

Southern New Hampshire University Hazing Policy

PURPOSE

Southern New Hampshire University (“SNHU” or the “University”) seeks to promote a safe environment where students may participate in activities and organizations without compromising their health, safety, or welfare. The purpose of this Policy is to provide for the protection of students at the University from hazing activities.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all students, student organizations, athletic teams, University-Affiliated Groups (as defined below), and volunteers of the University.

DEFINITIONS

Hazing: Any intentional, knowing, or reckless act or activity, including acts of coercion or intimidation, committed by a person or persons – whether individually or in concert with others – against a student or students, regardless of the students’ willingness to participate, when:

1. The act is committed in connection with an initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, continued membership in, or association with any University-Affiliated Groups; and
2. The act causes, is likely to cause, or would be perceived by a reasonable person as likely to cause, physical or psychological injury to any person.

In addition to this policy and New Hampshire state law (see “Criminal and Civil Penalties” section below), federal law also prohibits hazing as outlined in the Stop Campus Hazing Act (“SCHA”). For purposes of reporting statistics in compliance with the SCHA, the University will apply the definition above and further consider whether the hazing incident involves a risk of harm above the reasonable risks typically associated with participation in the University’s programs or that of the University-Affiliated Group (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team).

University-Affiliated Groups: Any fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, athletic group, cooperative, club, or service, social or similar group, whose members are or include students, operating at or in conjunction with the University.

POLICY

Hazing is strictly prohibited at SNHU. All forms of hazing or knowing failure to report hazing to University authorities on the part of any student, student organizations, athletic teams, University-Affiliated Groups, and volunteers of the University are prohibited. The express or implied consent of the individual(s) subject to any form of hazing is not a defense.

Students and Student Organizations alleged to have violated this Policy may be referred to Community Standards or another appropriate office and may be subject to sanctions in accordance with applicable University policies and procedures. A non-employee’s failure to comply with this Policy may result in the suspension or revocation of the person’s relationship with SNHU.

Additional consequences for violations of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, suspension or de-recognition for student organizations, University-Affiliated Groups, and athletic teams, and banning from campus for volunteers.

HOW TO REPORT HAZING INCIDENTS

SNHU students are required to promptly notify appropriate University officials of any hazing incident or perceived hazing incident, as defined by this Policy and/or New Hampshire law. Reports may also be filed by volunteers. Reports should be made using the following procedures:

- Campus students and volunteers may file a report in one of two ways, either by submitting a report in person at a Public Safety Office or by filing a report online utilizing the [Campus Student Conduct Form](#).
- Online Students may file an [Online Student Conduct Form](#) through the Office of Community Standards
- Any individual may file a complaint with the local law enforcement which includes but is not limited to the Manchester Police Department and Hooksett Police Department. Complainants must also understand that the University's Public Safety Office is not a police department, and a report to Public Safety is not equivalent to filing a police report.

The University's ability to thoroughly investigate reports depends upon the accuracy and specificity of the information provided. Therefore, the University strongly encourages persons to identify themselves when submitting reports and participate in the investigation and response process. The privacy of those submitting hazing reports will be maintained to the extent possible.

Individuals may also file anonymous reports by completing a [Confidential Reporting Form](#) through the Public Safety Office.

Retaliation against any individual who files a complaint or participates in a hazing inquiry is prohibited. Prohibited retaliatory acts include threats, coercion, intimidation, or discrimination. The University will take steps to prevent retaliation against individuals who file complaints or provide information regarding a complaint.

Hazing incidents reported to the University that, if substantiated, meet the definition outlined in this policy will be reported to local law enforcement by the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs and Public Safety (or their designee) on behalf of the University. Employees are also required to report incidents of hazing as outlined in the Employee Handbook.

INVESTIGATION OF HAZING REPORTS

All reports of hazing will be initially reviewed by the Office of Community Standards. Following this review, the Office of Community Standards will consult with the appropriate University leader to determine the appropriate appointment of an investigator. For allegations that concern campus-based student organizations, this consultation will typically involve the Dean of Students or their designee. For online student organizations, it will typically involve the Vice President of Student Experience Support Services or their designee. The University reserves the discretion to designate other appropriate personnel to conduct or support the investigation as circumstances warrant. Once an investigator has been appointed, the matter will be investigated in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Student Handbook.

EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

SNHU conducts ongoing research-informed educational programs to foster awareness and prevention of hazing behavior. Educational activities will occur in accordance with University policies and procedures and include regular training for students and employees involved with University-Affiliated Groups, and university-wide communications to foster awareness of hazing behavior.

CRIMINAL AND CIVIL PENALTIES

New Hampshire law criminalizes participation in student hazing and failure to report incidents of student hazing. The text of New Hampshire law RSA 631:7 can be found [here](#). Those responsible for hazing may also be personally liable under civil law.