



**48-01 - Policy on Camping and Tents on university owned or operated properties**

**Policy Title:** Policy on Camping and Tents on university owned or operated properties

**Policy Type:** Administrative (Interim)

**Policy Number:** 48-01 (2024)

**Approved:** 9/5/2024

**Responsible Office(s):** Office of Facilities Management; Auxiliary Services

**Responsible Executive:** Vice President for Finance and Administration

**Applies to:** Administrators, contractors, employees, faculty, students, student organizations, and visitors

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

Pursuant to guidance and directives issued by officials of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Norfolk State University (NSU) will maintain a policy prohibiting the use of tents and or similar temporary structures on campus or on university owned property. This policy prohibits the assembly and use of tents, camping tents, or similar temporary structure on campus without the express advance permission of the Office of Facilities Management or the Vice President for Finance and Administration. Additionally, this policy prohibits anyone from outdoor camping or occupying a tent or temporary structure on campus or university owned property without express permission. If approved, the use of tents or other structures must comply with any applicable facilities related policies.

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**DEFINITIONS:**

**Camping:** the act of using any part of the campus for living accommodation purposes, such as establishment of temporary or permanent living quarters, sleeping outdoors overnight, making preparations for overnight sleeping (including the laying down of bedding), storing personal belongings, using any tent, shelter, or similar structure regardless of size for sleeping, sleeping in, on or under parked vehicles, or setting up temporary or permanent sleeping areas outdoors or in structures not designated for human occupancy. Camping does not include the use of university real property that has been wholly or partially designated as sleeping areas, a tailgating activity in conjunction with a university event, or the use of temporary hammocks used in recreation or studying activities outside during non-overnight hours.

**Employee:** a person who is hired and paid by Norfolk State University to perform certain duties.

**Encampments:** the establishment of temporary or permanent living quarters, sleeping outdoors

overnight, making preparations for overnight sleeping (including laying down of bedding), storing personal belongings, or using any tent without approval.

**Faculty:** university employees who have full-time tenured or tenure-track appointments, who have term faculty appointments or serve as adjunct or affiliate faculty.

**Student:** a person who is enrolled in a course or program of study offered by the university.

**Camping Tent:** Any collapsible tent or structure, typically having as its basic components a flexible material supported by a framework, designed, intended, or used as temporary shelter while camping or on recreational outdoor outings. Camping Tents includes tents known as “pup tents,” “dome tents,” “cabin tents,” “hiker tents,” and “backpacking tents.” A Camping Tent does not include a tent with all sides entirely open and where there is an unobstructed view into such tent from the outside at all angles.

**Event Tent:** An “Event Tent” is a tent of not less than 400 square feet or a tent that requires professional installation and removal.

**Volunteer:** a non-paid person who performs a prescribed university function or responsibility that has been approved by the authorized university representative.

**Visitor:** A member of the general public with no existing formal relationship with the university.

#### **CONTACTS:**

The Office of Facilities Management within the Division of Finance and Administration interprets this policy. The Responsible Executive is responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions as required by BOV Policy # 01 (2014) *Creating and Maintaining Policies* through the appropriate governance structures. Please direct questions pertaining to this policy to the Office of Facilities Management.

#### **STAKEHOLDERS:**

Administrators, contractors, employees, faculty, students, and visitors

#### **POLICY CONTENTS:**

- NSU prohibits the assembly and use of tents or similar temporary structure on campus without the express permission of the Office of Facilities Management or the Vice President for Finance and Administration.
- NSU also prohibits anyone from camping, or using a tent overnight, or occupying a tent or temporary structure on campus or university owned property without express permission.
- Event Tents shall be exempted as part of the approval process from the overnight removal requirement. Event tents shall not be occupied or used during the hours of 12 a.m. and 6 a.m.
- Camping tents on campus are prohibited entirely and will not be approved.
- Encampments on campus whether by use of tents or otherwise are entirely prohibited.

