



UNIVERSITY of
ST. AUGUSTINE for
HEALTH SCIENCES

USAHS Hazing Policy

I. Introduction

This Hazing Policy outlines the institution's commitment to preventing hazing and its stance on fostering a respectful, inclusive, and supportive environment for all members of the campus community. Hazing, as defined by federal, state, and institutional guidelines, will not be tolerated. This policy provides clear processes for reporting incidents, investigating alleged hazing activities, and enforcing disciplinary measures. It also includes prevention and awareness programs aimed at reducing the occurrence of hazing and promoting ethical leadership. USAHS' Hazing Policy, which includes information on how to report hazing incidents and the investigation process, is available to the general public and all current and incoming students, staff, and faculty, on the University website. Any revisions to the policy are communicated through publication of the updated [USAHS Catalog/Handbook](#).

II. Definition of Hazing

Hazing is defined as any act or situation, by one person alone or acting with others, that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student as part of initiation, preinitiation, pledging, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining a membership in a student organization or student body of the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences ("USAHS"), which the initiator knows or should have known is likely to cause serious bodily injury to any former, current, or prospective student. It can include acts that produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule, and which may lead to the deprivation of rights or opportunities of individuals. Hazing may include, but is not limited to, forced consumption of alcohol or drugs, physical abuse, bullying, or any activity that is degrading, dangerous, illegal or intimidating.

III. Prohibition on Hazing

Hazing is prohibited by both state and federal law and institutional regulations. Students and employees of the institution are strictly prohibited from participating in, promoting, or condoning hazing in any form. This definition will be continuously aligned with the laws and regulations of local jurisdictions where USAHS maintains campuses.

IV. Relevant Laws

1. Federal Laws:

- Hazing is prohibited under federal law, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex and sexual harassment, including hazing behaviors that create a hostile environment.



2. State Laws:

○ California

- *California Penal Code Section 245.6*
- *California Education Code, Title 3, Division 5, Part 40, Chapter 5.1 “Stop Campus Hazing Act”*

○ Florida

- *Florida Statutes, Title VIII, Chapter 1006, Part II, 1006.63*

○ Texas

- *Texas Education Code, Title 3, Subtitle A, Chapter 51, Section 51.936 and Title 2, Subtitle G, Chapter 37, Sections 37.151 – 37.158*

V. Reporting Incidents of Hazing

1. How to Report Incidents of Hazing:

Students, staff and faculty are encouraged to report hazing incidents directly via the “[USAHS Hazing Reporting Form](#),” and can be made without the need to disclose the identity of the individual making the report. Contact information will be kept confidential to the fullest extent possible, consistent with the institution's policies and legal obligations. Reports may also be made to the National Anti-Hazing Hotline toll-free number at 1-888-NOT-HAZE (1-888-668-4293). Reports should include the name of the organization or the individual that is being reported, date(s) of incidents, whether the incidents occurred on or off campus, and any relevant details of hazing behavior. Reports may also include supporting documentation such as photos, emails, or video.

Hazing can also be reported to appropriate federal agencies (e.g., U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights) when it involves violations of civil rights or federal law. Please refer to the USAHS Title IX Policy for additional details (located [here](#)).

2. Process to Investigate Hazing Incidents:

All reported hazing incidents will be reviewed by the Department of Student Affairs to determine whether an investigation is warranted. If the information reported meets the threshold of hazing, a referral will be made to the Professional Misconduct Committee. The PMC Process can be found in the [University Catalog/Handbook](#), “University Policies” section.

3. Disciplinary Actions

- Students found responsible for hazing are subject to disciplinary action, as outlined in the PMC policy, including suspension or dismissal. Additionally,



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student organizations found responsible for hazing may also face suspension or permanent removal from the University.

- Any employee found to have engaged in hazing may face disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with USAHS' personnel policies.
- Additionally, any violation of state or federal law can be punishable by fines and/or imprisonment.

VI. Hazing Prevention & Awareness Programs

USAHS is committed to preventing hazing and fostering a campus culture based on mutual respect, inclusivity, and ethical leadership. Prevention efforts are vital, and USAHS provides a comprehensive campus-wide prevention program that targets all campus community members, including students, staff, and faculty. This program is based on research-informed strategies to reduce and prevent hazing. Additionally, bystander intervention programs are conducted to equip community members with the knowledge and tools to intervene and prevent hazing. The prevention and awareness programs emphasize the importance of speaking up when witnessing hazing behavior and the positive impact of proactive intervention, as well as highlighting the importance of ethical decision-making and creating inclusive group environments. These programs also focus on building leadership skills that reject hazing and encourage the formation of cohesive groups without the use of abusive practices.

VII. Conclusion

USAHS is dedicated to maintaining a safe and supportive learning and working environment free from hazing. We will continue to enhance awareness, provide educational programming, and uphold strong disciplinary standards to prevent hazing and protect the well-being of all individuals within our community. Through shared responsibility, ongoing education, and accountability, we aim to eliminate hazing from our campus and promote a culture of respect and integrity.