

F.04.02.03 Hazing Definition, Prohibition and Reporting Procedure

Responsible Department: Vice Chancellor for Student Success

Based on Board Policy: F.04.02 Student Conduct

Approved: 12-18-25

Prohibition of Hazing

The College District prohibits any form of hazing as defined and prohibited by either of Texas or federal law.

Definition of Hazing

The [Federal Anti-Hazing Law: Stop Campus Hazing Act](#) defines hazing more broadly than Texas law as “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 is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization; and causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or the organization, of physical or psychological injury , including:

- whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing a harmful substance on someone’s body, or similar activities;
- causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, inducing performance of sexual acts or consumption of food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;
- use of threatening words or conduct that induces a reasonable fear of bodily harm; and
- any activity against another person that constitutes or induces a criminal violation.

Federal law defines student organization very broadly as an organization at a college (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 enrolled students, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the college.

The Texas law definition applies more narrowly to the behavior of members of organizations defined as “a fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, club, or student government, a band or musical group or an academic, athletic, cheerleading, or dance team, including any group or team that participates in NCAA competition (inapplicable to the College District), or a service, social, or similar group, whose members are primarily students.”

Texas law defines hazing as “any intentional, knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization if the act:

- involves any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or similar brutalities,
- involves sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space,

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calisthenics, or other similar activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects their mental or physical health or safety;

involves consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance that either subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects their mental or physical health or safety, or coerces the student to consume a drug or an alcoholic beverage in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student is intoxicated, each of coercion and intoxication defined in the Texas Penal Code; or

otherwise causes the student hazed to violate the Texas Penal Code.

According to law, a person can commit a hazing offense not only by engaging in hazing, but also by soliciting, directing, encouraging, aiding, or attempting to aid another in hazing, by intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly allowing hazing to occur, or by failing to report in writing firsthand knowledge that hazing is planned or has occurred.

Individuals and organizations engaging in hazing commit a criminal offense under Texas law. The consent or acquiescence of a person hazed is not a defense to a prosecution for hazing.

The penalty for individual failure to report hazing is a fine not to exceed \$2,000, up to 180 days in jail, or both. Penalties for other hazing offenses vary according to the severity of the injury that results; they range from individual fines of \$2,000 and/or up to 180 days in jail to individual fines of up to \$10,000 and/or a state jail term of not less than 180 days or more than two years. Organizational penalties include fines of not less than \$5,000 or more than \$10,000. If the organizational hazing activity resulted in personal injury, property damage, or other loss, the penalty is a fine of not less than \$5,000 or more than double the amount lost or expenses incurred because of the injury, damage, or loss. State law grants immunity from civil or criminal liability to any person who reports a specific hazing event and immunizes that person from prosecution in any judicial proceeding resulting from that report.

State law does not affect or in any way restrict the right of the College District to enforce its own rules against hazing, regardless of whether or not criminally prosecuted.

Reporting of Hazing

Students or employees who become aware of any hazing incidents which are planned or have occurred must promptly report them to the college Directors of Student Life.

The College District shall collect information with respect to all hazing incidents.

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The College District shall prepare and include in its federal Clery Act report a statement of current policies relating to hazing, how to report incidents of hazing, the process used to investigate incidents of hazing, information on applicable law and a statement of policy regarding prevention and awareness programs related to hazing that includes a description of research-informed campus-wide prevention programs designed to reach students, staff, and faculty, which includes the foregoing and primary prevention strategies intended to stop hazing before it occurs.

The College District shall compile and distribute semi-annually as may be required by federal law a Campus Hazing Transparency Report addressing each incident involving a student organization for which a finding of responsibility is issued according to the detailed requirements of federal law and shall publish the report on its website along with its policies and applicable law prohibiting hazing. Geographically non-contiguous sites are considered separate campuses.

The College District, not later than the 14th day before the first class day of each fall or spring semester, shall distribute to each enrolled student a summary of the Texas law prohibitions against and penalties for hazing, and an electronic link to a report on hazing committed on or off campus by an organization registered with or recognized by the College District posted in a prominent location on its website.

Legal Reference -

Texas Education Code § 51.936 & Chapter 37, Subchapter F

20 US Code 1092(f)