

University of Houston Hazing Policy

1. PURPOSE

The University of Houston (“University”) is committed to maintaining an atmosphere of social and ethical responsibility. The University views responsible pre-initiation activity as a positive educational approach to preparation for student organization membership. This policy addresses hazing activity, which is antithetical to the University’s commitment to a positive educational environment.

Participation in hazing activities is against the law. Violation of the University’s hazing policy, whether on or off campus, may subject participants, including students and organizations, to arrest, prosecution and/or disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion of students and the revocation of an organization’s registration and/or recognition at the University. Consent to or acquiescence in hazing activity is not a defense.

The University strictly prohibits participation in hazing activities by any party, regardless of the existence of consent. Hazing activities do not contribute to the positive development or welfare of students. The University of Houston recognizes the act of hazing as illegal, irresponsible, intolerable and inconsistent with the principles of higher education and basic human development.

Accordingly, this policy strictly prohibits participation in hazing activities by all parties. This policy includes a summary of the provisions of the law as it relates to hazing.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1. “Pledge” means any person who has been accepted by, is considering an offer of membership from, or is in the process of qualifying for membership in an organization.

2.2 “Pledging” means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.

2.3 “Student” means any person who:

- (A) is registered in or in attendance at an educational institution;
- (B) has been accepted for admission at the educational institution where the hazing incident occurs; or
- (C) intends to attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after a period of scheduled vacation.

2.4 Student Organization means an organization at an institution of higher education (such as a club, society, association, varsity or junior varsity athletic team, club sports team, fraternity, sorority, band, or student government) in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at the institution of higher education, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution.

2.5 The term hazing means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with other persons) against another person or persons regardless of the willingness of such other person or persons to participate that:

- I. is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization; and
- II. causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team), of physical or psychological injury including:
 - a. whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone's body, or similar activity;
 - b. causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;
 - c. causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to consume food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;
 - d. causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to perform sexual acts;
 - e. any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct;
 - f. any activity against another person that includes a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law; and
 - g. any activity that induces, causes, or requires another person to perform a duty or task that involves a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law.

3. POLICY

3.1. Hazing

Hazing is strictly prohibited by the University.

(A) Personal Hazing Offense

A person commits an offense if the person: engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution, or has firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report that knowledge in writing to the dean of students or other appropriate official of the institution.

The offense of failing to report is a Class B misdemeanor. Any other offense under this section that does not cause serious bodily injury to another is a Class B misdemeanor. Any other offense under this section that causes serious bodily injury to another is a Class A misdemeanor. Any other offense under this section that causes the death of another is a state jail felony.

(B) Organization Hazing Offense

An organization commits an offense if the organization condones or encourages hazing or if an officer or any combination of members, pledges, or alumni of the organization commits or assists in the commission of hazing.

An offense under this section is a misdemeanor punishable by: a fine of not less than \$5,000 nor more than \$10,000; or if the court finds that the offense caused personal injury, property damage, or other loss, a fine of not less than \$5,000 nor more than double the amount lost or expenses incurred because of the injury, damage, or loss.

3.2 Consent Not a Defense

Consent to or acquiescence in hazing activity is not a defense. Any of the activities described herein where the initiation or admission into, or affiliation with, or continued membership in an organization is directly conditioned, shall be presumed to be “compelled activities;” the willingness of an individual to participate notwithstanding. It is not a defense to prosecution of an offense that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity.

3.3 Examples of actions and activities which may constitute hazing include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (A) Compelling individuals to consume alcohol or drugs.
- (B) Paddling in any form, shoving or otherwise striking individuals.
- (C) Compelling individuals to consume alcohol or drugs.
- (D) Compelling individuals to consume alcohol or drugs.
- (E) Having harmful substances thrown at, poured on or otherwise applied to the bodies of individuals.
- (F) Morally degrading or humiliating games or activities which make an individual the object of amusement, ridicule or intimidation.
- (G) Transporting individuals against their will, abandoning individuals at distant locations, or conducting any “kidnap,” “ditch” or “road trip” that may in any way endanger or compromise the health, safety or comfort of any individual.
- (H) Causing an individual to be indecently exposed or exposed to the elements.
- (I) Requiring an individual to remain in a fixed position for a long period of time.
- (J) Compelling an individual to be branded or tattooed.
- (K) “Line-ups” involving intense shouting of obscenities or insults
- (L) Compelling individuals to participate in activities (pranks, scavenger hunts, etc.) which encourage the defacement of property; engage in theft; harass other individuals, groups of individuals or organizations.
- (M) Excluding an individual from social contact for prolonged periods of time.

