

# STOP CAMPUS HAZING ACT: POLICY STATEMENTS

WTAMU ANTI-HAZING ASR POLICY STATEMENTS (AY 2024-2025), EFFECTIVE 06/23/2025.

West Texas A&M University (WTAMU), a member of The Texas A&M University System, strictly prohibits hazing in accordance with the Stop Campus Hazing Act (SCHA) (enacted December 2024, effective for the 2024-2025 academic year), Texas state law, and the Texas A&M University System Policy 07.01 – Ethics (available at <https://policies.tamus.edu/07-01.pdf>).

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act, that endangers or threatens a person's physical or mental health or safety, or involves property destruction, for the purpose of initiation, admission, affiliation, or maintaining membership in any student organization (as defined by the SCHA), whether recognized by WTAMU or not, such as fraternities, sororities, athletic teams, or other groups. Examples include physical brutality (e.g., whipping, beating), activities causing extreme mental stress (e.g., sleep deprivation, humiliation), forced consumption of substances, or any act against another person violating the Texas Penal Code.

The Stop Campus Hazing Act mandates that WTAMU maintain and report hazing incident data, implement anti-hazing education programs, and enforce policies to prevent and address hazing. Additionally, [System Policy 07.01](#) emphasizes ethical conduct, requiring all members to adhere to federal and state laws, including anti-hazing statutes, and to report unethical behavior. Consent is not a defense, and both individuals inflicting hazing and those submitting to it face disciplinary action.

Students and employees with firsthand knowledge of hazing must report it to the Vice President for Student Affairs (806-651-2389), Human Resource Office (806-651-2114), or the University Police Department (806-651-2300); failure to report is a violation. WTAMU encourages anonymous reporting and provides resources like the National Anti-Hazing Hotline (1-888-668-4293). Violations may lead to disciplinary actions, including probation, suspension, expulsion, or loss of organization recognition for students; termination for employees; and potential criminal consequences for both under Texas Education Code Sections 37.151–37.157 and 51.936, with fines up to \$10,000 and possible jail time based on severity. In emergencies, call 911 or contact WTAMU Police.

## Investigation Process

WTAMU follows a structured process to investigate hazing allegations, ensuring fairness and compliance with the Clery Act and university policies:

1. **Receipt of Report:** Hazing reports are received by UPD or CSAs. Reports to CSAs are promptly forwarded to UPD at 806-651-2300; if report meets criminal elements, the information will be entered into UPD's Record Management System (RMS).
2. **Initial Response:** UPD dispatches a police officer to the scene or requested location to assess the situation. The officer may issue a case number and complete an incident report, which is maintained per institutional and state records retention policies.

3. **Investigation:** UPD investigates all reported hazing incidents, collecting evidence, interviewing witnesses, and consulting with involved parties. Investigations aim to conclude within 30 days, though complex cases may require additional time. Criminal matters are referred to the appropriate County District Attorney's office for review and prosecution.
4. **Student Conduct Process:** If the incident involves students, UPD refers the case to the Office of Community Standards (806-651-2389) for adjudication under the [WTAMU Student Code of Conduct](#). The office conducts a review, which may result in sanctions such as suspension, probation, or educational interventions.
5. **Employee Process:** If the incident involves WTAMU faculty or staff, UPD refers the case to the Human Resource Office (806-651-2114) for investigation with reference to processes following [Texas A&M System Policy 32.01.02-W1.99](#) and/or [WTAMU Faculty Handbook](#). The Human Resource Office conducts a review, which may result in disciplinary action.
6. **Student Organization Process:** If the incident involves a national or recognized organization, such as a fraternity or sorority, UPD refers the case to the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership (OSEL) (806-651-2313) for initial review. This may include:
  - a. Council Judicial Board Process: A formal hearing conducted by a council of student organization representatives to review the incident and recommend sanctions.
  - b. Guided Resolution: An informal process involving mediation or restorative practices to address the incident and promote accountability.
7. **Findings and Notification:** Upon completion, UPD and/or any of the above-mentioned offices notify the student organization involved and affected parties of the findings and any disciplinary actions in writing. Notifications comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to protect personally identifiable information.
8. **Confidentiality:** Reports filed anonymously are included in annual crime statistics but cannot be held in confidence due to state public records laws. Victim identities are protected to the extent permissible by law, particularly for sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking cases related to hazing.

