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Recommended Citation

Roger Williams University School of Law, "Newsroom: Dean Logan on Occupy Providence Movement" (2011). *Life of the Law School (1993-)*. 241.
https://docs.rwu.edu/law_archives_life/241

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Newsroom

Dean Logan on Occupy Providence Movement

WRNI (Rhode Island NPR)'s Flo Jonic spoke to Dean David Logan about the respective rights of Occupy Providence protesters and government officials.

FROM WRNI, Rhode Island's NPR: "What First Amendment rights does Occupy Providence have?" by FLO JONIC

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PROVIDENCE, RI (WRNI) - Organizers of the "Occupy Providence" movement say they plan to camp out in Burnside Park indefinitely. Providence Public safety commissioner Steven Pare says he may let it go on for a few weeks but not a month or more. What rights do the protesters have?

Providence Public safety commissioner Steven Pare says he may let it go on for a few weeks but not a month or more. What rights do the protesters have?

If the city of Providence is forced to go to court to remove protesters from Burnside Park, the demonstrators would have one thing on their side: they're camped out in public, as opposed to private property. But even on public property their First Amendment right to assemble is not unlimited. Courts have ruled that states have a right to limit assembly provided that the restrictions they impose on time, place and manner are reasonable.



In the case of Occupy Providence, the city of Providence has so far been reasonable, says **Roger Williams University Law School Dean David Logan.**

"I think the state is making an effort by letting this continue on not just hours or days but maybe as many as weeks," **says Logan.** "And I think at the other extreme if protesters were to say that is an obligation you have to have indefinitely' that might be unreasonable to expect the city to permanently turn over the park to demonstrators."

Logan says it will bode well for the protesters if they comply with all city requirements for sanitation, fire codes and the like. So far they have.

[Click here to read the report and listen.](#)