(N) Compelling an individual to engage in acts of personal servitude.

3.4 Responsibility of the Organization

The organization has the responsibility to ensure its activities are acceptable under this policy. If you are not sure whether an activity is hazing, the activity should be dropped or discussed with the appropriate University official prior to further activity. Questions regarding the acceptability of a proposed organization activity should be discussed with the Dean of Students Office.

3.5 Enforcement

- (A) The President, Chair or Leader of each student organization is responsible for informing the members (pledges, associate members, initiated members, affiliates, etc.) of the organization of the University policy regarding hazing. The President, Chair or Leader should discuss and distribute a copy of this policy to each member of the organization during the first meeting of each semester.
- (B) The President, Chair or Leader of each organization is responsible for informing their guests and alumni members of that Organization regarding this policy and is additionally responsible for controlling the actions of their guests and alumni members of that organization regarding this policy.
- (C) It is the responsibility of any and all individuals who have firsthand knowledge of the planning or actual occurrence of a hazing activity to promptly report said knowledge to the Dean of Students Office.
- (D) Complaints may be made through the Dean of Students Office ([Student Conduct Referral](#)), the University of Houston Police Department, as well as through the University's anonymous reporting system at [Secure Anonymous Reporting Link](#).
- (E) Discipline and sanctions will be handled through the Student Conduct process as described in the [Student Handbook](#).
- (F) Retaliation against any individual, including victims of hazing, good faith reporters, witnesses and/or cooperating individuals, is prohibited, and may result in further disciplinary action.

3.6 Immunity from Prosecution or Civil Liability

- (A) A court may grant immunity from prosecution for the offense to each person who is subpoenaed to testify for the prosecution and who does testify for the prosecution.
- (B) Any person who voluntarily reports a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution to the dean of students or other appropriate official of the institution is immune from civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed as a result of the reported hazing incident if the person:

- (1) reports the incident before being contacted by the institution concerning the incident or otherwise being included in the institution's investigation of the incident; and
 - (2) as determined by the dean of students or other appropriate official of the institution designated by the institution, cooperates in good faith throughout any institutional process regarding the incident.
- (C) A person is not immune under Subsection (b) if the person:
 - (1) reports the person's own act of hazing; or
 - (2) reports an incident of hazing in bad faith or with malice.

3.7 Prevention Program on Hazing

The University of Houston implements several research-informed, campus-wide prevention programs to educate and engage students, faculty, and staff in hazing prevention:

- (A) **National Hazing Prevention Week (NHPW):** Hosted annually by the Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life, NHPW includes educational workshops, awareness campaigns, and student-led events that promote safe and welcoming community-building practices.
- (B) **Future Greek Leaders Academy:** This program brings together emerging chapter and council leaders to develop a shared understanding of how to live out the values and rituals of their organizations. It emphasizes values-based leadership and ethical decision-making within the fraternity/sorority experience. The academy is specifically designed for students in their first year of membership, helping to instill a strong foundation of respect and accountability early in their involvement.
- (C) **Fraternity/Sorority Presidents' Leadership Summit (FSPLS):** An annual overnight retreat for chapter and council presidents, FSPLS provides an immersive leadership development experience before the academic year begins. Participants engage in team-building activities, ropes courses, and peer-led discussions to strengthen collaboration and share best practices. This summit reinforces the importance of leading with integrity and fostering a culture of safety and inclusion within their organizations.
- (D) **Fraternal Leadership Conference (Elevate):** is a dynamic, one-day, conference-style leadership experience designed specifically for emerging and established leaders within the fraternity and sorority community. This conference provides accessible, skill-based education tailored to the needs of fraternity/sorority leaders. It expands leadership development opportunities on campus and Reinforces a culture of accountability, inclusion, and excellence within the Greek community.
- (E) **Bystander Intervention Training:** Offered through UH Wellness, these sessions equip students with the skills to recognize and safely intervene in potentially harmful situations, including hazing.
- (F) **New Member Education Standards:** Student organizations are required to submit and follow approved new member education plans that emphasize respect, safety, and compliance with university policies.

