

The Alumni Association of Princeton University

Insurance for Officially-Related Groups – Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is an “officially-related group”?

A class (post-graduation) or regional association may choose to become a tax-exempt organization by joining the University’s group exemption. An officially-related group is an organization that has formally become a member of this group. The primary requirement for becoming a group member is the organization’s purpose must be to support Princeton University. All officially-related groups are included with the University’s annual IRS tax filing.

2. How do I know if my alumni organization is a member of the University’s group exemption?

To find out if your class or regional association is a member of the University’s group exemption, contact the Regional Affairs staff at the Alumni Association Office.

3. How does my group become an officially-related group?

A class or association becomes a group member by completing paperwork including adopting a constitution (as prescribed by the University) or articles of association and receiving an IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN). Instructions and guidelines are available from the Regional Affairs staff at the Alumni Association Office.

4. What are the primary advantages of becoming an officially-related group?

The first reason to become a member of the group is to obtain federal tax-exemption through the University. Other advantages include simplified financial processes (such as opening a bank account), the ability to be included in a group tax filing and coverage under University insurance policies including Trustees and Officers, general liability and automobile liability. Coverage applies to the alumni class or regional association itself, group officers and individuals as alumni or volunteers.

5. If my alumni association is not an officially-related group, are we still covered by the University’s insurance policy?

Non-officially related groups are not covered by the University’s insurance policies. Officers of non-officially related groups are not covered by the University’s insurance policies in their roles as officers. When acting on behalf of the University, individual alumni or those acting in a volunteer capacity may be covered.

6. Can international regional associations become officially related?

Unfortunately, no. Under IRS rules, international groups are not permitted to be members of a group exemption.

7. What must international regional associations do from a legal and insurance perspective to qualify for tax exemption and insurance coverage?

You may wish to consider purchasing insurance to cover the group itself, depending upon the options available in your area. However, most individuals (but not the regional associations) acting on behalf of Princeton may be covered under certain circumstances.

8. When is an alumni event or program considered to be authorized by the University?

Any event or program that benefits the University’s goals and mission, as determined by the University, is considered to be authorized. This includes most class and regional association events held in the name of the University or the officially-related group. Such events should be publicized through paper mailings, broadcast e-mails and/or the organization’s web site. Private social events and activities would be excluded.

9. What does it mean to say that the University has assumed “care, custody or control” of property?

Care, custody or control is assumed whenever the University takes possession of an individual’s property and assumes responsibility for the safety of that property until it is returned to said individual unless safeguarding/

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storage is waived. For example, an article left in an attended coat check area would be considered to be under the “care, custody and control” of the University. However, an article left in an unsupervised coat check would not be considered to be under the “care, custody and control” of the University.

10. When do I need a certificate of insurance for an event and how do I obtain one?

If the venue where you are holding an event requires a certificate of insurance, the Office of Risk Management should be contacted and will provide the Certificate as needed. Please provide at least 5 business days notice.

11. While acting as an officer, am I covered when I am acting on behalf of my class or regional association and in what way?

For officially-related groups, an officer acting in an official capacity is covered for liability. For non officially-related groups, an officer acting in an official capacity is not covered, and the group is also not covered.

12. Can alumni groups that are or are not officially related receive specific event coverage?

The Office of Risk Management may be able to provide access to groups to purchase general liability insurance for specific events. Please contact the Office of Risk Management for more information and assistance in procuring event coverage.

13. Are non-officer volunteers or event hosts also covered under the University’s policies?

As noted above, when acting for the benefit of the University, individual alumni or those acting in a volunteer capacity may have coverage. Please contact the Office of the Alumni Association with questions regarding specific events.

14. What is the interaction of the University’s insurance policy and an alumnus/host’s personal policy for homeowners or auto insurance?

For an individual hosting an event on his/her private property or using a personal vehicle, the individual’s homeowners or automobile liability policy would be primary for any loss or claim and the University’s policy may provide excess coverage.

15. If alcohol is being served at an authorized event, do I need to be sure that the applicable insurance coverage is available?

The University’s general liability policy has coverage for liability associated with serving alcohol. When “special event coverage” is secured for an event, confirmation should be obtained that the special event coverage includes alcohol liability.

16. When should I notify the Office of the Alumni Association about an event?

Whenever an event is hosted in the name of Princeton University, the Office of the Alumni Association should be contacted at least 5 business days in advance of the event, either directly or by publicizing the event through paper mailings, broadcast e-mails and/or the organization’s web site.

17. Are there any exclusions on the University’s insurance coverage that I should understand?

Generally, the University’s liability insurance policies contain exclusions for intentional acts which cause harm or injury to others or for activities of a criminal nature which result in harm or injury to others.

Please note that coverage for individual situations may vary depending on the circumstances. Please contact the Office of the Alumni Association for answers regarding specific situations. Some questions may be referred to the Office of Risk Management.