#### **Process to request to use tents or temporary shelters:**

To request approval to use a tent or temporary shelter, the requestor must be a school-affiliated individual who agrees to be responsible for ensuring that the NSU rules are followed concerning

the tent and activities/behavior, or in the case of space rentals to an external individual or group (e.g., rentals for weddings, Rotary Club, etc.) a signed agreement that obligates the external user to comply with all NSU rules concerning tents and activities/behavior and also designates a specific responsible individual who will be on site and who is responsible for ensuring this compliance.

The requestor must do the following:

Email [auxiliary@nsu.edu](mailto:auxiliary@nsu.edu)

The email should include the following:

- a. The requestor's name and/or organization
- b. The purpose for using the tent or temporary shelter
- c. The time frame to use the tent or temporary shelter

A response will be provided to the requester regarding the request to use a tent or temporary shelter on campus or university owned property.

Appropriate university administrators will review the request and consider the following:

- Location of the request
- Time frame of the request
- Safety and weather concerns
- Logistical considerations (i.e. clean-up, potential for damage to campus grounds, etc.)
- That the approved use of a tent or temporary structure will comply with any applicable university policies, procedures, and any applicable federal, state, and local laws and safety requirements.
- Should the approved use of the tent or temporary structure violate any applicable federal, state, and local laws or university policies, the approval will be revoked.

Should the request to use a tent or temporary shelter be granted, the following conditions apply:

- The actual construction of tents or other structures must avoid disrupting or obstructing university functions, including impeding pedestrian or vehicular traffic, blocking ingress/egress, or creating unsanitary conditions
- If the user will be utilizing any sound system to amplify music or rhetoric, the decibel level should not exceed 90 dBA.
- Individuals using the tents must comply with any applicable university policies (i.e. Code of Student Conduct).
- That the user shall only use the tent or temporary structure during the approved times and at the approved location.

**As appropriate NSU will require the following to approved users of tents or temporary structures:**

1. That a safety inspection be completed prior to any tents being constructed.
2. That a specific type of tent that can be used
3. That the size of the tent(s) is restricted depending on the event. Larger tents shall be subject to applicable safety rules.
4. Restrict the number of tents depending on the event (e.g. one tent per application). NSU can and will limit the total number of tents in a particular space.)
5. NSU shall also exclude certain specific times, locations, and types of tents from this approval process (such as the use of tents in parking lots adjacent to stadiums or other facilities where university events are being held, from a few hours before to a few hours after the duration of the event, when consistent with parking needs and health and safety standards).

**Exclusions:**

This policy does not apply to event tents or canopies temporarily erected on University property adjacent to athletics facilities or fields during athletics or entertainment events, and up to four (4) hours before or after those events, so long as those tents otherwise comply with and are assembled in accordance with the Uniform Statewide Building Code and the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, do not impede ingress or egress to pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and do not create a safety or security hazard. Please note that event tents shall not be occupied during the hours of 12 a.m. and 6 a.m.

NSU shall reserve the right to put up its own tents and temporary structures or allow for tents and temporary structures at official University-sanctioned events, excluding its own use of tents/structures from any approval process.

**EDUCATION AND COMPLIANCE:**

**EDUCATION** - All enrolled students, student organizations, faculty, staff, and administrators will be notified about this policy.

**COMPLIANCE** – Students in violation will be referred to the Dean of Students Office. If found responsible, appropriate sanctions will be implemented related to the violation. This could include, but not limited to, disciplinary probation, educational project related to the violation(s); community service; educational modules related to the violation(s); counseling referral; fine; restitution; housing reassignment; housing visitation restriction; housing removal; suspension, and expulsion.

**PUBLICATION:**

This policy will be widely published or distributed to the University community. To ensure timely publication and distribution thereof, the Responsible Office will make every effort to:

- Communicate the policy in writing, electronically or otherwise, to the University community;
- Submit the policy for inclusion in the online Policy Library;
- Post the policy on applicable webpages as necessary; and
- Direct appropriate offices to educate and train all stakeholders and appropriate audiences on the policy's content, as necessary.

Failure to satisfy procedural requirements does not invalidate this policy.

**REVIEW SCHEDULE**

- Next Scheduled Review date: 11/16/2024

**RELATED DOCUMENTS**

1. [Student Code of Conduct](#)
2. [BOV Policy 33 – Freedom of Speech and Expression and Campus Space Utilization](#)