

University of Pittsburgh Anti Hazing Policy

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate hazing. Any student, student organization, team, or other persons associated with a student organization found responsible for hazing under this policy, whether occurring on or off campus, may face disciplinary action from the University, and may also face criminal charges under state law including [The Timothy J. Piazza Antihazing Law, 18 Pa. C.S. § 2801, et seq.](#)

Hazing Definition

For purposes of this definition, any activity as described in the below definition which is directly or indirectly made a condition of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in an organization shall be presumed to be “forced” activity, regardless of whether the individual was willing to participate in such an activity. Therefore, any student who causes or participates in hazing may be subject to appropriate University discipline and/or may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Hazing is defined as follows:

A person commits hazing if the person intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting, or affiliating a minor or student into or with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing a minor or student's membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces, or forces a minor or student to do any of the following:

- (1) Violate Federal or State criminal law;
- (2) Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug, or other substance which endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student;
- (3) Engage in physical activity, including whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics, or exposure to the elements which endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student;
- (4) Engaged in mental activity, including sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment which endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student;
- (5) Engage in sexual activity, which endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student;
- (6) Endure any other activity that creates a risk of bodily injury to the student.

Organizational Hazing

A Registered Student Organization commits organizational hazing if the organization intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly promotes or facilitates a violation of hazing or aggravated hazing.

Aggravated Hazing is defined as follows:

Conduct that would amount to hazing but that results in serious bodily injury or death. This may include instances where those responsible for hazing acted with reckless indifference to the health and safety of a student. Causing, coercing or forcing the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs that results in serious bodily injury or death is an example of aggravated hazing.

Hazing Adjudication Process

The Office of Compliance, Investigations & Ethics (CIE Office) will work collaboratively with the University of Pittsburgh Police Department in the investigation of alleged hazing events.

Ultimately, all reports of hazing will be referred to the Office of Compliance, Investigations & Ethics (CIE) for internal investigation either following or during a police investigation. The investigative procedures can be found [here](#).

Reporting

Several options are available for you to report hazing. Students and others are encouraged to report incidents, and suspected incidents of hazing. Reports may be made to the University Police (724-836-9865), or the Office of Compliance, Investigations and Ethics at (412-383-4553), compliance@pitt.edu. You may also report hazing using the [Pitt Concern Connection](#) either by submitting an online form, calling the report phone number, or submitting a report via text.

Although the University encourages students and others to make formal reports, including providing contact information for the reporter, you may file an anonymous report with the University Police tip line and/or the Pitt Concern Connection. Anonymous reports greatly limit the University's ability to respond to and investigate the report.

As noted above, all hazing allegations should be reported to the University of Pittsburgh Police Department and/or the CIE Office. In addition, hazing related to any University of Pittsburgh athletics teams may also be reported to the Director of Athletics at 724-836-9949 or Office of Student Conduct at 724-836-9953. Hazing related to any University of Pittsburgh student organization may also be reported to the Office of Student Conduct at 724-836-9953.

Interim Measures

As part of the University's response to a report of hazing, and regardless of whether there has been a request for formal disciplinary or law enforcement action, the University may impose interim measures or offer accommodations to address issues that impact the Complainant or Respondent's educational, living or work environments. These interim measures can often be put in place very quickly, prior to the resolution of any complaint, investigation, or criminal proceeding.

Once imposed, the University will take necessary action to enforce the implemented measures. Anyone who becomes aware of, or has a concern about, a Student's failure to follow any University-imposed interim measure or accommodation, should report this concern to the Office of Student Conduct at 724-836-9953 or twr@pitt.edu.

Advisor or Support Person

Both a Complainant and a Respondent are entitled to one advisor or support person of their choice, and the advisor or support person may accompany the party to any meeting or proceeding under these processes. However, the advisor or support person shall not be permitted to participate directly in the process. This includes advisors who are also attorneys.

An advisor or support person may not stand in place of either the Complainant or the Respondent, and information regarding the progress of the inquiry or investigation will only be shared with the Complainant or Respondent, and not the advisor of choice. If the advisor or support person has any questions, they should contact the Assistant Vice Chancellor for the Office of Compliance, Investigations & Ethics (AVC CIE), not the individual investigator. In keeping with the University's desire to resolve hazing complaints in a timely manner, the University reserves the right to proceed with any meeting regardless of the availability of the Student's/Registered Student Organization's advisor or support person.

