Event Management System (EMS) User Training Guide

Department of Student Unions · ems-help@pitt.edu · Mon–Fri, 9:00 AM–5:00 PM

What is EMS?

- EMS is the official reservation platform for every group hosting an event in Student Unions spaces
- Reserve spaces online across campus: William Pitt Union (WPU), O'Hara Student Center (OSC), University classrooms, Campus Recreation facilities, Residence Life spaces, and outdoor areas
- Campus Recreation also books through EMS but follows its own processes. This training is specific to Student Unions procedures.
- The University also uses 25Live for campus-wide scheduling. EMS is separate: Student Unions uses it to apply the right policies, approvals, and booking timelines to each request
- Only affiliates with registered EMS accounts may make reservations, and all requests must be submitted through EMS

Why EMS is required

Policy compliance

Different events carry different requirements. EMS matches your event to the right timelines, food policies, and approvals.

The right process

Reservation templates by activity type — meetings, events, information tables, and dance practice. Each has its own rules.

No double-booking

Tracks space availability and coordinates your request against every other reservation.

Coordinated services

Reservations, Event Productions, Catering, Facilities. EMS identifies what your event needs.

Safety & accountability

Flags events needing extra review — minors, outside vendors, food, and other special activities.

Fair access

Booking windows and space-use limits applied consistently across every organization.

Staff know what to build

Building and setup teams work from EMS for times, attendance, and room arrangements.

An official record

Documents what was requested, reviewed, and approved.

Booking through another platform, or getting informal permission from someone, does not remove any of these requirements.

Helpful contact information

Office	Phone	Email
WPU Reservations — reservations and event planning questions	412-648-7817	ems-reservations@pitt.edu
EMS Help — troubleshooting and accounts	—	ems-help@pitt.edu
Event Productions Office (WPU & OSC)	412-648-7821	satech@pitt.edu
Campus Recreation	412-648-8210	rec@pitt.edu
WPU Office	412-648-7811	—
SORC (3rd floor WPU) — contracts, waivers, cashboxes	412-624-7115	—

Business hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00 AM–5:00 PM. Responses from the Reservations Office are delayed outside of these hours.

How to create an EMS account

- You must be an officer in a SORC-certified student organization, or a faculty or staff member
- Complete the online training guide and quiz — account activation requires quiz completion
- Apply using your Pitt username, without @pitt.edu
- New users are notified by email once the account is activated. This typically takes 2 to 5 business days, but can take 7 to 10 business days during peak times
- Apply well before the event you plan to book to allow for this lead time

Important EMS information

- If your account is inactive, do not reapply — email ems-help@pitt.edu
- Student groups may have up to 2 members with EMS access
- Officers in multiple organizations can request additional access
- Submit requests from a computer. The mobile version skips fields and allows less detail, so phone requests often arrive incomplete
- Book reservations only under your own name and for your affiliated organization. Booking on behalf of other individuals or organizations is not permitted and may result in loss of EMS access

Frequently used terms

- WPU — William Pitt Union; OSC — O'Hara Student Center
- Multipurpose Room — flexible event space where you choose the setup
- Meeting Room — non-academic meetings and lectures, standard setup only
- Templates — reservation permissions, set by the type of activity you're booking
- University Classrooms — reservable by student organizations after classes end for the day
- UDF — User Defined Fields, the required questions on your request

Reservation templates

Your template is set by the type of activity, and each one carries its own requirements and restrictions.

Meetings

Meeting rooms, standard setup. Request at least 7 days in advance.

Events

Multipurpose rooms and outdoor spaces. Request at least 21 days in advance and confirm your layout 2 weeks out.

Information tables

Tabling positions indoors and outdoors. Request at least 5 days in advance. Tabling without a reservation is a policy violation.

Dance practice

An empty, as-is room with no setup and no furniture. Request at least 7 days in advance.

Event statuses

Web Request

Received and pending staff review. The room is on hold for you.

Tentative

Action items are required — food forms, minors documentation, non-Pitt guests, diagrams. Not yet confirmed.

Confirmed

Your event is approved.

Denied / Cancelled

The request was denied or cancelled, with an explanation.

Confirmed means all requirements are complete and approved by our team.

Tentative means requirements or approvals are still outstanding.

Common reasons an event stays Tentative: food forms still need to be completed, room details or the diagram still need to be confirmed, non-Pitt speakers or guests, minors documentation, or a movie showing.

Room policies

Space	Request at least	Setup
Multipurpose rooms and outdoor spaces	21 days in advance	You choose the layout. Confirm it at least 2 weeks before the event
Meeting rooms	7 days in advance	Standard setup only. Do not move the furniture
Dance practice	7 days in advance	Empty room, as-is. No setup and no furniture
Information tables	5 days in advance	Indoor and outdoor tabling positions
Technical services	14 days in advance	Requested separately through the Event Productions Office

Include setup and clean-up time in your reservation.

If your event runs 6:00 to 8:00, book the room from 5:30 to 8:30, not 6:00 to 8:00. Staying past your reservation end time is a policy violation.

