



On Third-Party Event Planners *MJ Sorority Position Paper*

We are finding an increasing number of chapters using event planning companies/individuals to organize their social and philanthropic functions. While we do understand that planning for large events is often complicated and time-consuming, we are finding that many of the event planners that we have dealt with are not taking the time to review the contracts with the venues, often leaving our clients obligated to much more expansive and concerning liability and negligence verbiage than we are comfortable with in these contracts. In addition, because the event planner/s does not know your organization's specific policies, we are finding that chapters that outsource their events to event planner/s are often not abiding by their fraternity's or sorority's policies regarding event planning.

Therefore, we are often finding that the chapters that engage the use of event planners believe that the event planner is handling all of the details of the event, when in fact, the event planners are not. When we are finally made aware of the situation (most often when a Certificate of Insurance is requested), it is often very late in the planning process, which makes it difficult to modify the contract or plan a different event, depending on the severity of the contract language.

If your chapters are using event planners, we would encourage you to make sure the event planners are aware of your organization's event planning policies, as well as communicating to your chapter officers that they *still* need to verify that they are meeting your organization's risk management policies even when they engage the use of an event planner. In addition, we recommend that when Certificates of Insurance are requested, that you provide *both* the contract from the event planner and the venue to us at MJ Sorority.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ruth Akers at ruth.akers@mjsorority.com.

For example

An Event Planner signs a contract on your behalf with additional insured language, which obligated the Sorority to extend coverage to the hotel holding the event. The hotel used glass bottles to serve drinks, some of which were broken on and around the dance floor. A chapter member's guest sliced his foot open on the glass and severed a tendon in his foot.

Because the contract obligated the Sorority to add the hotel onto their policy as an additional insured, the Sorority's insurance policy was triggered even though the hotel's employee broke the glass that caused the injury.