**Westerly Education Center Policies and Procedures**  
Effective 4/25/2022

**DEFINITION**  
Westerly Education Center is a facility whose operations, management, and supervision are provided for by Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC). The center is an innovative facility that unites higher education, business, industry, and community partners to serve the workforce and community needs of the region.

**MISSION**  
To serve as a host facility coordinating efforts of postsecondary institutions in providing education and workforce training responsive to the needs of students, employers, and Rhode Island.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**  
Responsibilities of OPC’s Westerly center staff include but are not limited to: conducting needs assessments, strategic planning, selecting or brokering courses and programs, coordinating and marketing services, facility maintenance, and assuring the quality of delivery.

**GOALS**  
OPC shall strive to meet the following goals regarding the center:

* To provide enhanced access to postsecondary education in Rhode Island.
* To meet the needs of the region’s workforce with quality education and training programs.
* To promote a climate of cooperation among postsecondary institutions, governments, and businesses.
* To position Rhode Island as a technologically advanced area, helping to create a skilled and trained workforce, and facilitating the economic development of the state.
* To facilitate the integration of educational goals and career development of the citizens of Rhode Island.

**RESOURCES**

**COMPUTER LABS**  
The center maintains computer labs to be used by collaborating institutions or businesses for the delivery of computer-based credit and non-credit courses. Please refer to Procedures for Scheduling Courses.

The computer lab(s) may be reserved on an as-needed basis for open lab, special topics, short-term training, college credit courses, etc. Please refer to the Room Request Form for scheduling. The institution reserving the lab will be expected to have an instructor in the computer lab during the time it is scheduled for use.

**SCIENCE LABS**  
Chemistry and biology labs are available for rent by any party needing them for science instruction. To ensure the highest degree of safety with the lowest exposure to risk for accidental injuries, a review of special hazards communication plan, the chemical hygiene plan and the, waste disposal policies and procedures is required. For more information about using the science labs, please contact Tom Pearce at tom.pearce@riopc.edu.

**PUBLICIZING CLASSES**  
The center publishes a list of all courses at the center on its website, www.WesterlyEdCenter.org. It includes links to registration information, contact information, and the specific courses that will be offered. If desired, the center can help promote classes and bookings open to the public through its social media properties.

To avoid confusion, please use the correct title of our facility in all advertising, press releases, digital media, social media, and print materials: Westerly Education Center. We are happy to display your flyers, brochures, posters, or other publications advertising your offerings. Please provide them to the center staff as early as possible to ensure timely posting.

**AUDIO/VISUAL REQUESTS & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**  
A/V and other equipment needs must be requested no later than two business days in advance of the needed date.

In-house technical assistance is available to organizations that rent center facilities. For routine service, the fee is included in the room charge. However, if dedicated service is needed (or extended support is required to resolve an issue), a fee of $75 per hour may be charged.

If organizations choose to use their own equipment (e.g., laptop) and need extended technical assistance, a $75 per hour minimum technical service charge will be assessed. Users must schedule time to test and troubleshoot non-center owned equipment. Click here to set up the best time for your testing with our IT Support team.

Last minute requests for equipment or technical assistance may not available.  
  
**USE OF COMPUTERS AND EQUIPMENT**  
Access to computer systems, networks and/or software owned or operated Westerly Education Center is granted subject to local, state and federal laws. Information technology includes but is not limited to desktop computers, workstations, network servers, mainframe computers, software, digital information, and voice, video and data networks.

Any persons who directly or indirectly access any computer system for any fraudulent purpose or who damage, destroy or alter any computer or parts of its systems without authorization shall be charged with a felony according to the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island (Chapter 52 of Title 11). Theft of a computer or any parts of its systems is a felony.

We expect guests to respect all pertinent licenses, contractual agreements and copyrights and use only legal versions of copyrighted software in compliance with vendor license requirements.

Guests must:

* Access only files and data that are their own, that are publicly available or to which they have authorized access
* Use only legal versions of copyrighted software in compliance with vendor license requirements
* In making acceptable use of resources, guests must not:
* Download or display obscene material
* Circumvent or subvert or attempt to circumvent or subvert system or network security measures
* Engage in any activity that might be harmful to systems or to any information stored thereon, such as creating or propagating viruses, disrupting services or damaging files
* Make or use illegal copies of copyrighted software
* Use the computer systems or networks in a manner that subjects the owners to civil or criminal liability
* Engage in computer harassment. Computer harassment may be defined as intentionally using the computer to annoy, harass, terrify, intimidate, threaten, offend or bother another person by conveying obscene language, pictures or other materials or threats of bodily harm to the recipient or the recipient’s immediate family

**ADA ACCESSIBILITY**  
The Westerly Education Center meets all Americans with Disabilities Act requirements and features:

* Disability-designated parking spaces
* Accessible entrances
* Accessible audio and visual panels
* Accessible drinking fountains
* Cord covers
* Detectable warning signs and signage
* Elevator
* Braille room signage
* Automated External Defibrillator

**PARKING REGULATIONS**  
Free parking is provided for guests of the center. Please do not park in fire lanes. Handicapped accessible parking spots are reserved for guests with state-issued permit placards. In addition to the front and side lots, parking is available in the lot on the corner of Canal and Friendship Streets. On-street parking is permitted. More free parking (118 spaces) is available at the municipal lot on Canal Street. Please do not park in the short-term visitors’ spaces, staff-assigned spaces, at the Amtrak Station lot, or in lots owned by neighboring businesses.

