

Robert V Ferrara

From: ailgboard-plus-bounces@MIT.EDU on behalf of Steve Baker <sbaker@baker-wohl.com>
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2013 4:03 PM
To: 'MIT AILG'
Cc: ailgboard-plus@mit.edu
Subject: [ailgboard-plus] IMPORTANT - MIT FSILG Community notice about social events and gatherings
Attachments: ATT00001.c
Importance: High

Friends and Fellow Stakeholders of the FSILG Community at MIT:

This is an important message; please read all of it. (This includes those of you in Brookline and Cambridge organizations.)

Unfortunately, we do not have good news about the assembly occupancy calculations for the City of Boston. Last month we reported that at a meeting with Boston's Inspectional Services Department (ISD), the Deputy Commissioner of ISD requested that each property provide information justifying its current posted assembly occupancy figure (the number of people who can be present for parties and events). On behalf of our community, the AILG Board and the FSILG Office retained the AILG's Building Safety Facilitator, Tom Stohlman, to prepare the required information.

This morning we had a follow-up meeting with ISD at which Tom presented his findings for the first 9 FSILG houses to be surveyed. Because of various issues with building exit doors, Tom determined that the properties could safely accommodate a maximum of 49 to 147 people; most have a safe occupant load of 98 people. As a result of these findings, the Deputy Commissioner stated that until all the houses' occupancy reports are submitted and approved by ISD, the City cannot guarantee that our buildings are safe for any occupancy above the posted legal residential occupancy figure. **Accordingly, effective immediately, ISD has determined that all Boston properties are prohibited from having events that cause the number of persons in the house to exceed the residential occupancy number posted on your dormitory license.**

In other words, until ISD accepts Tom's reports and issues a new Certificate of Inspection with a revised assembly occupancy figure, the assembly limit is the same as your licensed residential occupancy. There can be no parties or other large social events at Boston FSILGs until new the Certificates of Inspection are issued. We do not yet have timeframe for when the City will issue the new certificates, but we are working to help keep the process moving as quickly as we can

MIT is well aware of the hardship this will pose for our Boston-based organizations, and it intends to do everything it reasonably can to help mitigate the impact on our organizations' social programs and general operations while working with us to resolve the underlying safety issues. **MIT will support our community during this temporary occupancy restriction.** Dean for Student Life Chris Colombo has been briefed on this matter, and he noted the importance of social gatherings and other residence-based events to the student life experience of our members. He has already asked his leadership team to work with the AILG and our student leaders to find solutions to allow Boston FSILG social events to proceed in compliance with the ISD restriction, including working to provide space on campus to host events. Deans Marlena Love and Henry Humphreys will provide more information shortly.

In the interim, we ask that everyone in the FSILG community – students, alumni, and MIT staff – work cooperatively toward addressing this challenge. Please recognize that this issue came about because of ISD's legitimate concerns

about safety in our houses. We should not blame or vilify the City for this action; they are doing their best – as we all should – to insure that our students and their guests are safe in our houses.

Also note that we have a common responsibility for this issue: all of us are in this together. Should any member organization decide not to comply with the City's direction and later be found to have violated the prohibition on assembly occupancy, they may jeopardize their own dormitory license, as well as cause major adverse effects for all Boston FSILGs. ISD is seriously considering the withdrawal of all assembly occupancy permits, and the temporary restriction on social events could become permanent. So please, let's not test them on this to find out. We know this is a challenge, but we need to work through it together, not fight it.

The Brookline and Cambridge properties are not immediately affected by this matter, but just as Boston ISD was concerned with Tom's findings about problems with egress doors, we have the same safety concerns for our Brookline and Cambridge residents. Accordingly, the temporary occupancy limit of three times the legal residential occupancy that we announced previously remains in effect. Once Tom has completed his reviews, those numbers may be adjusted up or down based on his findings.

Friends, we understand that this email is going to generate far more questions than answers. Accordingly, we have scheduled a community-wide meeting to present more information and answer your questions. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the previously scheduled IFC President's Council meeting on **Thursday, 24 October, at 7:30 pm in Room 400 of the Student Center.** All IFC Chapter Presidents are expected to attend. We encourage each FSILG to have both an undergrad and alumnus/a officer present.

Thank you,

Brian Alvarez ('15, Kappa Sigma), IFC Executive Vice President
Marlena Love, Assistant Dean and Director, MIT FSILG Office
Henry J. Humphreys, Senior Associate Dean of Students, MIT
Steve Baker ('84, Theta Xi), AILG Chair