



HAZING POLICY

HAZING

In recent years, hazing has come under a lot of bad press nationally. Some states have passed legislation against the practice, including Tennessee. National fraternities are working hard to eliminate the practice. Freed-Hardeman students may seek to rationalize and say that nothing we do can be termed as hazing. There is a clear legal concern for any club that fails to follow the guidelines established by the University. The purpose of the guidelines is not to make the induction of new members harder for the clubs, but to protect the club and prospective members from irrational acts that may not be well thought out. Therefore, any club or individual who persists in engaging in activities that have danger of physical or emotional discomfort, pain or harm, or that subjects the student to humiliation and degradation should be aware that the club and/or the individual may become legally liable for such acts.

TENNESSEE HAZING LAW

http://www.stophazing.org/laws/tn_law.htm

49-7-123. Hazing prohibited.

(a) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) "Hazing" means any intentional or reckless act in Tennessee on or off the property of any higher education institution by one (1) student acting alone or with others which is directed against any other student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of that student, or which induces or coerces a student to endanger such student's mental or physical health or safety. "Hazing" does not include customary athletic events or similar contests or competitions, and is limited to those actions taken and situations created in connection with initiation into or affiliation with any organization; and

(2) "Higher education institution" means a public or private college, community college or university.

(b) Each higher education institution shall adopt a written policy prohibiting hazing by any student or organization operating under the sanction of the institution. The policy shall be distributed or made available to each student at the beginning of each school year. Time shall be set-aside during orientation to specifically discuss the policy and its ramifications as a criminal offense and the institutional penalties that may be imposed by the higher education institution. [Acts 1995, ch. 500, § 1.]

HAZING DEFINED

"Hazing" refers to any activity expected of someone joining a group (or to maintain full status in a group) that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. In years past, hazing practices were typically considered harmless pranks or comical antics associated with young men in college fraternities. Today we know that hazing extends far beyond college fraternities and is experienced by boys/men and girls/women in school groups, university organizations, athletic teams, the military, and other social and professional organizations. Hazing is a complex social problem that is shaped by power dynamics operating in a group and/or organization and within a particular cultural context. Hazing activities are generally considered to be: physically abusive, hazardous, and/or sexually violating. The specific behaviors or activities within these categories vary widely among participants, groups and settings. While alcohol use is common in many types of hazing, other examples of typical hazing practices include: personal servitude; sleep deprivation and restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling, swearing and insulting new members/rookies; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such on one's skin; brandings; physical beatings; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault, kidnapping, blindfolding, or subjecting someone to something humiliating.

Some common definitions and examples of hazing are below:

In the Alfred/NCAA survey of college athletes, hazing was defined as:

"any activity expected of someone joining a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. This does not include activities such as rookies carrying the balls, team parties with community games, or going out with your teammates, unless an atmosphere of humiliation, degradation, abuse or danger arises." Hazing is an activity that a high-status member orders other members to engage in or suggests that they engage in that in some way humbles a newcomer who lacks the power to resist, because he or she wants to gain admission to a group. Hazing can be noncriminal, but it is nearly always against the rules of an institution, team, or Greek group. It can be criminal, which means that a state statute has been violated. This usually occurs when a pledging-related activity results in gross physical injury or death" (from Hank Nuwer's book *Wrongs of Passage*, 1999, p. xxv).

Hazing is defined by the FIPG (Fraternal Information Programming Group) as:

"Any action taken or situation created, intentionally, whether on or off fraternity premises, 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, road trips or any other such activities carried on outside or inside of the confines of the chapter house; wearing of 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."

- » **If you have to ask if it's hazing, it is.**
- » **If in doubt, call your advisor/coach/national office. If you won't pick up the phone, you have your answer.**
- » **If you haze, you have low self-esteem.**
- » **If you allow hazing to occur, you are a 'hazing enabler.'**
- » **Failure to stop hazing will result in death..."Will Keim, Ph.D., "The Power of Caring"**



FHU'S HAZING RESPONSE

How is an incident reported?

Students who feel that they have been the victim of a hazing incident can contact the Office of Student Life or the Office of Student Services directly or they may fill out a confidential hazing report online. The hazing report is located on the Student Life page on Freed-Hardeman's official website fhu.edu.

Does the student who is hazed have to file a report?

Anyone who witnesses hazing may report the incident in the same manner described above.

What happens when a hazing incident is reported?

Once the Office of Student Life or the Office of Student Services is notified officially (see above) of a potential hazing incident, the Student Life and Student Services Offices will meet to review the incident report

The student reporting the hazing incident will be summoned to make a statement

The students accused of hazing will be summoned to make a statement

Other witnesses may be called for clarification

Social club officers will be called for a mandatory meeting with the Office of Student Life and the Dean of Students and sponsors to present the allegation of hazing

What is FHU's response to hazing?

In the event that hazing has occurred, students involved in the incident will forfeit their membership in their social club. They will also lose membership in the following groups if a member (UPC, Interface, Makin Music). The loss of membership will prevent them from participating in intramurals, fundraising opportunities for the club, banquets, club meetings or any other club related activities.

Students will also be subject to discipline by the Office of Student Services.

In addition to any discipline administered by Freed-Hardeman University, students directly involved with the hazing incident may be prosecuted in accordance with the laws of the State of Tennessee. Possible charges might include assault, aggravated assault, negligence, etc.



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