



PennState

Office of Ethics and Compliance

COMMONWEALTH CAMPUS MASCOT GUIDELINES

The purpose of the Nittany Lion Mascot (“Mascot”) is to support, promote and represent Penn State University by actively enhancing the spirit, pride, and excitement in all environment(s). These guidelines are intended for the 24 campuses throughout Pennsylvania that serve students and communities within the Commonwealth. In accordance with Penn State University [Policy AD07, Use of University Name, Trademarks, Symbols, Logos and/or Graphic Devices](#), the Nittany Lion is considered University Indicia; therefore, a direct reflection of the University. Policy AD07 “seeks to protect the University’s name and reputation by regulating the use of the University Indicia to prevent uses that are not supportive of the University’s mission or values and protect the University from the liability of misrepresentation.”

NITTANY LION MASCOT

The Mascot is property of the University and can only be used in connection with activities that meet the University’s standards and support the University’s mission. Each campus must designate an administrative unit and identify a full-time employee on its campus (the “Campus Lead”) that will provide oversight of the Mascot and Mascot uniform and ensure adherence to AD07, and these guidelines, including approval of permissible use. The Nittany Lion Mascot uniform may only be worn by an individual affiliated with the University (faculty / staff / student). University employees or students may not use the Mascot uniform for personal use.

PERMISSIBLE USE OF THE NITTANY LION MASCOT

The Mascot uniform may only be used in an official University capacity at a University Event or an approved Non-University event. “University Events” shall be defined as any event that is sponsored by, and in direct control of the University. The Campus Lead shall use University Policy AD07 to guide Non-University event appearance decisions. All events shall be determined and approved by the Campus Lead. The Campus Lead can utilize the Director of Commonwealth Campus Athletics as a resource in the decision-making process for non-University events.

For purposes of these guidelines, examples of University Events include, but are not limited to:

- Admissions Open Houses
- Intercollegiate Athletic Events
- Recruiting Events
- On-Campus Receptions
- Development Events
- Student Engagement Events

- THON
- New Student Orientation
- Community Service Events

Examples of Non-University Events include, but are not limited to:

- Non-University Groups Using University Facilities (AD02)
- Social Functions (e.g., wedding, retirement party, etc.)
- Community Events (e.g., parade, Chamber of Commerce, mini-Thon, etc.)

The Mascot shall not make commercial appearances (e.g., store grand opening) unless contractually obligated through an executed sponsorship agreement and approved by the Vice President of Strategic Communications in accordance with University Policy AD07. Additionally, the Mascot shall not attend religious or political-affiliated events.

Commonwealth Campus mascot(s) may NOT appear at events at University Park without prior approval from Intercollegiate Athletics (Spirit Squad Head Coach: Curtis White, clw109@psu.edu).

A University employee must always accompany the mascot as a guide, including at all Non-University event appearances. For a University Event, it shall be the obligation of the University group requesting the appearance of the Mascot to provide a guide for the Mascot at the appearance.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR APPROVAL OF USE

The Campus Lead shall approve all use of the Mascot including using AD07 to guide appearance decisions. The unit shall track all non-University Event appearances of the Mascot and be required to submit an annual report of the mascot use (University use and external use) to the Director of Commonwealth Campus Athletics. The annual report shall remain on-file in the Office of Ethics and Compliance and with the Campus Lead.

APPEARANCE FEES

Any fees charged must comply with University Policy AD15. The campus can decide whether or not to charge a fee for an appearance at a University event. A fee must be charged for appearances at all non-University events, whether held on or off campus. University Policy AD15 indicates that fees or rates may not be established solely for the purpose of generating discretionary departmental income. To get rates approved in compliance with policy AD15, campuses should submit the following information to Cost Analysis:

- Cost of Mascot uniform. Please contact Director of Commonwealth Campus Athletics for approved Mascot vendor information.
- Cost of cleaning of Mascot Uniform (campus will need to provide this expense).
- Hourly rate to pay the individual wearing the Mascot uniform and individual required guide/assist the mascot and/or related scholarship funds for student Mascots, if applicable.
- Cost of per diem and mileage reimbursement that will be paid to the mascot and/or guide by University (in accordance with University travel policy)

- List any other anticipated expenses.

The Campus Lead shall submit a financial statement of revenue and expenses for the mascot program to the Director of Commonwealth Campus Athletics and Cost Analysis at the end of each fiscal year.

