

Frequently Asked Questions: **Celebrating during the NCAA Basketball tournament**

Where can I go to celebrate?

The safest place is in your own residence or private residence you have been invited to or a public establishment designed to entertain sports-related celebrations. If you decide to go outside you may celebrate on public property so long as you do not violate the law and do not obstruct vehicle or pedestrian traffic.

What can I do?

You can sing, cheer and enjoy other responsible forms of celebrating. You can do activities that are legal and that do not disturb the comfort and peace of others while they are in their homes. If you do not violate anyone's constitutional rights or property, you will be fine. Your right to celebrate ends where the rights of others and the law begin. To protect yourself and others, stay out of the roadways and do not commit any crimes, throw any objects, or climb on anything or anyone to get a better view. Listen and obey if you are told by the police to move along or to leave the area, either by an officer or an official public address announcement. If the message was directly given to you by an officer, or if you are part of the crowd that was ordered to be dispersed, you are required to obey the orders given. If you fail to obey the given orders, you are subject to the same police interventions, arrests and penalties levied against others who are disobeying police commands.

What behaviors are considered 'inciting' a crowd and in turn would initiate police intervention?

- * Climbing trees, lamp poles, signs, getting on shoulders, or any other means to gain a height advantage of the crowds and to draw attention to one's self.
- * Taking off clothes to draw attention to one's self, including flashing.
- * Committing any type of illegal behaviors in the presence of others. This will include but is not limited to: fire of any kind, disorderly conduct (see ELPD Disorderly Code), malicious destruction of property (MDOP), intentionally disobeying police announcements and orders, throwing any items at or near others which could cause injuries.

What is "blocking a street"?

When a public street designed for vehicle traffic is partially and/or totally blocked by persons, objects, vehicles, etc, which inhibit and/or prevents safe passage of motor vehicles traveling on the roadway. This includes, but is not limited to standing in the street and crossing the street outside of pedestrian cross walks

What actions will be taken if we block a street?

Police officers will have continuous person-to-person contact with individuals blocking the streets in the effort to clear the roadways. Continuous announcements over loud speaker systems will be made to facilitate this effort. If the streets continue to be blocked, the police may utilize a progressive use of force to clear the streets as previously described. If necessary this may include the use of chemical agents outlined within department policies.

What do I do if I find myself in the middle of a declared unlawful assembly?

Follow the directions given by the police over the loudspeaker and attempt to immediately leave the area via the routes indicated. You should assist your friends who may also be with you in leaving the area. If approached by a police officer, comply with any directions as much as possible. The majority of crowds tend to gravitate towards the middle of the streets, so work yourself away from the middle of the street and look for and walk towards open areas for escape.

How do I approach an officer for help?

Always approach a police officer in a non-threatening manner and state your reasons for approaching them. During all large crowd activities, it is not the time to become argumentative or discuss your constitutional rights. If an officer tells you to do something at the time- comply and do it! There are formal procedures to follow if you feel your constitutional rights have been violated after the fact. If you are not satisfied with the answers the officers give you, attempt to properly identify the officer with whom you are having contact with. Depending on the situation at the time, the officer will provide you with his/her name and the lead department. There may also be some identification markers on their uniforms with name, department they work for, and a possible ID number attached to their uniforms.

Where do I get first-aid?

All police personnel will be able to summon emergency assistance and/or ambulances should that be required by any individuals. In addition, all East Lansing firefighters are trained paramedics and will be able to assist should first aid be necessary. Should you be exposed to tear gas, police will instruct you as to where to go to decontaminate yourself. In most cases, that will be to the nearest water supply and then home, where a simple water wash will clear the gas from your eyes and nose, and you can remove your contaminated clothing. Exposure to tear gas by a person without medical complications such as asthma does not generally cause a medical emergency requiring assistance other than a water wash and clothing removal. A wise course of action would be that individuals with medical issues should avoid being in areas where tear gas may be used.

What to do if exposed to tear gas?

Move to an area that is not exposed to the chemical agents / tear gas. Face into the wind and allow the wind to remove the particles from your clothing and body. Use plenty of cold water to wash the exposed areas of the body and flush the eyes with plenty of water. After washing the exposed areas, use paper towels to pat the areas dry. The effects will last anywhere from 15 to 30 minutes. Wash all clothing in cold water and separate from other non-contaminated clothing. If you have asthma or other respiratory ailments, you should seek professional medical treatment if breathing becomes labored.

Can I have open alcohol containers in this area?

It is illegal to have any open alcohol containers on any public streets or public property within the city of East Lansing and the MSU campus. Individuals under the age of 21 cannot legally possess and/or consume any type of alcohol, either on public or private property.

What are the consequences of being arrested, detained, violating laws, etc?

You will be subject to all of the penalties and sanctions associated with the related crime that you commit. If you are convicted of any offenses related to riotous behaviors, then you could also be subject to being banned from attending any state college or university for up to two years.

Relevant Laws/Ordinances/Policy

East Lansing: <http://www.municode.com/resources/gateway.asp?pid=13690&sid=22>

MSU: <http://trustees.msu.edu/ordinances.html>

Student Disorderly Conduct Policy: <http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/rule53.htm>

How do I file a complaint if I believe my rights have been violated?

To file a complaint on-line:

MSUPD <http://www.police.msu.edu/contact.asp>

ELPD <http://www.cityofeastlansing.com/>