As the Patriots head to Atlanta on their way to another Super Bowl, Student Legal Services Office (SLSO) offers the following information concerning rights and responsibilities regarding assembling for this purpose:

- You have a First Amendment right to **peaceably** assemble on public property to express your views. The police and the University are unlikely to interfere with a peaceful gathering on public property that is not disrupting anything. Don't just take our word for it, read what they have to say: www.umass.edu/umpd/safe-celebrations.

- A peaceful gathering is one that does not disrupt the comfort and safety of others. The police can intervene if members of a group are throwing things, damaging property, or acting in a menacing or threatening way.

- The Constitutional right to assemble does not protect you from the consequences of unlawful conduct. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has several criminal laws that regulate conduct that may apply at large gatherings, such as disorderly person, alcohol violations, assault, destruction of property and failure to disperse.

- The behavior of a minority of students can strip post-game celebrations of First Amendment protection. It takes only 5-10 people being disruptive to transform a protected gathering into a ‘riot’ under Massachusetts law. Rioting is a criminal act.

- Once the police have given an order to disperse (via megaphone or other mass communication), the whole group must leave in the manner directed by the police. Failing to leave an area when ordered to do so can subject you to arrest, which can result in your being charged under the UMass Code of Student Conduct.

- Depending on several factors, potential consequences of arrest or criminal charges include:
  1. Time in jail, payment for lawyers, court costs, restitution and fines;
  2. Media coverage of your arrest;
  3. Parental Notification;
  4. UMass conduct charges resulting in housing removal, suspension or expulsion;
  5. Loss of tuition, room and board for the Spring 2019 semester; and
  6. A criminal record, which can impact financial aid, future employment, and graduate school.

- Media Coverage, social media, and cell phone cameras pose the potential if not likelihood for the creation of a public and permanent internet display of your presence and/or behavior at a post-Super Bowl celebratory event.

- Please stay aware of your surroundings and walk away if you sense the celebration is getting out of control or if the police are telling people to leave. If you are arrested, please remember that constitutional issues will be resolved in court, not by protesting them to the police at the moment of your arrest. If you are arrested or charged under the Code of Student Conduct, please request services from SLSO by completing an intake form.