil environment while still allowing individual free speech and expression. The DRT may develop a campus strategy for the demonstration. For spontaneous or unplanned protests, the DRT will convene a meeting, as soon as

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feasible, with available DRT members to discuss and assess the campus response, including, but not limited to, addressing safety, and security issues and needs related to the demonstration.

DEFINED DRT MEMBERS AND ROLES:

Director, Campus Life, Student Affairs (or designee):

- Steward of the Student Event Approval Process
- Liaison between Demonstration Response Team, Divisional Leadership, and University Partners

Director, Center for Leadership & Civic Engagement, Student Affairs (or designee):

- Consultant and liaison to students on Student Political & Legislative Activities
- Liaison between Demonstration Response Team and Students or Student Organizations

Director of Public Information and Internal Communications, Marketing & Communication (or designee):

- Consultant on university wide messaging
- Liaison to broader University Marketing & Communications team

Public Safety:

- Student event security coordinators
- Liaison to external community members
- First responders to unplanned demonstrations
- Threat evaluation and event monitors

Associate Vice President, Student Affairs (or designee):

- Liaison to University Leadership, RIT Legal, and Global Risk Management

Assistant Vice President, Government & Community Relations (or designee):

- Steward of the External Visitor, Faculty, and Staff Event Approval Process
- Consultant on Student Political & Legislative Activities

PROTOCOLS

PROTOCOLS FOR PLANNED DEMONSTRATIONS:

All events must follow RIT's Freedom of Speech and Expression Procedures. The determination of whether or not an event shall be allowed on property owned or leased by RIT shall be made in accordance with existing university procedures for the approval of events. If university procedures do not exist for the approval of a particular event, the divisional vice president for the division sponsoring the event shall make the determination, in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs³.

³ RIT C11.0 Freedom of Speech and Expression Procedures

Student Organizations Event Management Procedures:

1. Student Organization submits event through the RIT EMS Approval Process.
2. If flagged as a possible partisan event or is a demonstration, the student organization meets with the Director, CCL; Director, AVP, G&CR; and, Director, CLCE to review time, place and manner per relevant policies and procedures.
3. The Director, CLCE steps in as liaison to student organization if the event determined as partisan (by the Political & Legislative Activities Procedures for Student Organizations⁴) or is a demonstration. Communicates event limitations and requirements for partisan events (Political & Legislative Activities Procedures for Student Organizations) or demonstrations (Student Organization Demonstration Plan, Appendix A).
4. The Director, CCL and AVP, GCR updates respective Divisional Leadership.
5. The CCL coordinates an Event Service Provider Meeting and approval with Public Safety, Space Managers, and relevant Service Providers.
6. Public Safety evaluates the necessity of additional Event Security Officers in the same manner as other student events.
7. The CCL & CLCE monitor EMS for counter protests in order to review time, place and manner for approvals of these events to ensure both safe and civil discourse on campus.
8. Public Safety, CCL, and CLCE coordinate day-of event logistics. CCL & CLCE assigns multiple individuals or teams of staff to serve as event managers in the event of counter protests or multiple events.
9. The CCL coordinates event debriefing with all service providers at the conclusion of the event and retains all relevant documentation.

PROTOCOLS FOR UNPLANNED DEMONSTRATIONS:

****At any time if Public Safety deems the event to be disruptive, violent, or unlawful their procedures and instructions will supersede these processes and they will immediately take command of the event.*****

Student or Student Organizations Event Management Procedures:

Unplanned demonstrations on campus are not permitted. This Protocol addresses the procedures that will be followed to ensure the safe dispersal and redirection of participants in the event of an unplanned demonstration event or activity.

Anticipated but Unplanned Events: If a demonstration is anticipated by the DRT but it is not a registered event, the DRT will convene as practicable to determine the demonstration management plan and include any additional relevant partners. (Examples of anticipated by unplanned events might include those organized on social media posts with calls to gather, notification from students about unofficial

⁴ RIT Political & Legislative Activities Procedures

events, unapproved flyers announcing an event, etc. OR where there is an increased likelihood of unplanned counterprotest activity due to a planned demonstration or event on campus).

1. CLCE or CCL will first work to identify the potential planners of the unregistered potential event and work with those involved in the unplanned event to register the event using the standard event procedures process. If the event is registered, it shall be further governed by the Protocols for Planned Demonstrations.
2. If the event is an anticipated counterprotest to a planned demonstration or event:
 - a. CCL will communicate to appropriate event organizers if the demonstration is anticipated in response to their scheduled event.
 - b. CCL will identify and reserve appropriate demonstration space and a staffing point location.
 - c. CLCE will generate policy handouts to disperse at the event to inform all participants of RIT Code of Conduct, Free Speech Policies, and Political & Legislative Activities Procedures
 - d. CCL, CLCE and Public Safety will determine if the counterprotest activity can be sufficiently supported and allowed to continue. (Time, Place and Manner)
 - e. CCL and CLCE staff will liaise with the organizers, notify them of the need to disperse and establish a timeline for the dispersal.
 - f. Associate Vice President, SA will communicate updates to University Leadership, RIT Legal, and Global Risk Management.
 - g. Assistant Vice President, GCR will communicate updates to Government & Community Relations Leadership.
 - h. Marketing & Community relations will prepare drafts of external and internal messaging, if deemed appropriate.