Campuses must establish a request system for Non-University Events which should include guidelines for requestors such as:

- For Non-University events, the Mascot is potentially available upon request with a minimum of one month's notice. Because the request will need to be reviewed and the mascot schedule will need to be checked, there is no guarantee that a request will be fulfilled.
- Payment for appearance shall occur prior to the event. If the appearance is cancelled, the campus shall determine reimbursement (if any) amount.
- Photos and videos taken at these events may not be used for commercial or promotional purposes without express consent from The Pennsylvania State University Intercollegiate Athletic Department.
- LIABILITY FOR COSTUME DAMAGE- In the event that any components of the mascot costume are damaged as a result of negligence or misconduct on the part of a guest at an appearance, the requesting organization will be responsible for the repair/replacement of each damaged item.

GUIDELINES FOR NITTANY LION MASCOT AT COMMONWEALTH CAMPUSES

- The Mascot uniform may only be worn by an employee or student. Unpaid volunteers are not permitted to wear the Mascot uniform. For nonexempt employees (including student-employees), they must be paid an hourly wage (to be determined by each campus) when wearing the Nittany Lion uniform. Students may also be engaged to wear the Mascot uniform if granted a scholarship. If applicable, the scholarship awarded to a student will be determined by each campus.
- Employees wearing the mascot uniform in approved appearances shall be covered by insurance, including, but not limited to, workers' compensation, general liability, automobile liability, and property insurance. Student scholarship recipients wearing the mascot uniform in approved appearances shall be covered by the athletic injury and general liability coverages.
- A Student mascot may not attend a function that would cause them to miss class or other program obligation.
- The Mascot must always be accompanied by a University employee (mascot guide) at events.
- The Mascot must take care of the suit (e.g., carry the tail to avoid dragging it on the ground).
- The Mascot must be respectful and polite to everyone.
- The Mascot **MAY**:

- Be photographed with fans, provided no alcoholic beverages or tobacco products are in the picture.
- Hug and/or shake hands with fans (always hug with hands in sight).
- Dance and interact with fans.
- The Mascot **MAY NOT**:
 - Speak, sing or make noises.
 - Pick up or hold children or infants.
 - Approach people who appear scared or confused.
 - Engage in any violent activity or behavior that may be offensive or reflect negatively on Penn State University.
 - Consume alcoholic beverages or use tobacco products before and during conduct of event.
 - Engage in photos depicting inappropriate actions (i.e., obscene gestures or behaviors).
 - Use the uniform for personal use.

MASCOT GUIDE RESPONSIBILITY

- The guide shall always be the eyes and ears for the Mascot.
- The guide shall be clearly identified to the Mascot prior to an event.
- The guide shall monitor potential temperature extremes and any other hazardous situations.
- The guide shall address potentially hazardous situations (i.e., vehicle traffic, emotional or overzealous fans, navigating obstacles, etc.)
- The guide shall ensure compliance with the guidelines for appearances (listed below).

GUIDELINES FOR APPEARANCES

- All appearances shall be supportive of the University's mission or values.
- The Mascot and guide may not accept gifts, special promotions, or other items unless those items are available to the general promotion of the event. Please refer to University Policy AD86 regarding the acceptance of gifts and entertainment.
- At the event, the Mascot requires the following:
 - A parking space close to the event.
 - A private place to dress and rest.
 - A 10-15 minute break per hour.
 - A secure location for their clothes and personal items.
 - Drinking water available at all times.
 - A reminder of when the appearance time is over.
- The Mascot costume may become excessively hot under certain conditions, and extended use can be hazardous. The University employee that accompanies the mascot as its guide should watch for signs of heat-related illness and reserve the right to leave an appearance if weather dictates.
- The Mascot shall enjoy entertaining in a friendly and safe environment. The mascot and/or guide reserve the right to leave an appearance in which they feel unsafe.

QUALITY CONTROL

Quality control of the Mascot and the Mascot uniform is essential in meeting the University's standards of integrity, image, and character. It shall be the responsibility of the Campus Lead to ensure that the Mascot uniform is used at approved events and properly maintained and meets image standards (e.g., clean, holes repaired, etc.) of the University. Contact the Director of Commonwealth Campus Athletics for guidance on repair and replacement options for the mascot uniform.

