



Southern Methodist University Statement on Hazing

Hazing is a violation of federal and state 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

Federal

On December 23, 2024 the Stop Campus Hazing Act (Public Law No: 118-173) was signed into law by President Biden. The Stop Campus Hazing Act requires institutions of higher education (IHEs) that receive federal funds to report hazing incidents as an additional crime category on the Annual Security Report (ASR) as part of an IHE's compliance with the **Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act** ("Clery Act") Compliance with the Clery Act is monitored and enforced by the U.S. Department of Education and failure to report crimes or issue Timely Warnings may result in civil penalties issued by the Department of up to \$71,545 per violation (as of January 2025) for each failure to report.

For the purposes of SMU's annual reporting statistics on hazing, the Stop Campus Hazing Act defines hazing as:

any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with others) against another person or persons, regardless of the willingness of such person(s) to participate, that is

- (1) committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in a student organization, and,
- (2) causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the IHE or the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletics team) of physical or psychological injury, including:
 - Whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone's body, or similar activity, and/or:
 - Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing any of the following:
 - Sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;
 - Another person to consume food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances
 - Another person to perform sexual acts;

- Any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct;
- Any activity committed against another person that includes a criminal violation of local, state, tribal, or federal law; or,
- Any activity that induces, causes, or requires another person to perform a duty or task that involves a criminal violation of local, state, tribal, or federal law

State of Texas

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;
- Involves consumption of food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug or other substance, other than as described by Paragraph (E), that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or which adversely affects the mental or physical health of the student;
- Is any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that involves a violation of the Penal code; or involves coercing, as defined by Section 1.07, Penal Code, the student to consume an alcoholic beverage, liquor, or drug in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student is intoxicated, as defined by Section 49.01, Penal Code.

****The fact that a person consented or acquiesced to participation in a hazing activity is not a defense to prosecution for hazing under the law.**

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 staff member in the Office of the Dean of Students 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 or the mobile reporting site: 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.C.7. 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 and the Stop Campus Hazing Act, 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.

- **Alpha Kappa Psi**

Date of Incident(s): Between November 22, 2023 and Spring 2024

Date Investigation was Initiated: October 10, 2024

General Description of Incident: Alpha Kappa Psi was allegedly hazing new members by subjecting them to activities that affected their health and safety. Alpha Kappa Psi was charged with violating the following policies: Hazing, Irresponsible Conduct, and Failure to Comply.

Resolution: Alpha Kappa Psi was found responsible for violating the following policies: Hazing, Irresponsible Conduct, and Failure to Comply. The resolution includes an Organization Accountability Agreement, which outlines several educational programs and requirements effective until December 1, 2026.

Date Investigation Concluded: April 11, 2025

- **Beta Theta Pi**

Date of Incident(s): Between January 15, 2023 and February 9, 2023

Date Investigation was Initiated: February 10, 2023

General Description of Incident: Beta Theta Pi was allegedly hazing 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, Failure to Comply, and Laws and University Policy.

Resolution: The national organization Beta Theta Pi entered into a mutual agreement

with SMU through May 15, 2026, that includes the deferred suspension of the SMU chapter through May 15, 2026 and additional educational programs and requirements.
Date Investigation Concluded: June 28, 2023

- **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.

Resolution: Resolution includes an Organization Accountability Agreement, which outlines several educational programs and requirements effective until May 15, 2023.

Date Investigation Concluded: May 11, 2021

- **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 Theta**

Date of Incident: October 28, 2020

Date Investigation was Initiated: November 11, 2020

General Description of Incident: Kappa Alpha Theta was allegedly hazing potential new members through forced consumption of alcohol at an off-campus location. Kappa Alpha Theta was charged with violating the following policies: Alcohol, Irresponsible Conduct, and Hazing.

Resolution: Kappa Alpha Theta was found responsible for violating the following policies: Irresponsible Conduct, Alcohol, and Hazing. The resolution includes the completion of an Organization Accountability Agreement, which outlines several educational programs and requirements effective through May 15, 2023.

Date Investigation Concluded: December 18, 2020

- **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 members were also exposed to activities that adversely affected their physical health and safety.

Resolution: The national organization Kappa Alpha Theta entered into an Organizational Accountability Agreement with SMU through May 15, 2026, which includes removal from campus for a period of time and additional educational programs and requirements.

