Risk Management for Registered Student Organizations at the University of Houston
Frequently Asked Questions

HB2639/SB1138 is a statute that was enacted by the 80th Texas Legislature so that registered student organizations at public colleges and universities in Texas receive risk management education and guidance for their members and advisors. In accordance with the legislation, the Center for Student Involvement will work with registered student organizations that have been designated by the university to complete training on risk management annually.

Please find below a list of Frequently Asked Questions about this law and the risk management program offered through the Center for Student Involvement. The Center for Student Involvement is located in 278 University Center. More information can be found at http://www.uh.edu/csi/organization_resources/risk_management.html or contact Selby Lo, Activities Coordinator for Risk Management at salo@uh.edu or 832-842-6245.

1. What student organizations at the University of Houston have to comply with HB 2639/SB1138?

As of the 2012-2013 academic school year, all registered student organizations at the University of Houston including all SFAC fee funded student organizations, social fraternities & sororities, club sports are required to participate in the risk management and guidance sessions.

2. Why does our organization have to comply with HB 2639/SB1138?

The University of Houston is required to comply with this statute. However, the law allows each institution to determine the types of student organizations that could benefit from management guidance.

3. What will we learn in the risk management program?

The law requires, at a minimum, that the program address possession and use of alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs, including penalties that may be imposed for possession or use; hazing; sexual abuse and harassment; fire and other safety issues, including the possession and use of a firearm or other weapon or of an explosive devise; travel; behavior at parties and other events held by a student organization; and adoption by a student organization of a risk management program. The law also permits the University of Houston to add to the risk management program any topics the institution determines is relevant.

4. Why do authorized representatives and advisor(s) have to attend the risk management program?

The law makes attendance at this risk management training program mandatory for certain individuals. Those individuals mentioned specifically are advisors and students holding the offices of president, membership chair, risk management chair, social chair, and pledge class or new member chair as potentially being required to attend. Because not every organization that registers at the University of Houston uses these titles, we require the top three (3) officers of every registered student organization to attend the training.

5. When will this mandatory risk management education program be offered?

All groups will receive risk management training during the fall semester. The Center for Student Involvement will contact organizations and advisors regarding date/time of the risk management training for each academic year. Training sessions for student organization leaders and advisors will be separate. The sessions will be geared towards the two different groups to allow for presenters to provide the necessary tools for advisors and students to address issues on the various topics.

6. What if our organization does not have an advisor? (Is this really necessary?)

For the 2012-2013 academic year, the University of Houston does not require registered student organizations to have faculty/staff advisors. For student organizations that have identified a faculty/staff advisor, the advisor will be required to attend the training. Off-campus advisors will not be required to attend but are invited to attend.
Starting in the 2013-2014 academic year, all registered student organizations will be required to have a University of Houston faculty or staff advisor. At that time, all University of Houston faculty and staff advisors will be required to attend the training.

7. Once our organization members and advisor(s) complete this risk management program, will we need to complete the program again even if we have the same officers the following year?

Beginning with the 2012-2013 academic year, the top three (3) student officers of all registered student organizations will be required to complete the risk management program every year. While an officer may stay for the following year, he/she must complete the training each academic year to comply with the law. Any advisor who has not previously completed the UH risk management program is required to complete the program at least once. However, advisors are encouraged to complete the training on an annual basis.

8. What if our organization already has our own risk management program?

Regardless of the internal education programming that your organization or your national body may have in place, your organization and advisor will still be required to complete the annual risk management program administered by the Center for Student Involvement at the University of Houston.

9. As an organization advisor, why am I required to attend the risk management program?

As of the 2012-2013 academic year, all University of Houston faculty and staff advisors are required to attend. The training materials have been updated and new material will be presented. Off-campus advisors are strongly encouraged to attend.

Starting in 2013-2014, all University of Houston faculty and staff advisors that have not attended will be required to attend. Advisors that have previously attended in the 2012-2013 academic year will not be required to attend but it is encouraged. Any time an organization replaces a University of Houston faculty and staff advisor, the new advisor will be required to attend the training.

10. Once our authorized representatives and advisors complete the risk management program, are we in compliance?

To meet the minimum obligations under this new law, selected student organizations must:
   i. Attend UH Training Program: the top three (3) student officers of all registered student organizations and their student organization advisor must physically attend the entire UH risk management program and must actively participate in assigned individual or group activities during the program.
   ii. Report Back to Your Organization: Take the information from the Risk Management Training back to your student organization. Communicate where to find information and resources.
   iii. Create a Risk Management Plan: work with your organization to create a risk management plan for events. Keep the plan in your organization’s paperwork.
   iv. NOTE: Student organizations may have many other obligations they must meet under state or federal law, as well as university rules. Completing the above requirements does not necessarily mean that your organization is in full compliance with other laws or university policies that impact your student organization. Please consult with your advisor or staff in the Center for Student Involvement if you have any questions.

Student organizations that do not meet the minimum obligations will be placed on RSO suspension. RSOs placed on suspension will lose privileges such as loss of confirmed reservation spaces through the University Center and the ability to request funding from Activities Funding Board & Auxiliary Services (Student Event Catering Fund and Student Coca-Cola Beverage Donation Fund).

11. How can I find out if my organization is in compliance with HB 2639/SB1138?

For more information on whether or not your organization is in compliance with the new law, contact the Center for Student Involvement, 278 University Center, 832-842-6245.