



Policy Title: College Hazing Prevention and Response Policy

Applicability: College-wide

Oversight Department: The Office of Public Safety and The Division of Student Affairs/Dean of Students Office

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to establish rules in compliance with State and Federal law as it relates to hazing prevention and response

Effective Adoption Date: June 10, 2025

I. PURPOSE

Providence College is committed to maintaining an environment in which all students and employees are treated with dignity and respect. Engaging in hazing or any hazing-related activities is expressly prohibited by the College. In compliance with the Federal Stop Campus Hazing Act of 2024 (“the Hazing Act”) and Rhode Island State Law, this policy revises the College’s existing hazing policy and establishes clear guidelines to prevent hazing through prevention and awareness trainings, outlines reporting procedures, and sets forth penalties for violations.

II. DEFINITIONS

“Hazing” is defined slightly differently in both Rhode Island Law and in the Federal Hazing Act; however, all hazing activities, as defined by both State and Federal law, are expressly prohibited by the College.

- A. Hazing under Rhode Island Law.** Hazing is defined as “any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. This conduct shall include, but not be limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of the student or any other person, or which subjects the student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.” See R.I.G.L. 1956 § 11-21-1.
- B. Hazing under the Federal Hazing Act.** Hazing is defined as “any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with other persons) against another person or persons regardless of the willingness of

such other person or persons to participate that (i.) is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization; and (ii.) causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team), of physical or psychological injury.” See 20 U.S.C. 1092 § 485(f)(6)(A)(vi)

- C. Student Organization.** Student Organization is defined under the Hazing Act as “any organization at an institution of higher education (club, society, association, athletic team, club sports team, intramural team, fraternity or sorority, band, student government etc.) in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at the institution, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution.” See 20 U.S.C. 1092 § 485(f)(6)(A) (vii)

III. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

- A.** Hazing in any form, as defined in **Section II** above, is strictly prohibited by the College. It is a violation of College policy for any member of the campus community to plan, participate in, encourage, or engage in the following activities both on and off campus:

- i. Whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone’s body, or similar activity;
- ii. Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;
- iii. Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to consume food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;
- iv. Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to perform sexual acts;
- v. Any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct;
- vi. Any activity against another person that includes a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law, or a violation of any College policy or the College’s Mission; and
- vii. 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, or a violation of any College policy or the College’s Mission.

- B.** The following circumstances will **not** be considered a defense to hazing activity:

- i. Assertions that the conduct or activity was not part of an official organizational event or was not officially sanctioned or approved by the organization;
- ii. The express or implied consent of the victim of hazing; and

- iii. Lack of active participation while hazing is occurring (apathy or acquiescence in the presence of hazing activity is also considered hazing).

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES & INVESTIGATION

- A. Any student or employee who becomes aware of hazing must report the incident promptly. Reports can be made through the following channels:
 - i. The Office of Public Safety Emergency Line: 401-865-2222
 - ii. The Office of Public Safety Anonymous Reporting Form: [Here](#)
 - iii. The Providence College Anonymous Ethics Line: [Here](#)
 - iv. The Division of Student Affairs/Dean of Students Office: 401-865-1782
 - v. In addition, allegations of Hazing may be reported to the Providence Police Department (401-272-3121), other applicable law enforcement agencies, or 911 in the case of an emergency
- B. All reports of hazing will be reviewed promptly and investigated. Incidents of hazing involving only students will be investigated by the Office of Public Safety and reported to the Office of Community Standards. Students will be subject to the Office of Community Standards' Student Conduct process and procedures as set forth in the Student [Handbook](#). Allegations made against employees for involvement in hazing activity will be investigated by the Office of Public Safety and Human Resources. The Office of Public Safety will also work with law enforcement if criminal activity is suspected. Allegations of hazing that involve violations of the College's Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy or Sexual Misconduct: Harassment and Discrimination Policy will also be referred to the Office of Equity Compliance.

V. SANCTIONS

- A. **Discipline by College.** In cases of individual student violators, appropriate student conduct action may be imposed as outlined in the Student [Handbook](#) and for student athletes, in the Student Athlete [Handbook](#). As a result, students may face discipline up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. In cases where organizations have been involved in hazing activity, loss of privileges, loss of campus recognition, and loss of funding may be imposed. Employees involved in allegations of hazing may be subject to discipline by the College up to and including termination.
- B. **Rhode Island State Law Penalties.** In addition to discipline by the College, individuals who engage in hazing may be subject to penalties under Rhode Island law. Hazing is considered a misdemeanor in the State of Rhode Island and if convicted, individuals could face a fine of up to \$500, imprisonment for thirty (30) days up to one (1) year, or both. See R.I.G.L. 1956 § 11-21-1. Further, any College employee that knowingly permits hazing may be convicted of a misdemeanor and fined anywhere from \$10.00 to \$100.000. See R.I.G.L. 1956 § 11-21-2.

VI. HAZING PREVENTION & EDUCATION

- A.** The College has developed a hazing prevention and awareness training program for its students and employees. All incoming freshman and transfer students will receive anti-hazing training during the Fall “New Student Orientation” in connection with Bystander Intervention training. Transfer students beginning in January will be assigned an online anti-hazing program. Hazing prevention and awareness training will also be provided to the following groups on an annual basis:
- i. Varsity athletes and varsity athletic coaches/ team staff members;
 - ii. Club sports student leaders, club sports coaches, and Intramural Athletic Board leadership;
 - iii. Executive board leaders and advisors to College clubs, organizations, and academic fraternities¹; and
 - iv. Orientation Leaders, Pre-Orientation Program Leaders, Resident Assistants, mentors in Horizons and PC1G (PC First Generation), Leadership Fellows Program Companions, and Friar Foundations student leaders.
- B.** All College students and employees are welcome to join any hazing training and prevention programming sessions listed in Section VI(A). Additionally, any student or employee may request online anti-hazing training and/or resources and materials through the Office of Student Affairs/Dean of Students Office at any time.

¹ Some academic fraternities may have their own specific hazing prevention and awareness training requirements separate and apart from the College’s mandatory training program. The College is not responsible for providing this training.