Date Investigation Concluded: July 24, 2022

- **Pi Beta Phi**

Date of Incident: Between January 15, 2023 and February 2, 2023

Date Investigation was Initiated: February 8, 2023

General Description of Incident: Pi Beta Phi was allegedly hazing new members of their organization by subjecting them to activities that caused shame or humiliation. Pi Beta Phi was charged with the following policies: Hazing and Irresponsible Conduct.

Resolution: The resolution includes an Organizational Accountability Agreement, which outlines several educational programs and requirements effective until May 25, 2025.

Date Investigation Concluded: August 2, 2023

- **Pi Kappa Alpha**

Date of Incident: February 9, 2018

Date Investigation was Initiated: February 9, 2018

General Description of Incident: Pi Kappa Alpha was allegedly hazing new members of their organization through forced consumption of distasteful substances. Pi Kappa Alpha was charged with violating the following policy: Hazing.

Resolution: Pi Kappa Alpha was found responsible for violating the following policies: Hazing. Resolution includes the suspension of the organization until Fall 2022.

Date Investigation Concluded: March 26, 2018

- **Sigma Chi**

Date of Incident: September 16-18, 2024

Date Investigation was Initiated: September 19, 2024

General Description of Incident: Sigma Chi was allegedly hazing new members by exposing their new members to activities that affected their physical health and safety. Sigma Chi was charged with violating the following policies: Alcohol, Hazing, Irresponsible Conduct, and Failure to Comply.

Resolution: Sigma Chi was found responsible for violating the following policies: Alcohol, Hazing, Irresponsible Conduct, and Failure to Comply. The resolution includes deferred suspension through December 31, 2027, along with additional requirements.

Date Investigation Concluded: November 5, 2024

- **Sigma Chi**

Date of Incident: Between February 1, 2023 and February 28, 2023

Date Investigation was Initiated: September 1, 2023

General Description of Incident: Sigma Chi was allegedly hazing new members by exposing their new members to activities that affected their physical health and safety. Sigma Chi was charged with violating the following policies: Hazing, Irresponsible

Conduct, and Failure to Comply.

Resolution: Sigma Chi was found responsible for violating the following policies: Hazing, Irresponsible Conduct, and Failure to Comply. The resolution includes the completion of an Organization Accountability Agreement, which outlines several educational programs and requirements effective through December 15, 2025.

Date Investigation Concluded: November 13, 2023

- **Sigma Nu**

Date of Incident: September 28, 2021

Date Investigation was Initiated: November 19, 2021

General Description of Incident: Sigma Nu was allegedly hazing new members by forcing new members to participate in calisthenics and imposing required methods of communication and attire. Sigma Nu was charged with violating the following policies: Hazing and Irresponsible Conduct.

Resolution: Sigma Nu was found responsible for violating the following policies: Hazing and Irresponsible Conduct. Resolution includes several educational program and requirements and Deferred Suspension through December 31, 2022.

Date Investigation Concluded: December 3, 2021

- **SMU Pom Team**

Date of Incident: August 26, 2024

Date Investigation was Initiated: August 29, 2024

General Description of Incident: The SMU Pom Team was allegedly hazing new members by subjecting them to activities that affected their health and safety. The SMU Pom Team was charged with violating the following policies: Alcohol, Hazing, and Irresponsible Conduct.

Resolution: The SMU Pom Team was found responsible for violating the following policies: Alcohol, Hazing, and Irresponsible Conduct. Resolution includes conduct probation through May 31, 2027, along with educational sanctions and other requirements.

Date Investigation Concluded: March 13, 2025

Reporting Hazing on Campus

- To report a hazing incident on campus, please use the [Hazing Reporting Form](#). This form notifies the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards that a hazing incident has occurred. If you are more comfortable speaking to someone about the incident, please call the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards at 214-768-4563.
- You can also report hazing anonymously through via Real Response by texting 205-TXT2SMU where a member of the Dean of Students Office will respond to you.
- If you are experiencing an emergency, please contact the SMU Police Department immediately at 214-768-3333.

Additional Resources

For a list of additional resources, please see below:

- **Office of the Dean of Students**
Hughes-Trigg Student Center, Suite 205
- **Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards**

Hughes-Trigg Student Center, Suite 205

- **Southern Methodist University Student Code of Conduct:**
<https://www.smu.edu/studentaffairs/dean-of-students/student-handbook>
- **Hazing Prevention Website**
<http://hazingprevention.org/>