Off-Campus = Off-the-Hook?

Spring is here! As the weather warms, your fraternity or sorority may be planning more events off-campus. Chapter or recruiting events may be held at a lake, a rental, or a private home. Does being off-campus mean that you are off-the-hook as far as risks? Absolutely not.

Criminal laws, like hazing statutes and drinking laws, apply on and off-campus. In fact, being out-of-town could be worse for the offender. Police and courts don't look fondly on those who bring crime to their jurisdiction. One of the more prominent recent hazing cases actually occurred at an out-of-state rental.

Is security sufficient? Are the premises safe? The same rules of good events apply at your chapter house and off campus. Off-campus locations need to be checked for hazards too.

Will your chapter insurance protect your group for events off-campus? Do you need a special event policy? Better check first. Don’t find out the bad news later.

Even if it's not “your” event, your reputation may be ruined by off-campus misconduct. Remind your members who they represent, even when they may think they are on their own.

Your student code of conduct allows punishment for certain off-campus wrongs. Plan ahead to avoid the conduct process later.

Great weather often brings great freedom and fun, but risks must still be managed. Off-campus does not mean off-the-hook.