

USF System USF USFSP USFSM

Number: USF6.0023

Subject: Prohibition and Prevention of Hazing

Responsible Office: Student Affairs

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- (1) The University of South Florida System (USF System) prohibits any form of hazing of its students, including hazing by students or other persons associated with any student, organization, or group, at any time, and at any location.
- a. Hazing means any action or situation created by a member of the University community, or acting in the capacity as such, against another member of the University community for purposes including, but not limited to, initiation, admission into, or affiliation with an organization or group that:
 - i. Is negligent or reckless in nature; or
 - ii. Is humiliating or endangers an individual's mental or physical health; or
 - iii. Unreasonably interferes with academic or employment activities; or
 - b. It is not a defense to a charge of hazing that:
 - i. The express or implied consent of the individual(s) was obtained or that the individual(s) willingly participated;
 - ii. The conduct or activity was not a part of an official organizational or group event or was not otherwise sanctioned or approved by the organization or group; or
 - iii. The conduct or activity was not a condition of membership or affiliation with the organization or group.

(2) A person, organization, or group is subject to conduct proceedings under this regulation if they engage, commit or participate in the offense of hazing, and, solicit, encourage, direct, aid, or attempts to aid another in hazing; Recklessly permits hazing to occur or has firsthand knowledge of the planned or actual hazing incident(s), and knowingly fails to report that knowledge to the appropriate University Official.

(3) Making an intentionally false accusation of hazing is prohibited.

(4) Retaliating in any manner against an individual who reports hazing or who participates in an investigation of a hazing report is prohibited.

(5) All members of the University community are subject to this Regulation and any investigation that may be required to enforce the Regulation.

(6) In addition to this regulation:

- a. NCAA student athletes shall follow the policies and guidelines set forth by the NCAA, affiliated Athletic Conference (e.g. Big East), and University Athletics Compliance Office.
- b. Students belonging to organizations with national policies and guidelines should follow those policies in addition to those set by the University.

(7) Hazing does not include customary athletic events or other similar contests or competitions or any activity or conduct that furthers a legal or legitimate objective.

(8) **Definitions:**

1. Actions and situations that may constitute hazing include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Forced or coerced consumption of food, alcohol, beverage, drugs, or other substance
 - b. Paddling, hitting, slapping, branding, and/or physical brutality in any form
 - c. Creation of unnecessary fatigue

- d. Personal servitude
- e. Physical and/or psychological shocks
- f. Wearing of apparel which is conspicuous and not normally in good taste
- g. Degrading or humiliating games or activities
- h. Sleep, food, or beverage deprivation
- i. Isolation and exclusion from social contact
- j. Calisthenics
- k. Unreasonable exposure to the elements
- l. Kidnapping or abandonment
- m. Line-ups and berating behaviors
- n. Undue interference with academic pursuits
- o. Pressuring or coercing involvement in activities that are illegal, lewd, or in violation of University Policy

2. “Members of the University Community” means its faculty, staff, students, volunteers, organizations, groups, vendors, patients, customers, alumni, and visitors.

3. “Organization” and “group” are defined as follows:

- a. “Organization” means a number of persons who are associated with the University and each other and has registered with the University as a Student Organization under USF6.017, Registration and Conduct of Student Organizations.
- b. “Group” means a number of persons who are associated with the University and each other, but who have not registered, or are not required to register, as a student organization (e.g. athletic teams, musical or theatrical ensembles, academic or administrative units, clubs, etc.)

4. “University Official” means any person (faculty or staff) who is employed by the University, and who performs assigned administrative, professional, or paraprofessional responsibilities.

For the purposes of this regulation, the term “Appropriate “official is defined by each institution as follows:

- a. USF Tampa: Office of the Dean for Students and/or designee to include Fraternity & Sorority Life, Student Rights & Responsibilities, Center for Student Involvement, Campus Recreation, and University Police.
- b. USF Health: Office of the Associate Dean of Student Affairs.
- c. USF St. Petersburg: Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities.
- d. USF Sarasota- Manatee: Office of Student Services/Office of Rights & Responsibilities/Dean of Students.
- e. USF Lakeland: Office of the Director of Student Affairs/Dean for Students.

For other members of the University community (volunteers, organizations, groups, vendors, patients, customers, alumni, and visitors) the appropriate official is any of the above University Officials or the University Police.

(9) Rights of Those Who Report:

1. Individuals who are victims of hazing and who truthfully report the activities shall not be individually charged with a violation of this regulation in relation to that or related incident.
2. Individuals who have knowledge of or witness a hazing incident, but who did not participate, and truthfully report the activities shall not be individually charged with a violation of this regulation in relation to those particular or related incidents.
3. An organization or group that seeks assistance in preventing hazing from occurring within the organization or group, even if past behaviors have included hazing, shall not be charged with a past violation of this regulation.
4. Any organization or group that self-reports a hazing behavior to an appropriate University Official or the University Police shall be given the opportunity to stop and change those behaviors without immediate threat of being charged with a violation of this regulation. An organization or group that self-reports shall be expected to identify those individuals responsible for the hazing behaviors to the appropriate University

Official. If evidence is presented in subsequent semesters that hazing behaviors have continued or were not stopped within the organization, that organization may be held responsible for past behaviors.