Room layouts and diagrams

- Multipurpose room layouts must be confirmed at least 2 weeks before your event
- Your diagram is what the setup crew builds from. If the furniture it isn't on the diagram, it will not be in the room.
- Only request furniture we have. We offer 6ft rectangle tables, cocktail tables, and round tables.
- Make sure the room and the date on your diagram match your reservation
- Late submission of event logistics, can lead to a policy violation

Cancellations and rain spaces

Multipurpose & outdoor

Cancel at least 14 days in advance

Meeting rooms

Cancel at least 5 days in advance

Rain spaces

Cancel at least 72 hours in advance

Technical services

Cancelled separately — cancelling the room does not cancel the tech

If you cannot meet these deadlines, contact the Reservations Office directly.

We are flexible, but early notice prevents no-shows. A no-show is a policy violation.

Extra requirements at a glance

If your event involves	Deadline	What you do	Who handles it
Microphones, projector, laptops, or lighting	14 days before	Submit the Technical Services Request Form. Booked and cancelled separately from your room	Event Productions Office 412-648-7821 satech@pitt.edu
Food or drink	21 days before	Catering exemption	BHAS
	21 days before	Nordy's Snack Package	WPU Reservations
	14 days before	Chartwells Campus Catering	Chartwells
	7 days before	Bake sale	WPU Reservations
	5 days before	Snack form	WPU Reservations
A cashbox	Ask early	Request goes directly to SORC. WPU Reservations and the Ticket Office do not handle cashboxes	SORC 3rd floor WPU 412-624-7115
A non-Pitt speaker, performer, or service	21 days before	Submit a SORC contract or waiver. Contracts and waivers are on the SORC website	SORC 3rd floor WPU 412-624-7115
Non-Pitt, unaccompanied minors	30 days before	Complete every step on the Events with minors slide. One cleared chaperone per 15 minors	Clearances verified through Pro-Verify, an external company

Most of these are processed outside the WPU Reservations Office, so Reservations staff cannot shorten those deadlines.

Events with minors

- Applies to non-Pitt, unaccompanied minors. Start at least 30 days before the event
- Complete all three items: indicate minors in your EMS request; register your event with Student Affairs using the Event with Minors form on the WPU website; and complete clearance verification through Pro-Verify
- One cleared chaperone is required for every 15 minors
- Your event stays Tentative until the minors documentation is complete
- Clearances are processed by an external company, so Reservations staff cannot shorten the timeline

Approved food at events

- Food and drink must go through an approved option: Catering exemption, Nordy's Snack Package, Chartwells Campus Catering, a bake sale request, or a snack form
- Potluck food is not an approved option
- Homemade baked goods are only allowed through an approved bake sale request, submitted at least 7 days before the event
- Complete the food forms before your event. It stays Tentative until they are done, and skipping the food approval process is a policy violation
- Deadlines for each option are listed on the Extra requirements slide

Money at your event

Digital payment platforms are not permitted.

This includes Venmo, Cash App, PayPal, and other digital payment platforms.

However, *attendees may donate directly through an organization's official philanthropy website, if available*.

WPU staff monitor events to ensure compliance with this policy.

- Cashbox requests go directly to SORC — 3rd floor WPU, 412-624-7115
- WPU Reservations and the Ticket Office do not handle cashbox requests
- If your event involves selling anything or collecting donations, say so in your EMS event description

Policy violations

- EMS users must know and follow all Student Unions policies before holding events
- The booking rules are published — review them before you book, not after something goes wrong
- The EMS user and the affiliated organization share responsibility
- Send policy questions to ems-reservations@pitt.edu

The violation process

Step	What happens	Notes
1	A written warning explaining what led to the violation	Sent to your event host and your organization president or department contact
2	A second written warning, noting that further issues could require a virtual meeting with the Assistant Director, Reservations	Sent to your event host and your organization president or department contact
3	A warning requiring a virtual meeting with the Assistant Director, Reservations	Must be scheduled within 2 weeks. If not scheduled, Union Operations reserves the right to pause all future events
4	A warning requiring an in-person meeting with your Event Liaison and the Assistant Director, Reservations or the Director of Student Unions	Must be scheduled within 1 week. If not scheduled, Union Operations reserves the right to pause all future events
5	A meeting with the Assistant Director, Reservations and the Director of Student Unions	**All future events paused and EMS privileges suspended for the remainder of the semester**

Common policy violations

- Failure to show up for a reserved event without notice to Student Unions staff
- Failure to follow the food approval and documentation process
- Late submission of event logistics, such as speakers, open to the public, or incorrect event descriptions
- Failure to maintain cleanliness of the space following an event
- Tabling without a reservation
- Moving, rearranging, or removing furniture without authorization or assistance from Student Unions staff
- Late cancellation of events
- Staying past your reservation end time
- Damage to the room, furniture, or building
- Holding a speaker, lecture, or other event that requires a contract without following contract procedures
- Misrepresentation of events with an inaccurate or incomplete EMS description
- Reserving space for a different group/organization

Violations are not limited to the items above.

EMS Quiz

Thank you for completing the EMS User Training Guide.

Complete the EMS Quiz to activate your account.