The 8 S’s of Safety for Guidelines for Safer Meetings and Events

It is the responsibility of each student organization to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those who attend their meetings and events. We call these guidelines the 8 S’s. They can be used as a simple checklist for holding safer programs. When reviewing a potential activity, make sure that it is possible to ensure that each of these conditions are met. If they cannot be met, modify the activity to make it possible. If the activity cannot be modified, it should not be held.

Contact the Office of Student Engagement at studentengagement@sfasu.edu or by phone at 936.468.3703 if you need any assistance in planning safer meetings and events.

The 8 S’s of Safety

✔ **Stay Home if you have symptoms.**

Monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and report to a medical professional if I have a fever (100 F or higher) or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea/vomiting, or diarrhea.

If you exhibit any of these symptoms, or know you have had close contact (been within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive or who you believe may have COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more), DO NOT attend class, meetings, events or go to work, and contact the SFA Health Clinic at 936.468.4008.

✔ **Social Distance (6 feet)**

Ensure that you are never less than 6 feet away (That’s a distance of two axe handles) for 15 minutes or more with any individual who is not in your household. Roommates and suitemates are considered members of your household.

✔ **Sanitize (spaces and hands)**

Ensure that the spaces you would hold meetings or events are clean and that frequently touched surfaces are continuously cleaned. Bring cleaning supplies with you, don’t just count on custodial staff to do this for you. The Office of Student Engagement will have cleaning kits that are available for checkout.
Don’t hand out items unnecessarily. If people need to use items like pens or clipboards, sanitize them after each use.

Wash your hands regularly with warm water and soap for 20 seconds or more (long enough to sing the school song). You can also use approved hand sanitizers. The Baker Pattillo Student Center has many available hand sanitizing stations. Individuals should also carry their own hand sanitizer. These can be refilled for free at the front desk of the Baker Pattillo Student Center or the Campus Recreation Center.

**Shield Your Face (Wear a face covering)**
Always wear a mask or other approved face covering when you are not in a private space such as a residence hall room or private office where social distancing is possible. Ensure that others wear their masks as well.

Plastic face shields are not an approved face covering because they have not been demonstrated to be as effective in preventing transmission. For certain individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, obscuring the speaker’s mouth presents difficulties. It is best to use a face mask with a clear plastic window which allows for lip reading. These can be easily and cheaply obtained online. The Office of the Dean of Student Affairs will also maintain a small stock of these masks in case of a last-minute needs.

If an individual comes to a meeting or event without a face masks, they can obtain a free, disposable face mask from the front desk of the Baker Pattillo Student Center. If a student cannot afford a reusable cloth face masks, they can obtain one from the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs. If a student refuses to wear a mask, they should be asked to leave. University Police should only be called if an attendee refuses to leave, is belligerent, or threatening.

**Service**
Do not allow individuals to serve themselves food, utensils, condiments, office supplies, programs or anything else. It is better to have items distributed by one individual who is not exhibiting any signs of COVID-19. When possible, food should be individually packaged.

If the individual or individuals distributing items would like to have their temperature checked, this can be done at the front desks of the Baker Pattillo Student Center or Campus Recreation Center.

**Space**
You must ensure that the space you choose has enough room to facilitate appropriate physical distancing. Our recommendation is that you’ll need 30 square feet per person. Also make sure that the total number of attendees does not exceed the reduced capacity of a given space. Most spaces will be at 50% of their previous capacity. These capacities may change as conditions improve or worsen. In spaces like the student center, they should be clearly marked.

**Sign In**
If possible, keep track of who attends meetings or events to facilitate contact tracing if anyone who attends tests positive. However, having a sign-in sheet is not advisable since it may require everyone to touch the same pen, paper or clipboard. Google forms is an easy and free way to create a digital sign in sheet.

✓ **Signage**

Make sure that all expectations are clearly posted. Observe and follow all signage posted in SFA facilities.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What do students need to do to lessen the chance of infection?**

Keeping ourselves and others safe is relatively simple and straightforward. In everything we do, we should be guided by the 8 S’s. If you do these things, the chances of infections drops considerably. We must also make sure that when planning meetings or events, we ensure that everyone follows these guidelines.

**Can student groups hold public events?**

We would strongly discourage student groups from holding public events of any size. Instead, we are encouraging groups to hold events via Zoom or other video conferencing platforms. The Office of Student Engagement can assist students in setting up these kinds of programs. If you do hold face-to-face events, limit the number of attendees and be mindful of the total capacity of the space that is necessary to promote physical distancing (explained in the 8 S’s). We would also encourage groups to make it possible for individuals to attend the event remotely (via Zoom if possible).

**What should student groups do to ensure the safety of people attending events?**

It is critical that groups consider the 8 S’s when planning anything interfacing with the public.

**Can student groups hold meetings?**

We would strongly encourage groups to hold meetings via Zoom or other video conferencing platforms. The Office of Student Engagement can assist students in setting up these meetings. If you do hold face-to-face meetings, limit the number of attendees and be mindful of the total capacity of the space that is necessary to promote physical distancing (explained in the 8 S’s). We would also encourage groups to make it possible for individuals to attend meetings remotely (via Zoom if possible).

**How can groups ensure their meetings are safe?**

Following the 8 S’s is the best way to ensure that meetings are safer. There are inherent risks when groups get together, so meetings should be avoided if necessary and the number in attendance should be limited as much as possible.

**Can student groups do retreats?**

They may, but it should be advised that this is a higher risk activity. It is important to take appropriate safety precautions.
How can retreats be done safely?
Students should follow our guidelines for safe travel (below). Additionally, they should follow the 8 S’s.

Can student groups travel?
You will need enough space for each student to sit no less than 6 feet apart. This will likely impact your costs if you are renting vans or buses. You should not have multiple individuals who are not from the same household in personal vehicles. Roommates and suitemates are considered members of your household. It is imperative that all students are wearing a mask while in a vehicle, even if maintaining a physical distance of 6 feet is possible.

Longer trips requiring a bathroom stop or eating or drinking while in the vehicle increase risks and should be avoided.

Can student groups serve food at events?
Yes, but they need to follow the 8 S’s.

What precautions should groups take if they have an office that students or the general public visit?
Walk through the space making sure that you will be able to follow the 8 S’s. Consider placing a hand sanitizing station just inside the entrance, encouraging everyone to sanitize their hands as they enter. Make sure that the space promotes physical distancing of 6 feet. For example, space chairs or work stations 6 feet apart. If you have couches or benches, consider using signage to indicate that no more than one person should be seated there. Look at the routines you use in the space, and ensure they will allow you to follow the 8 S’s. Plexiglas shields are relatively cheap, and easy to obtain. Look for places where a physical barrier could improve safety.