**WEATHER AND OTHER EMERGENCY CANCELLATIONS**  
OPC may close the center in inclement weather or for other emergencies. The center will post closures on the Westerly Education Center website and on social media properties. When a closure is weather related, OPC will also post status updates with the Rhode Island Broadcasters Association.

**WEAPONS**  
Westerly Education Center is a weapons-free facility. The introduction of guns, knives or other devices on premises is potentially dangerous to all building occupants and inconsistent with a safe learning environment.

**ALCOHOL**  
Possession or consumption of alcohol is strictly controlled at the Westerly Education Center. Rhode Island law states that no alcoholic beverages can be sold, delivered or in any way be given to a person under 21 years of age.

**DRUG-FREE, SMOKE-FREE, TOBACCO-FREE**  
The facility, parking lots and surrounding property are a smoke-free environment. All forms of tobacco are banned including cigarettes, cigars and chewing tobacco. Vaping is also banned. All illicit drugs and substances are strictly prohibited. Smoking is permitted only next to the dumpster.

**SAFETY & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**  
We encourage staff, trainees, guests and property neighbors to promptly and accurately report all crimes and public safety incidents to the Westerly Education Center executive director. The facility engages 24-hours/day surveillance camera recordings of the premises for security and safety purposes.

In the event of a medical emergency, call 911. In a safety or security emergency, immediately notify others in the area of the situation and sound an appropriate alarm. As soon as safely possible, call 911.

After notifying first responders and securing your own safety, notify the executive director of the facility.

Defibrillators are located next to the elevators and some first aid supplies are located near the instructors’ office on the first floor.

**FIRE SAFETY**  
Fire alarms are located throughout the facility. Please note their locations as well as all the emergency exits. When an alarm sounds:

* Evacuate quickly
* Do not use the elevator
* Maintain a safe distance from the building
* Do not re-enter the building unless authorized

**CONDUCT**  
Guests of the facility are expected to be respectful of the learning environment. Examples of misconduct include:

* Violations of personal privacy including unauthorized recordings in private spaces, voyeurism and concealed observation
* Disruption or obstruction of teaching
* Violence, including physical abuse, fighting, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, or conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of others
* Hate crimes and/or bias-related behaviors that result in the abuse, harassment or intimidation of another person based on the perceived or actual religion, ethnicity, race, nationality, veteran status, gender or sexual orientation, or disability
* Theft, attempted or actual, of and/or damage to Westerly Education Center property, and/or personal property of the instructors or staff
* Tampering with food and beverage vending machines
* Unauthorized access to any Westerly Education Center premises or unauthorized entry to or use of Westerly Education Center premises
* Violation of federal, state or local law while on Westerly Education Center premises
* Use, possession or distribution of alcohol, narcotics or other controlled substances except as expressly permitted by law
* Illegal or unauthorized possession of firearms, explosives, other weapons or dangerous chemicals at the center

**FACILITY USAGE FEES**

**CLASSROOM SPACE**  
Facility use and equipment rental rates will apply to all activities. These activities include but are not limited to the following: continuing education programs, credit courses, non-credit courses, non-credit certificate programs, workforce development training programs, workshops, and special events.

The rental fees provide for a turn-key facility, marketing, on-site supervision, and IT support. Invoices for the facility space will be prepared at the end of each month.

**EQUIPMENT AND OTHER SERVICES**

Additional equipment and other services can be provided for the following rates:

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| **Equipment** | **Amount** |
| Bottled water | $0.50 per bottle |
| Soda | $0.75 per bottle/can |
| Easel with flip-chart pad | $7 per day |
| Tablecloth | $10 per day |
| Extension cord | included |
| HDMI cable | included |
| Facilitator/Proctor | $18 per hour |
| Photocopies (if not included in contract) | $0.10 per copy |
| Conference phone | $10 per day |

The following rules may apply:

* Events booked on holidays, after 5:00 PM, or other non-business hours may be charged a higher fee.
* Arrangements for serving refreshments and/or meals must be established prior to functions.
* In keeping with the mission of the center, public college/university functions and/or activities will have priority on the use of facilities at all times.
* The booking institution will be responsible for damage to equipment, property and/or facilities.
* Participants and/or sponsors of activities must abide by regulations of Westerly Education Center – such as no smoking, no alcoholic beverages (unless a previously approved, catered event), attaching items to walls, doors, ceilings, etc.
* Absolutely NO equipment (especially lab equipment or audio/visual equipment) should be moved without prior approval by the staff.
* OPC reserves the right to alter space assignments at the center due to equipment failures, HVAC issues, or other unexpected interruptions of services.