5. Students reporting hazing in the above circumstances shall not be charged under this University Regulation. However, depending on the circumstances, to the extent the conduct violates state law; the provisions of Florida Statute 1006.63 may apply.

(10) Reporting:

1. Complaints or reports of activities believed to be hazing should be reported to the appropriate University Official or the University Police.
 - a. Any faculty, staff, student, or volunteer member of the University community, with knowledge or suspicion of hazing has a duty to report the activity to appropriate University Officials or the University Police.
 - b. Other members of the University community with knowledge or suspicion of hazing are strongly encouraged to report the activity to appropriate University Officials or the University Police.
2. Any questions concerning the interpretation or application of this regulation should be referred to the appropriate University Official (refer to “Definitions Number 4”).
3. Victims of hazing should be referred to the appropriate Office to render services for victim advocacy.

(11) Investigation and Response:

1. The USF System will respond to and investigate reports of alleged hazing received from any source and will determine whether to proceed with disciplinary action, to forward a report to the appropriate law enforcement officials for prosecution as a criminal matter, or both.

2. All reports of hazing will be directed for investigation to the appropriate department depending on the nature of the report.
3. Pending a hearing or other disposition of the allegations, the responsible department may make a reference to OSRR for investigations and sanctions which may include a provisional suspension against a student, student organization, or group. In addition, the administrative office responsible for oversight of the student organization may impose additional sanctions as appropriate. Failure to comply with a provisional suspension may result in additional conduct action.

(12) Corrective Action and Penalties:

1. Violation of this regulation may result in corrective action under the Student Code of Conduct, Human Resources Policies and Procedures, or other applicable University Regulations, Policies, or Operating Procedures. Visitors refusing to comply may be reported to the University Police.
2. Responsibility for any violations of this regulation may be attributed to the perpetrators, the organization or group, its members, or its officers.
3. Any organization, group, or individual may be found responsible for any violations of this regulation upon satisfactory proof that the organization, group, or individual engaged in, did not discourage, or did not take reasonable steps to prevent hazing from occurring.
4. Individual Cases:
 - a. In most cases, an individual will be referred to the institutional conduct officer and will be subject to the terms and conditions of the Student Code of Conduct.
 - b. If found responsible for a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, disciplinary sanctions that are appropriate for the violation will be assigned.

- ii. For individual Students, possible sanctions resulting from the University conduct process range from written warning to expulsion from the University.
- iii. For faculty and staff, possible sanctions range from an oral warning to termination of employment.

5. Organization or Group Cases:

- a. Organization or groups will be referred to the appropriate department where the organization is registered. The department will investigate and impose sanctions if it is determined the conduct violated the terms and conditions applicable to their registration and/or the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct and/or any other applicable governing rules, policies, and regulations set forth from the respective USF System Institution.
- b. An organization or group may be referred to an Institutional Conduct Officer directly for joint or independent review, investigations, and disposition.
- c. If found responsible for a violation of this regulation, disciplinary sanctions that are appropriate for the violation will be assigned.
 - i. For groups and organizations, possible sanctions resulting from the University conduct process range from probation to expulsion. This range can include, but is not limited to: Educational interventions, Restriction from University property, Loss of specific privileges, Revocation of Student Organization status for a period of time.

6. Legal Processes:

- a. Individuals believed to have engaged in hazing but who are not students, faculty, staff, may be referred to appropriate authorities to investigate their involvement in particular incidents.
- b. If criminal charges are filed against an individual, organization, or group, the USF System reserves the right to proceed with its investigations and adjudication process

according to the Student Code of Conduct or other prescribed process as the USF System handles the educational aspect of the alleged violations separately from any criminal or legal procedures.

(13) Additional Requirements for Registered Student Organizations:

1. All elected or appointed student organizations' presidents or designees shall be required to educate their respective member organization members on an annual basis regarding applicable University Regulations concerning Hazing. The method of this required training will be subject to the terms and conditions applied by each respective USF System Institution.
2. All registered student organizations must include in their governing documents an Anti-hazing statement in addition to a written copy of the Florida State Statute #1006.63 and inclusion of USF Anti-Hazing policy: Prohibition and Prevention of Hazing.

*Authority: Article IX, Sec. 7, Fla. Constitution, FL Board of Governors Regulation 1.001, Section 1006.63,
F.S. History: New 6-25-09.*