## Employee and Faculty Disciplinary Actions

When a WTAMU staff or faculty member is found responsible for hazing, disciplinary actions may be imposed on the employee by the Human Resource Office, in alignment with the [WTAMU Faculty Handbook](#) and [Texas A&M System Policy 32.01.02-W1.99](#). Employee disciplinary actions may range from a verbal warning to a written warning, a Performance Improvement Plan, paid suspension, and/or termination.

## Student Conduct Sanctions for Incidents of Hazing

When a student is found responsible for hazing, the following sanctions may be imposed, as determined by the Office of Community Standards, in alignment with the [WTAMU Student Code of Conduct](#) and SCHA reporting requirements:

- **Disciplinary Reprimand:** An official warning that the student's, or student organization's, conduct is in violation of the WTAMU Student Handbook.
- **Social Probation (for organizations):** A period of time during which a student group or organization will not be allowed to have, host, or attend social gatherings as an entity of their organization.
- **Conduct Review:** An official warning that the student's, or student organization's, conduct is in violation of the WTAMU Student Handbook, but is not sufficiently serious to warrant expulsion, suspension, or disciplinary probation. A student on conduct review shall have their conduct under review for a specific period of time. This sanction may require regular meetings with an appropriate official to ascertain and evaluate the nature and seriousness of the misconduct. Students and student organization's placed on this sanction remain in good standing with the University. If there is a finding of responsibility for subsequent violations of the WTAMU Student Handbook during this time, more severe sanctions may be administered.
- **Disciplinary Probation:** An official warning that the student's conduct is in violation of the WTAMU Student Handbook, but is not sufficiently serious to warrant expulsion or suspension. A student on conduct probation is deemed "not in good standing" with the university. If there is a finding of Responsibility for subsequent violations of the WTAMU Student Handbook during this time, more severe sanctions may be administered.
- **Suspension:** A period of separation of the student from the University. The student is not guaranteed readmission at the end of the suspension, but is guaranteed a review of the case and a decision regarding eligibility for readmission. Suspension takes effect upon exhaustion of the disciplinary process. Suspensions may be implemented in one of two ways: immediate implementation of suspension or deferred implementation of suspension. A student who has been issued a suspension sanction is deemed "not in good standing" with the University. At the end of the suspension period, the student is eligible for re-enrollment. Actual admission to the University will be determined by the academic rules in place at the time of application for re-enrollment.
  - **Immediate Suspension:** Separate of the student or student organization from the University for a definite period of time.
  - **Deferred Suspension:** The sanction of suspension may be placed in deferred status. If the student or student organization is found in violation of any University rule during the time of deferred suspension, the suspension takes effect immediately without further review. Additional student conduct sanctions appropriate to the new violation also may be applied.
- **Expulsion:** Separate of the student or student organization from the University whereby the student is not eligible for readmission to West Texas A&M University and the student organization is prohibited from university recognition.
- **Conditions:** Conditions are additional components of a disciplinary sanction. A condition is usually an educational element that is to occur in conjunction with the assigned sanction. Some examples of conditions include, but are not limited to:
  - **Personal and/or academic counseling intake session.** This condition is attached to the outcome of the intake requiring a certain number of follow-up sessions to be determined by the intake administrator.
  - **Educational programming, interventions, restorative practice, or workshops** determined to help develop the student or organization. For example, Anger

- Management course, Substance Abuse module, Hazing Education workshop, etc.
- Residence hall relocation and/or contract review/cancellation of Residence Hall contract or use of dining facilities.
- Restitution or compensation for loss, damage, or injury, which may take the form of appropriate service and/or monetary or material replacement. Structural sanctions applied to student organizations, which are changes related to the structure, membership, or governance of the organization.
- No Contact Order: This is an official directive from WT that two parties not have contact with one another. This mutual No Contact Order asks both students to refrain from communicating in person, through electronic communications, or contacting one another via a third party.
- Restrictions: The withdrawal of specified privileges for a defined period of time, but without additional stipulations contained in the imposition of a sanction which results in a student being not in good standing. The restrictions involved will be clearly defined. Some examples of restrictions include, but are not limited to:
  - Revocation of parking privileges.
  - Denial of eligibility for holding office in registered student organizations.
  - Denial of participation in extracurricular activities.
  - Prohibited access to university facilities and/or prohibited direct or indirect contact with members of the University community.
  - Loss of privileges on a temporary or permanent basis.

