

# Southern Methodist University

## Statement on Hazing

Hazing is a violation of Texas law and the Southern Methodist University *Student Code of Conduct*. Below is a notification sent twice yearly from the Office of the Dean of Students regarding hazing. Individuals or organizations engaging in hazing could be subject to fines and charged with a criminal offense as well as face disciplinary action from the University.

### **Hazing Defined**

The Texas anti-hazing statute is found in the Texas Education Code, Chapter 37, Subchapter F at §37.151 and 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 is:*

- Any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electric shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body or similar activity;
- Involves sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other similar activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student;
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## **Reporting Hazing**

According to the law, a person can commit hazing by not only engaging in the activity, but also soliciting, encouraging, directing, aiding or attempting to aid in hazing; and by intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly allowing hazing to occur. Witnessing hazing or having first-hand knowledge that a hazing incident is planned or has occurred can also be considered hazing, as defined by law.

In an effort to encourage reporting of hazing incidents, the law grants immunity from civil or criminal liability to any person who reports a specific hazing event in good faith and without malice to the Dean of Students or other appropriate University official, such as staff in the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards. A person may also be granted amnesty for any potential liability in university student conduct proceedings. Additionally, a doctor or other medical practitioner who treats a student who may have been subjected to hazing may make a good faith report of the suspected hazing activities to police or other law enforcement officials and is immune from civil or other liability that might otherwise be imposed or incurred as a result of the report. The penalty for the failure to report incidents of hazing is a fine of up to \$1,000, up to 180 days in jail, or both. Penalties for other hazing offenses vary according to the severity of the injury which results and include fines from \$500 to \$10,000 and/or up to two years of jail time.

Students who have knowledge of hazing activity can report it to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards by clicking [here](#) or to the Southern Methodist University Police Department or both. Information about hazing may also be reported anonymously through the SMU Police Department's Silent Witness Program by calling 214-SMU-2TIP or online at <http://www.smu.edu/2tip>. You can also report hazing anonymously via Real Response by texting 205-TXT2SMU where a member of the Dean of Students Office will respond to you. Anonymous reports of hazing activity may also be made through the SMU Fraud Reporting Program, by calling 844-995-4895, or accessing the online portal at: [smu.ethicspoint.com](http://smu.ethicspoint.com) or the mobile reporting site: [smumobile.ethicspoint.com](http://smumobile.ethicspoint.com).

## **University Policy**

This law does not affect or in any way limit the right of the university to enforce its own rules against hazing. Hazing is a violation of Section IV.B.4. of the *Southern Methodist University Student Code of Conduct* and is subject to potential proceedings in the Conduct Review Process.

**Disciplined Organizations**

In accordance with Texas Law, universities have a duty to report to the campus community all organizations that have been disciplined for hazing, on or off campus, during the preceding three years.

- **Beta Theta Pi**

**Date of Incident(s):** February 26 and March 2, 2020

**Date Investigation was Initiated:** March 10, 2020

**General Description of Incident:** Beta Theta Pi was allegedly hazing new members of their organization by requiring members to send pornographic images to other members of the chapter. It was also reported that new members were required to engage in activities that can be considered servitude. Beta Theta Pi was charged with violating the following policies: Hazing, Alcohol, Irresponsible Conduct, and Harassment.

**Resolution:** Beta Theta Pi was found responsible for violating the following policies (Hazing, Alcohol, Irresponsible Conduct, and Harassment). The resolution includes Conduct Probation through December 31, 2021 and the completion of an Organization Accountability Agreement, which outlines several educational programs and requirements.

**Date Investigation Concluded:** March 12, 2020

**Beta Theta Pi**

**Date of Incident(s):** Between January 24, 2021 and January 31, 2021

**Date Investigation was Initiated:** February 1, 2021

**General Description of Incident:** Beta Theta Pi was allegedly hazing new members of their organization by requiring new members to perform calisthenics, consume distasteful food, and perform acts of servitude. New members were also exposed to activities that adversely affected their physical health and safety.

Beta Theta Pi was charged with violating the following policies: Hazing, Irresponsible Conduct, and Laws and University Policy.

### **Delta Delta Delta**

**Date of Incident:** February 26, 2021

**Date Investigation was Initiated:** March 25, 2021

**General Description of Incident:** Delta Delta Delta was allegedly hazing by subjecting new members to activities that caused shame or humiliation. Delta Delta Delta was charged with violating the following policies: Hazing, Alcohol, Irresponsible Conduct, Laws and University Policy, and Failure to Comply.

**Resolution:** Delta Delta Delta was found responsible for violating the following policies: Hazing, Alcohol, Irresponsible Conduct, Laws and University Policy, and Failure to Comply. Resolution includes an Organization Accountability Agreement, which outlines several educational programs and requirements effective through May 15, 2023.

**Date Investigation Concluded:** May 4, 2021

- **Kappa Alpha Order**

**Date of Incident:** n/a

**Date Investigation was Initiated:** September 13, 2017

**General Description of Incident:** Kappa Alpha Order was allegedly hazing new members of their organization through paddling, servitude, forcing new members to consume alcohol, forcing new members to participate in calisthenics, forcing new members to consume various food items and liquids until vomiting was induced, forcing new members to wear clothing soiled with vomit, sleep deprivation, and "underground" membership. Kappa Alpha Order was charged with violating the following policies: Irresponsible Conduct, Laws & University Policy, Interference, Harassment, and Hazing.

**Resolution:** Kappa Alpha Order was found responsible for violating the following policies: Irresponsible Conduct, Laws & University Policy, Interference, Harassment, and Hazing. The resolution includes the suspension of the organization until Fall 2021.

**Date Investigation Concluded:** Oct92 reW\* nBT-6(on)-0912 0 612 792 reW\* nBT/F1 12 Tf1 0 0 1

**Kappa Alpha Theta**

**Date of Incident:** February 10, 2022

**Date Investigation was Initiated:** April 8, 2022

**General Description of Incident:** Kappa Alpha Theta was allegedly hazing new members through forced consumption of alcohol at an off-campus location. New

