

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PHILADELPHIA

No. 247

Section: Pupils

Title: Hazing

Adopted: February 15,  
2018

Revised: June 27, 2019

247 HAZING

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe, positive environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. The Board of Education (the “Board”) does not tolerate hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the District and are prohibited at all times. Any student, student organization, team, employee, volunteer or other person associated with an organization operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by the School District, found responsible of Hazing, Aggravated Hazing, or Organizational Hazing under this policy, whether occurring on or off School District property, may face disciplinary action, and may also face criminal charges under state law, including the Timothy J. Piazza Anti-hazing Law. [1]

**Definitions**

These terms are defined as follows for the purposes of this policy:

**Hazing** - A person commits the offense of hazing if the person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting or affiliating a student into or with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing a student’s membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following: [2]

1. Violate Federal or State criminal law or a City ordinance;
2. Consume or cause another to consume any amount of food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug or other substance which subjects the student to a risk of emotional or physical harm;
3. Endure or perform acts of brutality of a physical nature, including whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics or exposure to the elements;
4. Endure or perform acts of brutality of a mental nature, including activity adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact, unwanted sexual contact, or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment;
5. Endure or perform acts of brutality of a sexual nature; or

6. Endure or perform any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury or emotional harm to the student being hazed or to another person.

Any of the above may be considered as aggravated hazing (resulting in serious bodily injury or death) and organizational hazing ( an organization that promotes or facilitates hazing).

Hazing shall not include reasonable and customary athletic, law enforcement or military training, contests, competitions or events. [2]

Any activity, as described above, upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with or continued membership in an organization is directly or indirectly conditioned shall be presumed to be “forced” activity. It is not a defense that the consent of the student was sought or obtained; nor is it a defense that the conduct was sanctioned or approved by the organization. [5]

**Aggravated Hazing** – A person commits the offense of aggravated hazing if the person commits a violation of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death to the student; and

1. The person acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the student; or
2. The person causes, coerces, or forces the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the student. [3]

**Organizational Hazing** – An organization commits the offense of Organizational Hazing if the organization intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly promotes or facilitates a violation of hazing or aggravated Hazing. [4]

**Organization** – Any of the following:

1. An association, extra-curricular activity, corporation, order, society, corps, club or service, social or similar group, operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization or extra-curricular activity by the district, whose members are primarily students or alumni of the organization or of the district. [1][6]
2. A national or international organization with which an organization as enumerated under paragraph (1) directly above is affiliated. [1]

Other persons associated with an organization – includes former students, alumni, volunteers, and home education students. [7][10][12][13]

### **Authority**

The Board prohibits hazing in connection with any student organization regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off school property or outside of school hours.[2][3][4] The Board authorizes the Superintendent and their designee to implement this policy and its related administrative procedures.

This policy will be posted on the District's website. Principals will ensure that students are informed of the policy. This policy, will be provided to all school athletic coaches and all the sponsors and volunteers affiliated with a student organization, prior to coaching an athletic activity or serving as a responsible adult supervising, advising, assisting or otherwise participating in a student organization. [9]

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

Students, parents/guardians, coaches, sponsors, volunteers, "other persons associated with an organization", and District employees shall be alert to incidents of hazing and report such conduct or suspicion of such conduct in accordance with the administrative procedures for this policy.

### **Reporting**

Students, parents/guardians, coaches, sponsors, volunteers, and District employees shall be alert to incidents of possible hazing and shall report incidents of possible hazing, in accordance with the administrative procedures for this policy.

### **Investigation and Enforcement**

District administrators shall investigate and enforce all complaints of hazing in accordance with the administrative procedures for this policy.

### **Consequences for Violations**

If the investigation results in a substantiated finding that the student(s) engaged in conduct in violation of this policy, the principal or designee shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, as circumstances warrant, in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. Additionally, the student may be subject to disciplinary action by the coach or sponsor, up to and including removal from the activity.[2][5][6]

If the investigation results in a substantiated finding that an employee, coach, or volunteer affiliated with the student activity, organization, or other person associated with an organization, engaged in, condoned or ignored any violation of this policy, they shall be disciplined in accordance with Board policy and applicable laws and regulations. Discipline could include, but is not limited to, dismissal from the position as coach, sponsor, or volunteer, and/or dismissal from District employment.[7]

If a student activity or organization authorizes hazing in blatant disregard of this policy or other applicable District rules, penalties may also include rescission of permission for that organization to operate on school property or to otherwise operate under the sanction or recognition of the District.[2]

Any person who causes or participates in hazing may also be subject to criminal prosecution.[1]

**Legal References:**

1. 18 Pa. C.S. § 2801, et seq.
2. 18 Pa. C.S. § 2802
3. 18 Pa. C.S. § 2803
4. 18 Pa. C.S. § 2804
5. 18 Pa. C.S. § 2806
6. Pol. 122 - Extracurricular Activities
7. Pol. 137.1 Extracurricular Participation by Home Education Students
8. Pol. 123 - Interscholastic Athletics
9. 18 Pa. C.S. § 2808
10. Pol. 218 - Student Conduct and Discipline
11. Pol. 233 - Suspension and Expulsion
12. Pol. 317 – Conduct/Disciplinary Procedures
13. Pol. 916 - Volunteers

**Related Information:**

1. Philadelphia Home Rule Charter - 12-300