## Fraternity and Sorority Sanctions

When a fraternity or sorority is found responsible for hazing, the following sanctions may be imposed, as determined by the Office of Community Standards or OSEL, in alignment with the [WTAMU Student Code of Conduct](#) and SCHA reporting requirements:

- Loss of University Recognition: The organization loses its status as a recognized student organization, prohibiting participation in university activities.
- Required Trainings from National Organization: The organization must complete anti-hazing training mandated by its national governing body.
- Required Trainings from University: Members must participate in WTAMU-provided hazing prevention education.
- Education Workshops: The organization must host or attend workshops on hazing prevention and ethical leadership.
- Organization-Led Education Initiatives: The organization develops and implements its own anti-hazing education programs.
- Internal Policy and Procedure Review: The organization reviews and aligns its policies with an advisory committee to prevent future incidents.
- Internal Accountability Process: The organization conducts its own standards board or judicial board process to address member violations.
- Loss of Membership: Individual members involved in hazing may be removed from the organization.

- **Required Coaching Sessions and Check-ins:** Members participate in ongoing mentoring or accountability meetings.
- **Social Restrictions:** Includes social probation or suspension, limiting the organization's ability to host social events.
- **Restriction of Campus Facilities Reservations:** The organization is barred from reserving university facilities.
- **Intramural Restrictions:** The organization is prohibited from participating in intramural sports.
- **Homecoming Participation Restrictions:** The organization is excluded from homecoming events.
- **Restitution to Governing Councils:** The organization may be required to pay fines or restitution to fraternity/sorority governing councils.

These sanctions will be documented in the Campus Hazing Transparency Report, as required by the SCHA, starting in December 2025.

## Prevention and Awareness Programs

WTAMU is dedicated to preventing hazing through research-informed, campus-wide programs designed to educate students, staff, and faculty. These programs aim to raise awareness, promote bystander intervention, and foster a culture of respect. Key components include:

1. **Annual Hazing Prevention Training**
  - **Target Audience:** All students, staff, and faculty.
  - **Content:** Training covers the definition of hazing, its physical and psychological impacts, reporting procedures, and bystander intervention strategies. Trainings use evidence-based research, such as information published by StopHazing.org.
  - **Delivery:** Encouraged online modules for all incoming students and annual in-person workshops for student organization leaders, athletic teams, and faculty advisors. Training sessions are offered during New Student Orientation and throughout the academic year.
2. **Campus-Wide Awareness Campaigns**
  - **Hazing Prevention Week:** Held annually in September, this week may feature events such as guest speakers, panel discussions with student leaders, or interactive workshops to promote a hazing-free campus.
  - **Educational Materials:** Posters, social media campaigns, and brochures are distributed across campus, highlighting hazing definitions, reporting options, and resources. Materials are informed by research on effective anti-hazing messaging.
3. **Student Organization Training**
  - **Leadership Workshops:** All student organization officers and advisors participate in mandatory anti-hazing training, focusing on creating inclusive initiation practices and recognizing hazing behaviors.
  - **Policy Acknowledgment:** Members of recognized student organizations must sign an anti-hazing pledge annually, affirming their commitment to WTAMU's hazing policy.

4. Bystander Intervention Program

- **Program:** The “Buffs Step Up” initiative trains students, staff, and faculty to recognize and safely intervene in potential hazing situations. The program uses research-based techniques, such as those from Step UP! ([stepupprogram.org](http://stepupprogram.org)).
- **Implementation:** Offered as part of orientation for new students and integrated into staff and faculty professional development.

5. Support and Resources

- **Counseling Services:** WTAMU Counseling Services ([wtamu.edu/counseling](http://wtamu.edu/counseling)) provides confidential support for students affected by hazing, including trauma-informed care.
- **Human Resources Office:** Employee Assistance Program and/or other resources for WTAMU employees and student employees (806-651-2114).
- **University Police Department:** 806-651-2300 (available 24 hours a day)
- **National Anti-Hazing Hotline:** 1-888-NOT-HAZE (1-888-668-4293)