

Hazing

The following sections are excerpted from Title 24 of the PA consolidated Statutes:

Section 5352: Definitions. “Hazing.”

Any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student or which willfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in, any organization operating under the sanctions of or recognized as an organization by an institution of higher education. The term shall include, but not be limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug or other substance, or any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health and safety of the individual, and shall include any activity which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual, or any willful destruction or removal of public or private property. For the purposes of this definition, any activity as described in this definition upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with or continued membership in an organization is directly or indirectly conditioned shall be presumed to be “forced” activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such activity notwithstanding.

Section 5353: Hazing Prohibited.

Any person who causes or participates in hazing commits a misdemeanor of the third degree.

Examples of hazing (list is not inclusive):

- a) PHYSICAL HARM can occur as a result of a direct action: any brutality of a physical nature, required eating and/or drinking, drug use, forced exercises, exposure to elements, arduous phone-runs.
- b) PHYSICAL HARM can occur as a result of indirect action: someone gets hurt while blindfolded or during an illegal drop trip; someone becomes ill because of a new member education activity.
- c) PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM is less easy to define: activities which cause extreme mental stress; sleep deprivation; exclusion from social contact; extreme embarrassment and/or public ridicule.
- d) A NOTE ON COMMUNITY STANDARDS: Since people feel embarrassed when others regard them as ridiculous, the opinion of other members of the community

(including faculty, staff and administration) are important in determining what activities could be embarrassing.

e) PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROPERTY may not be taken or broken. A scavenger hunt using public or private property is defined as hazing.

f) **THE WILLINGNESS OF AN INDIVIDUAL TO PARTICIPATE IN HAZING DOES NOT MAKE THE ACTIVITY LESS ILLEGAL.**