

# University of Rochester Policy on Hazing

## The University of Rochester defines hazing as follows:

*Any action taken or situation created, whether on or off University premises, which has the potential to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule.*

Such activities may include, but are not limited to the following: use of alcohol; paddling in any form; creation of excessive fatigue; physical and psychological shocks; quests, treasure hunts/scavenger hunts (without the expressed and prior approval of the appropriate director or dean), road trips or any other such activities carried on outside or inside the confines of any living unit (without the expressed and prior approval of the appropriate director or dean); wearing public apparel which is conspicuous and not normally in good taste; engaging in public stunts and buffoonery; morally degrading or humiliating games and activities; and any other activities which are not consistent with fraternal law, ritual, or policy, or the regulations and policies of the educational institution.

Violations are reviewed by the Judicial Officer and the Director of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs, the Director of Athletics, or other appropriate University official. In sanctioning groups found responsible for hazing, hearing boards are trained to begin sanction discussions with the possibility of revoking the recruitment privileges of such organizations.

**This definition is available in the University of Rochester Student Conduct Bulletin.**

## Recognizing Hazing: Types and Examples

### **Subtle Hazing**

Subtle hazing emphasizes the power differential between new members and existing members. Subtle hazing goes against standards of mutual respect and can result in the ridicule, embarrassment, and humiliation of new members.

#### Common Examples

- Deprivation of privileges granted to existing members
- Requiring new members to perform duties not required of existing members
- Expecting certain items to always be in one's possession
- Quizzing/drills on meaningless information
- Socially isolating new members

### **Harassment Hazing**

Harassment hazing includes behaviors that cause emotional or physical stress. It creates situations that confuse and frustrate new members.

#### Common Examples

- Verbal abuse
- Threats or implied threats
- Sleep deprivation
- Stunt/skit nights with degrading, cruel, or humiliating acts
- Expecting new members to do chores or personal favors for existing members

### **Violent Hazing**

Violent hazing includes activities with the potential to cause physical, emotional, or psychological harm to new members.

#### Common Examples

- Use of alcohol or drugs
- Paddling or other forms of assault
- Public nudity
- Expecting illegal activity
- Abductions or kidnaps
- Bondage
- Water intoxication

## Ways to Stop Hazing

- Reduce the power differential between members and initiates.
- Give members time to reflect their actions.
- Encourage members to voice concern with the New Member education program.
- Be willing to amend traditions
- Develop a chapter hazing policy
- Share ideas with other organizations.
- Take advantage of campus resources.
- Do not include alcohol consumption for any new member activities
- Provide opportunities for existing members to participate in some activities alongside new members. This can reduce hazing and give existing members the opportunity to model positive behavior.
- Identify the intended positive outcomes for all new-member activities. If the activity does not have any, consider revisions that make it a more educational, enjoyable experience.
- Anticipate the times and actions that lend themselves to hazing. Remember that activities such as scavenger hunts, skits, and study hours are not hazing IF they are conducted in the right way.

## Hazing Myths

**Myth #1:** Hazing is a problem for fraternities and sororities primarily.

**Fact:** *Hazing is a societal problem. Hazing incidents have been frequently documented in the military, athletic teams, marching bands, religious cults, professional schools and other types of clubs and/or, organizations. Reports of hazing activities in high schools are on the rise.*

**Myth #2:** Hazing is no more than foolish pranks that sometimes go awry.

**Fact:** *Hazing is an act of power and control over others --- it is victimization. Hazing is pre-meditated and NOT accidental. Hazing is abusive, degrading and often life-threatening.*

**Myth #3:** As long as there's no malicious intent, a little hazing should be O.K.

**Fact:** *Even if there's no malicious "intent" safety may still be a factor in traditional hazing activities that are considered to be "all in good fun." For example, serious accidents have occurred during scavenger hunts and kidnapping trips. Besides, what purpose do such activities serve in promoting the growth and development of group team members?*

**Myth #4:** Hazing is an effective way to teach respect and develop discipline.

**Fact:** *First of all, respect must be EARNED--not taught. Victims of hazing rarely report having respect for those who have hazed them. Just like other forms of victimization, hazing breeds mistrust, apathy and alienation.*

**Myth #5:** If someone agrees to participate in an activity, it can't be considered hazing.

**Fact:** *In states that have laws against hazing consent of the victim can't be used as a defense in a civil suit. This is because even if someone agrees to participate in a potentially hazardous action it may not be true consent when considering the peer pressure and desire to belong to the group.*

Adapted from *Death By Hazing*, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, 1988.

## Reporting a Hazing Incident

Office of Fraternity and Sorority  
Affairs 585-275-3167

Dean of Students  
585-275-4085

University Security  
585-275-3333

If you are a member of a fraternity or sorority, you should also contact your national headquarters, chapter advocate, and alumni advisor.

## Additional Resources

Visit the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs website for more information about hazing.

[www.rochester.edu/college/ofsa/hazing.html](http://www.rochester.edu/college/ofsa/hazing.html)

The following websites are also useful:

[www.stophazing.org](http://www.stophazing.org)  
[www.insidehazing.com](http://www.insidehazing.com)  
[www.hazingstudy.org](http://www.hazingstudy.org)  
[www.hazingprevention.org](http://www.hazingprevention.org)

# HAZING

## In Fraternities and Sororities

***A Guide to Understanding,  
Recognizing, and Eliminating  
Hazing***

**A Publication of the  
University of Rochester  
Fraternity and Sorority Affairs**