Spontaneous and/or Unanticipated Unplanned Events: If an unregistered demonstration is observed by a community member or Public Safety, Public Safety will first identify the individuals who are protesting (students, staff, or external community members).

1. If students are identified as demonstrators, Public Safety will notify the Director, CCL; Director, CLCE; or AVP on Call.
2. Director, CCL; Director, CLCE; or AVP on-call arrives to demonstration location and informs students of university policy, standards, and code of conduct and provide a notice to disperse.
3. Once students have received an official dispersal notification, they must end their protest, communicate the cancelation of their demonstration to any possible attendees, and clear the area in no more than 30 minutes, unless otherwise advised by the DRT/Public Safety.
4. If students are willing to comply the staff member liaises with students by offering next steps and disperses the gathering. If possible, collect student emails for follow-up.
 - a. Director, CLCE serves as a resource to re-engage student groups through the planned demonstration process outlined above.
5. If students are unwilling to comply with university policy, Public Safety will determine a plan for disbursement.
 - a. Public Safety remains on-site to monitor demonstration, evaluate risk, and assist with de-escalation.

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- b. CLCE identifies the on-site staffing point location (if not anticipated).
- c. CLCE remains on-site as the liaison for student demonstrators.
- d. CCL communicates to Divisional Leadership and Marketing & Communications
 - i. AVP Student Affairs communicates to University Leadership, RIT Legal, and Global Risk Management.
 - ii. Marketing & Communications prepares external & internal messaging.
- e. DRT meets at earliest convenience at staff point location to establish the de-escalation plan.

Considerations

Establishing an “End” to the Unplanned Demonstration: To effectively de-escalate a demonstration, the DRT will honor Policy C.11 Time, Place, and Manner violations, while respecting students’ right to engage in free speech and expression in accordance with policy C11.0 and all other applicable RIT policies. The DRT team should convene quickly to establish and mobilize a de-escalation plan that educates students on RIT policy, communicates possible conduct procedures, and then delivers an official dispersal notification to attendees of the unplanned demonstration.

Student Conduct Response: Students who are unwilling to immediately disperse from an unplanned demonstration when directed to do so by a university official will be considered to be in violation of policy C.11 and subject to the student conduct process.

Appendix A:

Student Organization Demonstration Plan

Relevant Policy:

1. [C11.0 Policy on Freedom of Speech and Expression](#) – This policy outlines freedom of speech and expression for individuals on our campus. The policy also outlines Time, Place, and Manner restrictions.
2. [Freedom of Speech and Expression Procedures](#) – This document outlines the processes to host a demonstration or protest and the limitations that would cause your demonstration to be canceled. *I fully recognize that these documents can be complex and I can help with navigating them.*

Overview:

Sponsoring RIT Organization: [RIT's Freedom of Speech and Expression Procedures](#) outlines that demonstrations on-campus must be sponsored by a recognized club or organization. We can discuss why this is at our meeting.

Demonstration Purpose: Consider what you hope to accomplish with this demonstration. Is this to draw attention to a specific cause, raise awareness, or to point larger action?

Time: In our meeting, we will discuss your desired timeline. We will then look at availability and timeframe for securing additional services as needed (public safety, interpreting, etc) to identify the final time.

Proposed:

Final:

Considerations:

Place: In our meeting, we will discuss your desired on-campus location. We will then look at availability and identify a location that does not disrupt students' ability to attend/participate in class or access on-campus resources.

Proposed:

Final:

Considerations:

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Manner: *In our meeting, we will discuss your plans for the demonstration. How you envision the program, who will be responsible, and the broader details about logistics. We will then discuss if the location we've selected is conducive to the style of demonstration you'll be hosting.*

Summary of Demonstration:

Plans for Speeches?

Plans for External Community Members? *A Note: RIT rigorously supports your free speech as a student who attends this university. In planning for your demonstration, if you are considering inviting external community members, what plans do you have in place to ensure it is the RIT student voice that is central to the demonstration and not that of external parties?*

- If the sponsoring organization invites external speakers or community members, they acknowledge the following:
 - That they are responsible for the messaging of external speakers and intervening if the message does not align with their organization's values
 - That they are responsible for the actions and behavior of external community members who are on our campus as guests.

Plans for Noise Amplification?

How many people do we expect to attend?

Other Notes

Marketing:

- [RIT Posting Procedures](#)

Next Steps

1. Sponsoring Student Organization Registers Event in EMS:
 - Campus Life will approve the space for you and send you confirmation
2. CLCE staff will communication with service providers to ensure they are aware and can provide guidance.