

EVENT TIMELINE

Contact Dana Ricci, Manager, Events and Special Programs, 848-932-6408, if you need assistance with your event.

Check these items off your To-Do List when planning your event.

THREE TO SIX MONTHS TO A YEAR AHEAD

- Determine the purpose, format and target audience for event
- Create an estimated budget and get approval if necessary
- Select the date, but before confirming it, clear the date with all calendars; [Rutgers Events calendar](#), Office of student Affairs, double-check for conflicts with other major functions
- Gather committee/event team
- Draw up preliminary guest list categories. Begin collecting addresses for save-the-date mailing, if needed
- Select a name or theme for the event
- Select and reserve a facility
- Develop a rain plan if the event is to be held outdoors
- Reserve a block of hotel rooms, if necessary
- Choose a caterer
- Select and order recognition items (award, honor, citation)
- Order favors, souvenirs, printed folders, and other give-away items
- Reserve rental equipment such as vans, buses, tables, chairs, tents, podiums, etc.
- Confirm program speakers
- Plan presentations
- Get all necessary administrative approvals
- Plan promotion and publicity of event to internal and external audiences

TWO TO THREE MONTHS AHEAD

- Write copy, contact Office of Communications for design and/or approval of printed invitations and all other printed materials
- Finalize and get approval of the guest list
- Contact [Mail Services](#) to coordinate the printed materials mailing (if large quantity mailing)
- Send save-the-date announcements to guests (3-5 months prior to the event)
- Contact program participants and
 - Supply suggestions for their remarks
 - Gather their biographical information
 - Request a photo of each participant for publicity and programs
- Keep campus officials, deans, and administrative officers informed
- Meet or contact Facilities to discuss parking/shuttle if needed
- Plan the decorations
- Order prizes, novelties, food, or other special needs
- Contact and/or meet with the florist
- Update campus security on your plans. Advise if dignitaries will be invited.
- Begin publicity
- Contact [University Communications and Marketing](#) if you need a [photographer](#) or [videographer](#)
- Begin creating a logistical outline to document all arrangements as they are decided on and confirmed.

TWO MONTHS AHEAD

- ❑ Select menus and confirm contract with outside vendor or do a requisition when using [Rutgers University Dining Services](#)
- ❑ Prepare mailing labels for invitation mailing
- ❑ Send out invitations 4 – 6 weeks prior to event (depending on event)
- ❑ Finalize decor and facility arrangements
- ❑ Make hotel and transportation arrangements for out-of-town dignitaries and guests
- ❑ Mail an itinerary to dignitaries
- ❑ Prepare, write and print the program
- ❑ Finalize the audiovisual presentations
- ❑ Order any ceremonial items needed
- ❑ Inspect the facility – make sure there are no safety hazards.
- ❑ Recruit volunteers to staff registration if needed, such as med student ambassadors and greeters, etc.

TWO TO FOUR WEEKS AHEAD

- ❑ Meet with Event coordinator to go over logistics
- ❑ Record and acknowledge RSVPs as they are received
- ❑ Mail out confirmations tickets, parking permits, to attendees if necessary
- ❑ Ask Facilities for building requests: unlock rooms and floors for date and times.
- ❑ Run registration reports for necessary leadership, development officers, and staff.
- ❑ Send detailed instructions to all staff and participants (including tickets, parking permits, and maps)
- ❑ Finalize details with caterer, rental company, and all vendors
- ❑ Write speeches and introductions, if necessary.
- ❑ Do a diagram of the room/building to be used as a seating chart or for set up

ONE WEEK AHEAD

- ❑ Create a Management “day of” schedule outlining all deliveries, etc, and timing for the event
- ❑ Print out the guest list in alphabetical order
- ❑ Finish place cards, table cards, and/or name tags
- ❑ Create the seating chart, if needed.
- ❑ Plan a meeting or contact all staff, greeters, ambassadors and volunteers on their duties
- ❑ Gather all presentation items such as gifts, plaques, trophies. Collect ceremonial items.
- ❑ Prepare the briefing packet and send along with the guest list to VIPs and Deans (with full names, titles, business and professional affiliations, and other specific interests), biographies, and the final schedule of events to administrative leadership or host
- ❑ Deliver prepared introductions, citations, and speeches to those who will read them
- ❑ Contact catering with RSVPs and guarantees
- ❑ Prepare event box with any supplies, such as tape, string, zip ties, staplers, clip boards, baskets, etc. you may need

THE BIG DAY

- ❑ Arrive early
- ❑ Bring the logistical outline, production schedule, directions, phone numbers, food orders, seating charts, name tags, table assignments, guest lists, and the event supply box with you
- ❑ Check all facilities
- ❑ Set up event venue with tables, signs, awards, etc.
- ❑ Conduct sound, computer checks.
- ❑ Set up registration. Be sure it is ready no later than 45 minutes prior to the start of your event.
- ❑ Relax and smile!!!!!!!

AFTER THE EVENT

- ❑ Send thank you notes to staff, volunteers and vendors
- ❑ Finalize billing and prepare final budget, if necessary.
- ❑ Conduct event meeting to discuss success or ways to improve in the future
- ❑ **Survey attendees, if appropriate.**