**FOOD & BEVERAGES**  
Policies for serving food and beverages at Westerly Education Center will be determined in accordance with municipal, state and federal laws and regulations. A list of approved vendors is available. Recycling of materials such as plastic beverage containers, soda cans and paper is strongly encouraged.

**ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE**

Facility charges for events held at the center are quoted based upon the type of room, number of participants, equipment needs, and length of engagement.

In accordance with our mission, Rhode Island public colleges and universities are granted priority on use of the facilities. Therefore, room assignments may be adjusted prior to an engagement. In this case, the organization sponsoring the event will be notified and appropriate signage will be posted to notify participants of room changes. No events will be cancelled due to another event if staff has executed a contract or proposal with the organization.

A signed contract is required for use of the facility.

**ROOM DEPOSIT**  
For events whose estimated charges exceed $1,000, a $500 deposit is required. If a deposit is not received within 30 days of booking the event, the OPC reserves the right to release the room(s) and rebook them for other events. Deposits can be transacted by mail or in person.

A certificate of general liability insurance coverage, with a minimum limit of $1,000,000 per occurrence, is required for all bookings. Coverage must name the OPC, its governing boards, the RI Council on Postsecondary Education and the RI Board of Education, and their members, officers, directors, employees and agents as insured for activities that will take place at the Westerly Education Center. Documentation must be submitted to staff before the event can be confirmed. Rhode Island state agencies are exempted from this requirement.

Activities are invoiced on the day of the event or at the end of the events held for multiple days unless previously designated in contract. Payment is due upon receipt by check, payable to RI Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner. Credit card payments are not accepted.

OPC reserves the right to deny future center facility use requests from organizations/entities with slow or delinquent accounts.

Should an organization/entity question an invoice amount, the Westerly Education Center Executive Director must be notified within 10 days of the invoice issue date. The amount in question will be reviewed by both parties. If it is deemed a correction is necessary, a revised invoice will be issued.

**CANCELLATIONS**  
Cancellations of the multi-use room are required 20 business days prior to the scheduled event in order to avoid a 15% penalty fee and ensure a refund of deposit. For all other rooms, a 24-hour notice is required.

**SCHEDULING FACILITY USE**

**SCHEDULING ACADEMIC CREDIT COURSES**  
OPC will give priority to the scheduling of academic credit courses and workforce development programs each semester at Westerly Education Center. In addition, any degree-granting programs being offered at the center will receive top scheduling priority.

Participating institutions that wish for their course schedules to be printed in the online calendar each semester must submit all course schedule information.

All course descriptions should be submitted electronically to the Executive Director. Rooms will begin being assigned on the opening date for submission. Rooms will be assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis.

In the event of a scheduling conflict for special use rooms, the Executive Director will work with Rhode Island state and private institutions to try and accommodate all requests. It may be necessary to explore options such as changing days, times, etc. to meet the needs of all institutions.

There may be occasions during a semester when an instructor would like to meet in another room for a limited time period, such as a computer lab, multi-use room, etc. In order to schedule time in a room other than the room assigned for the course, the instructor should complete the Equipment/Special Room Request Form. The Westerly Education Center staff will try to accommodate all such requests.

Multi-Use Room 201 will be reserved for conferences, workshops, and special events and may not be available for credit courses except when not previously booked by another entity.

**SCHEDULING NON-CREDIT COURSES OR OTHER ACTIVITIES**  
Any requests for facility use (with the exception of the semester credit course offerings) must be done in writing to the Executive Director on a Room Request Form via www.westerlyedcenter.org. The Executive Director will seek to accommodate these requests on a first-come, first-serve basis.

**LIABILITY**  
Damages to the Westerly Education Center and/or its contents are the responsibility of the organization that booked the event. Damages include those incurred by acts or omissions of the event organization’s agents, employees, participants, guests, or students.

All events must adhere to federal and state laws as well as municipal regulations.

**SECURITY**  
Westerly Education Center is equipped with multiple interior and exterior digital video cameras for safety. If on-site security personnel are desired, the booking organization is responsible for securing appropriate coverage. To coordinate logistics, please notify the Executive Director when security personnel are expected to be on are the premises.

**GUIDELINES AGREEMENT**  
In order to contract space at Westerly Education Center, you will be asked to sign a PDF copy of Facility Use Guidelines.