These initiatives are part of a broader strategy to prevent hazing before it occurs and to cultivate a culture of accountability and care across the campus community.

3.8 Offenses in Addition to Other Penal Provisions

The University may enforce its own penalties against hazing.

Approved by Donell Young, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students on June 18, 2025.

Responsibility:

Annually by Donell Young; Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

UH Campus Hazing Transparency Report

Each institution of higher education in the State of Texas is required to publish or distribute a list of student organizations that have been disciplined or convicted for hazing violations on or off-campus during the previous five years. [Hazing statistics can also be found in the Clery annual security report.](#)

In compliance with Texas Senate Bill 38, organizations found responsible for hazing will be listed in accordance with Texas Education Code, sections 37.151 (5) and (6).

Organization	Date Incident Occurred	Date Institution Initiated Investigation	General Description of Incident	Violations of the Student Code of Conduct	Findings	Sanctions	Date Organization was Provided Notice of Hazing Violation	Date Institution's Disciplinary Process was Resolved
Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity	Fall 2019	Feb. 27, 2020 (a)	Members compelled individuals to engage in behavior likely to produce mental or physical discomfort, fright, or otherwise compromised the safety and dignity of individual(s) as a requirement for pledging. It occurred both on and off-campus	3.2 – Complicit 3.16 – Hazing 3.17 – Mental or Bodily Harm 3.27 – Unauthorized Use of Alcoholic Beverages 3.30 – Use, Manufacture, Distribute, Sale, Offer for Sale, or Possession of a Controlled Substance and/or Drug Paraphernalia 3.32 – Violation of University Policies & Procedures	3.2 – In Violation 3.16 – In Violation 3.17 – Not in Violation 3.27 – In Violation 3.30 – In Violation 3.32 – In Violation	Organization placed on suspension status until a Membership Review is completed by the National Organization. Must submit findings of Membership Review process, along with plans for recruitment, education, training, hazing, accountability, brotherhood, alcohol and drug use/abuse, risk management, etc. to petition for reinstatement under a disciplinary probation status.	July 14, 2020	July 14, 2020
Sigma Lambda Gamma Sorority	Spring 2018 through Fall 2019	July 9, 2020 (b)	Members compelled individuals to engage in behavior likely to produce mental or physical discomfort, fright, or otherwise compromised the safety and dignity of individual(s) as a requirement for pledging. Occurred off- campus.	3.2 – Complicit 3.16 – Hazing 3.17 – Mental or Bodily Harm 3.27 – Unauthorized Use of Alcoholic Beverages 3.32 – Violation of University Policies & Procedures	3.2 – In Violation 3.16 – In Violation 3.17 – Not in Violation 3.27 – Not in Violation 3.32 – Not in Violation	Organization placed on Disciplinary Probation through September 2, 2021. Organization must draft plan clarifying the role of organization advisors, process for hazing education and elimination from the organization. Organization must create plan for educating and training all members and advisors regarding UH System policies, obligations, and policies.	Sept. 2, 2020	Sept. 2, 2020
Delta Sigma Pi	Nov. 12, 2021	Nov. 30, 2021	Members compelled individuals to engage in	3.2 – Complicity 3.16 – Hazing	3.2 – In Violation 3.16 – In Violation	Organization removed and banned from	June 7, 2022	June 7, 2022

