

6.7 PUBLIC ACCESS POLICY

Policy Statement: Central Lakes College is a publicly supported institution of higher education, maintained by the people of the State to further the educational and cultural opportunities of the citizens. Education, broadly defined, is the fundamental purpose and responsibility of the College, and to this end, its staff members direct their efforts. Contributing to this primary purpose and erected solely to further it are the physical plant facilities that house various educational activities initiated and developed by the College.

These facilities come in many types and are adapted to a wide variety of purposes, including specialized areas such as libraries, program shops, and laboratories. Others are adaptable for more general use, such as classrooms, gymnasiums, and auditoriums. Regardless of the uses to which the College facilities may be put, all of them were conceived and planned with the immediate needs of the institution and its educational program in mind. The primary justification for extending the physical plant has been to enable the College to carry out its broad educational task more effectively.

Procedures

- A. General** - All persons on College property are required to abide by College and MinnState policies, State laws, and College regulations. Violation of law, policy, or regulation may subject a person to legal penalties, removal from the campus, or other sanctions. If the person is a student, faculty member, or staff member of the College, that person may also be subject to College discipline.
1. All persons on College property may be required to identify themselves to, and comply with instructions of, authorized officials acting in the performance of their duties.
 2. Food, beverages, and other consumables may be distributed on campus only in accordance with state and federal regulations, campus policies, and regulations governing food service operations implemented by the Office of Business Services. All groups, including campus organizations, College groups, Student Governments, and Support Groups, are required to obtain prior approval from the Office of Business Services before dispensing such items.
 3. The name, initials, insignia, logo, mascot, seal, or address of Central Lakes College or any of its offices or units shall not be used except for official or authorized College purposes.
 4. No sign, poster, paint, chalk, or ink messages may be placed, affixed, or applied to the walls, windows, floors, or surfaces of campus buildings or structures, streets, walkways, utility poles, construction fences, trees, or any location other than designated college bulletin boards, unless approved by the Office of Business Services.
- B. Public Access** - The grounds open to the public generally include the paved walkways on College property. The grounds are typically open to the public from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm. Between 10:00 pm and 6:00 am, these areas are generally closed to all activities except for coming and going to a College function or crossing the campus.

The College reserves the right to limit or otherwise direct demonstrations, especially for safety reasons. Such activities shall not be disruptive, impede access, or litter the campus. Limitations are as follows:

1. Picketing in an orderly manner outside College facilities is not prohibited. Picketing is not permitted inside College facilities or in other areas used for instruction or student activities.
2. Literature may be distributed in public areas of the grounds and certain facilities after receiving the appropriate approval, provided that the free flow of traffic is not obstructed, literature or materials are not forced upon others, and literature is not placed on or in vehicles parked on campus. The College reserves the right to determine the time, place, and manner of distribution of literature.
3. Displaying a sign, gesturing, wearing symbolic clothing, or otherwise protesting is permissible unless it is a disruptive activity or impedes access. Such acts should not obstruct the audience's view or prevent them from paying attention.

The criteria to be used to determine whether an activity, program, or event unreasonably disrupts the orderly operation of the College or an official College function or any other scheduled activity shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The expected duration of the activity.
2. The activity's timing in relation to the academic calendar (for example, proposed scheduling during the first week of classes or final examination week).
3. The number of participants.
4. The expected noise level to be generated by the activity.
5. The need for College resources, security, and personnel to oversee or control the activity.

C. Educational Activities: Because the facilities of the College are requisite to the academic activities and designed to house them, specific underlying assumptions are made with respect to their use. They are available at all times for purposes that the College itself develops as part of its educational program. Such use constantly extends beyond that associated with the courses of instruction. It may and does include programs that contribute to students' physical and cultural development, supplementary to the formal coursework. The College, through its departments, invites lecturers to come to the campus, providing opportunities to hear good music, see fine examples of art, and in many specific ways stimulate the intellectual and emotional life of its students. All such extra-classroom activities are a definite part of the educational program. The people of the State are invited to share in many of these advantages.

It is not in connection with such educational programs that questions arise concerning the use of the College's facilities; rather, it is in connection with the desire of and requests by non-College groups to come to the campus and use the facilities to house programs or activities that they themselves have initiated. The College appreciates that its facilities are sometimes better suited to specific purposes than those of other buildings that may be available. At the same time, it reiterates its basic assumption that the buildings are designed for the College's educational use and not for general use.

D. Co-sponsored Activities: There are circumstances in which the purposes of non-College groups coincide with or complement those of the College itself. In such circumstances, non-College groups

may be authorized to use College facilities under agreements in which all conditions and pertinent details are arranged by the College or subject to its formal approval.

Central Lakes College will not, under any circumstances, permit the unrestricted use of its facilities by non-College groups. So that there may be a clarification of the policy governing the use of College facilities, these principles are listed:

1. Events involving the use of College facilities by non-College groups may be co-sponsored by the College, its units, or recognized student organizations.
2. The College cannot be a co-sponsor with any non-campus group for political, racial, or sectarian gatherings, unless such are directly related to the educational mission of the College.
3. Whenever non-College groups use College facilities, it is with the College's approval, and all conditions of that co-sponsorship are to be set by the College in the Facilities Utilization Procedures.
4. The College will not enter into co-sponsorship of any program or activity in which the educational or public service implications are not evident and which does not relate appropriately to the mission of the College.
5. Upon entering into co-sponsorship or participating in any program or activity, the College reserves the right to pre-approve all advertising copy and news releases.

E. Rental Agreements: Conflicting Activities: In the event of a conflict with regular College programs or activities, College activities take priority.

F. Rates: The College will set rates for the use of its facilities.

Conflicting Opinions: Entering into a Facilities Use Request Form with a non-College organization in no way indicates official College sanction of or agreement with the policies, goals, or opinions of the non-College group. In cases where there may be groups with differing views, it should be clear that all groups have equal access to College facilities. For example, the College's location in the community and the limited space available at other facilities may make it an appropriate venue for a political party to hold a caucus meeting. In such cases, opposing parties must be afforded equal opportunity to use the facilities, in accordance with established procedures.

Denial of Use of College Facilities to Authorized Users: The use of College facilities may be denied if the proposed activity is:

1. not approved by the college administration; or
2. contrary to the expressed College policies or campus regulations concerning the general use of properties or use of specific properties; or
3. likely to significantly harm the safety or welfare of persons or property; or
4. would involve an off-campus audience under circumstances not permitted by Central Lakes College.

Implementation: The Vice President of Administrative Services is responsible for implementing and interpreting this policy and procedure, including actions to approve or disapprove proposed public access requests or regulate public access consistent with this policy and procedure.

Date of Implementation/Presidential Approval: 11/15/2002
Date of last review: 7/31/2025