Investigative Process

The investigation of hazing allegations involves a prompt and equitable investigation conducted by an investigator assigned by the Office of Compliance, Investigations & Ethics (CIE Office). The investigation is a fact-finding process, giving all parties notice and the opportunity to be heard, to identify witnesses and to offer evidence, and to pose questions to parties and witnesses. The process will generally progress as follows:

1. Once a report is received, the Investigator will attempt to interview witnesses and identify relevant parties, including any Complainants or Respondents.
2. Following the completion of initial interviews, the investigator will notify the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Compliance, Investigations & Ethics as to whether or not the allegations, if substantiated, would constitute a violation of the *Code* related to hazing.
 - a. If the investigator's notification indicates that such an allegation, if substantiated, would not constitute a violation, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Compliance, Investigations & Ethics may close the investigation and that decision shall be final, barring new information.
 - b. In the event that the investigator's notification indicates that the allegations, if substantiated, would constitute a violation of the *Code*, the investigator shall conduct a full investigation. Steps in the investigations may involve the following actions:
 - i. Notification to the Respondent and Complainant that an investigation is underway
 - ii. Interviewing members of Registered Student Organizations
 - iii. Interviewing witnesses, including the Respondent(s) and Complainant(s)
 - iv. Providing the parties with the opportunity to identify relevant witnesses
 - v. Providing the parties with the opportunity to review and comment upon a summary of their interview. The parties shall have five (5) days to review and comment.
 - vi. Collecting evidence
 - vii. Documenting all evidence collection and interviews

viii. Collaborating with multiple departments to gather relevant information

3. Reasonable rules of relevancy will guide the investigator in evaluating evidence and witness statements.
4. Following the gathering and evaluation of evidence, the investigator will prepare a report of investigation. The parties will have an opportunity to review, in the Office of Compliance, Investigations & Ethics, the report of investigation. The report of investigation will include the relevant information provided by the Complainant, Respondent, and any witnesses, as well as reference other relevant evidence gathered during the investigation which will be considered in determining responsibility for allegations of hazing. Within five (5) business days of the date that the report of investigation was first made available for review, the Complainant and Respondent must submit verbally or in writing to the Investigator any comments (including additional statements, proposed witness questions and additional evidence) concerning the summary. This portion of the investigation may be an iterative process.
5. Following the receipt of any comments on the investigative summary, or after the five (5) day period has lapsed without comment, the Investigator will prepare a final report of investigation that includes a determination of whether it is more likely than not that a hazing violation has or has not occurred. The final written report will include the basis upon which the Investigator reached their determination of responsibility. This determination will be made using the preponderance of the evidence standard, asking whether it is more likely than not that hazing occurred and the *Code* violated.
6. The report will be provided first to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Compliance, Investigation & Ethics for review and input. The AVC CIE will consult with the Office of University Counsel and submit the final report to the Vice Provost for Student Affairs or their designee. Once the Vice Provost for Student Affairs or their designee has determined the appropriate sanctions, either the Vice Provost for Student Affairs or their designee will provide the decision letter, to both the Complainant and Respondent. At this time, a copy of the final investigation report will be available in the Office of Compliance, Investigations & Ethics for review.
7. Both the Complainant and the Respondent may submit an appeal to the University Review Board (URB) within ten (10) business days from the date of the decision letter. See the Level II Hearing Appeal Process.

Prohibition of Retaliation Retaliation is prohibited and may constitute separate grounds for disciplinary action. Retaliation is the act of taking adverse action against any person involved in the investigation process based upon the person's reporting or participation in the process. Retaliation includes behavior on the part of any related person or party. Although independent action will be taken against anyone engaging in retaliation, any party to the investigation should not encourage such actions and will also be held responsible to the extent of their involvement in the retaliation. An individual who believes they have experienced retaliation should contact the Office of Compliance, Investigations & Ethics (compliance@pitt.edu) or submit concern using the Pitt Concern Connection. Investigations of retaliation in connection with this Chapter will follow the investigative procedures outlined above.