Professional Business Fraternity			behavior likely to produce mental or physical discomfort, fright, or otherwise compromise the safety and dignity of individual(s) as a requirement for pledging and holding office in the organization. Occurred off- campus.	3.17 – Mental or Bodily Harm 3.32 – Violation of University of Houston & UHS Policies & Procedures	3.17 – In Violation 3.32 – In Violation	organizational activity through September 1, 2023.		
Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity	Fall 2022	Jan.30, 2023 (c)	Members compelled individuals to engage in behavior likely to produce mental or physical discomfort, fright, or otherwise compromised the safety and dignity of individual(s) as a requirement for pledging. Occurred both on and off -campus.	3.2 – Complicity 3.10 – Hazing 3.11 – Mental or Bodily Harm 3.25 – Violation of University of Houston & UHS Policies & Procedures	3.2 – In Violation 3.10 – In Violation 3.11 – In Violation 3.25 – In Violation	Organization placed on suspension status through the Fall 2023 semester. Must complete required components of the Remedial Action Plan (RAP) developed by National Headquarters and University of Houston administrators. Must submit summary of RAP process, along with plans for recruitment, education, training, etc., to petition for reinstatement under a disciplinary probation status.	Feb 23, 2023	May 18, 2023
Alpha Kappa Delta Phi Sorority	March 23, 2023	April 26, 2023 (d)	Members compelled individuals to engage in behavior likely to produce mental or physical discomfort, fright, or otherwise compromise the safety and dignity of individual(s) as a requirement for pledging and holding a position in the organization. Occurred off-campus.	3.2 – Complicity 3.10 – Hazing 3.11 – Mental or Bodily Harm 3.25 – Violation of University of Houston & UHS Policies & Procedures	3.2 – In Violation 3.10 – In Violation 3.11 – In Violation 3.25 – In Violation	Organization placed on suspension status through the Fall 2023 semester. Must complete required components of Remedial Action Plan (RAP) developed by National Organization and University of Houston administrators. Must submit summary of RAP process, along with plans for recruitment, education, training, etc. to petition for reinstatement under a disciplinary probation status.	June 30, 2023	June 30, 2023

Lambda Phi Epsilon Fraternity	Fall 2022	June 29, 2023	Members compelled individuals to engage in behavior likely to produce mental or physical discomfort, fright, or otherwise compromised the safety and dignity of individual(s) as a requirement for pledging. Occurred both on and off-campus.	3.2 – Complicity 3.6 – Failure to Comply or Identify 3.10 – Hazing 3.11 – Mental or Bodily Harm 3.20 – Unauthorized Use of Alcoholic Beverages 3.25 – Violation of University of Houston & UHS Policies & Procedures	3.2 – In Violation 3.6 – In Violation 3.10 – In Violation 3.11 – In Violation 3.20 – In Violation 3.25 – In Violation	Organization removed and banned from organizational activity through August 21, 2028.	Sept. 1, 2023	Sept. 1, 2023
Gamma Beta Fraternity	Spring 2023	June 1, 2023 (e)	Members compelled individuals to engage in behavior likely to compromise the dignity of individual(s) as a requirement for pledging. Occurred both on and off-campus.	3.2 – Complicity 3.7 – False Statements 3.10 – Hazing 3.11 – Mental or Bodily Harm 3.25 – Violation of University of Houston & UHS Policies & Procedures	3.2 – In Violation 3.7 – Not in Violation 3.10 – In Violation 3.11 – Not in Violation 3.25 – In Violation	Organization placed on Disciplinary Probation status through the Spring 2024 semester. Must complete educational workshops on Hazing and Bystander Intervention and select a new advisor.	Nov. 10, 2023	Nov. 10, 2023
Kappa Sigma	Spring 2023	24-Aug-24	Members allegedly compelled individuals to run down the street with limited clothing	3.1 – Aiding and Abetting 3.2 – Complicity 3.5 – Disruption/Obstruction 3.10 – Hazing 3.11 – Mental or Bodily Harm 3.15 – Photographing or Videotaping	3.1 – In Violation 3.2 – In Violation 3.5 – Not in Violation 3.10 – Not in Violation 3.11 – In Violation 3.15 – Not in Violation	Organization placed on Disciplinary Probation status through August 15, 2025; The fraternity must work with the Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life to develop and implement a comprehensive risk management plan and 12 slide presentation that meets university standards and best practices.	Feb. 21, 2025	18-Feb-25