HOW TO WEAR THE NITTANY LION COSTUME

1. Find a private room for changing into costume.
 - a. This room is best if it has a mirror to check the costume and help get in character
 - b. Arrange in advance, with the event organizers, a changing area (avoid public bathrooms if possible)
2. Take off “street clothes.”
 - a. The amount of clothing you’ll want underneath is up to you. It is hot in the suit; therefore, cool-wicking clothing is recommended. The Nittany Lion typically just wears compression shorts underneath the suit. You may choose to wear a long sleeve shirt underneath, black preferably.
3. Put on the body of the suit.
4. Put on the scarf.
 - a. The scarf is meant to cover the zipper. It should be tucked into the front of the suit at the neck and should drape down over the zipper to roughly hip height. Make sure you spread the scarf to make sure it lays flat.
5. (Optional) Put on the pins.
 - a. The pins are meant to keep the scarf flat against your body. Only pins displaying official University marks shall be used. Place 2-4 of these on alternating sides of the scarf starting at the top and going down no lower than the stripe above the “Penn State”.
6. Put on shoes and tie them.
 - a. The official shoes of the Nittany Lion are black Nike trainers/turf shoes. While blue, white, or grey may be acceptable, it is important not to have any other brand logo.
7. Put on sleeves.
 - a. Black sleeves are worn underneath the suit to prevent skin from being visible when arms are raised. These are mostly Nike basketball shooter’s sleeves, but any alternative is acceptable as long as it is black and does not show a brand logo besides Nike. Make sure that the sleeves come down just past your wrist and end above your elbow.
8. Put on gloves.
 - a. Gloves should overlap the black sleeves.
9. Put on the helmet.
 - a. After you fasten the snaps of the helmet, fix the hood (neck) and make sure it is not curled over anywhere. Then fluff the ears up to make sure they aren’t lying flat against the helmet.
10. Do a quick check to make sure everything is on properly.
11. Get into character.
12. Go represent our great University!!!! WE ARE...PENN STATE!!!!

Click [Link](#) for video footage highlighting proper look and actions of the Penn State University Nittany Lion mascot.

COMMONWEALTH CAMPUS MASCOT FAQs

Does an Alumni Chapter event constitute a 'University Event'?

No. Alumni Chapter events would be considered a 'non-University' event; therefore, should follow the established process outlined in the guidelines (e.g., must make a request through the request process and pay the established rate).

Can the mascot attend a wedding?

A wedding would be considered a 'non-University' event; therefore, should follow the established process outlined in the guidelines (e.g., must make a request through the request process and pay the established rate).

Can a campus administrator utilize the costume for a private event?

This would be considered a non-University event; therefore, should follow the established process outlined in the guidelines for a non-University event.

What does the Mascot Event Appearances annual report to the Director of Commonwealth Campus Athletics need to include?

A fillable PDF has been created for a campus to use to collect and submit the annual mascot appearance report.

Can a campus waive fees for non-University events at its discretion? (i.e., local community event)?

The Chancellor has the autonomy to approve this request at a campus.

The campus does not have the funds to provide shoes for the Nittany Lion, is it ok to allow the mascot to wear any shoes?

The official shoes of the Nittany Lion are black Nike trainers/turf shoes. If the lion cannot wear the official shoe, only blue, white, or grey Nike shoes MAY be used instead.

Is a mini-Thon at a local school considered a University event?

No. This would be considered a non-University event; therefore, should follow the established process outlined in the guidelines for a non-University event.

Can a campus loan the mascot suit to a local Penn State Alumni Chapter in their area to use for an event?

No. This would be considered a non-University event; therefore, the Alumni Chapter should submit a request for a Lion appearance.

Can our campus continue to use unpaid volunteers to be the mascot?

No. The Mascot must be an employee or student. For non-exempt employees (including student-employees), they must be paid an hourly wage when wearing the Mascot uniform. Students may also be engaged to wear the Mascot uniform if granted a scholarship. The University must retain control over the actions of the Mascot, and the University has greater

control in that regard through an employment or student relationship. Importantly, employees are subject to and governed by University policies, including the Code of Responsible Conduct and students are governed by the Student Conduct Policy. Further, considering someone to be a “volunteer” does not necessarily mean that they are a non-employee for federal and state wage and hour laws. There are specific considerations relevant to this question, and the analysis depends on individual facts and circumstances. By requiring that only University employees or students can wear the Mascot uniform, we eliminate the risk of inadvertently violating federal and state wage and hour laws if an individual is incorrectly treated as a “volunteer.”

Can our campus engage a student through a scholarship?

Yes.

How does a campus care for the mascot?

The uniform should be washed using the cold cycle and dry on a very low setting. The inside of the helmet should be wiped with an EPA-registered disinfectant after each appearance.

SAMPLE JOB POSTING FOR STUDENT NITTANY LION MASCOT

Campus Location:

Date Announced:

Date Closing:

Job Number:

Work Unit:

Department:

Description: Penn State (Insert Campus Name) is seeking a high energy, charismatic student(s), with lots of Penn State pride to wear the Nittany Lion mascot costume and 'be the Lion' during select special events both on and off campus, make public appearances and be in photo shoots, or in videos. Appearances may occur up to 25 miles from campus. The Lion will be expected to pose with people of all ages: students, children, parents, and grandparents. The position requires an application, interview, and tryout. A mascot costume and other supplies will be provided. Due to the size of the costume, there may be height and weight limitations. Successful applicant must show proof of insurance. This is a wage payroll position for a maximum of 24 hours per week.