

COMMANDER'S POLICY ON HAZING



Hazing is counter to good order and discipline. Marine Corps Order 5354.1E defines hazing as any conduct whereby a Service member or DOD employee knowingly, recklessly, or intentionally and without proper authority but with a nexus to military service causes a Service member or members, regardless of Service or rank, to suffer physically or psychologically or be exposed to any activity which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, oppressive, demeaning, harmful, or creates a risk of physical or psychological injury.

Hazing includes, but is not limited to, any form of initiation or congratulatory act that involves physically striking another to inflict pain, piercing another's skin in any manner, verbally berating another, encouraging another to excessively consume alcohol, or encouraging another to engage in illegal, harmful, demeaning or dangerous acts. Soliciting or coercing another to participate in any such activity is also considered hazing. Hazing need not involve physical contact among or between military members; it can be verbal or psychological in nature.

The Marine Corps forbids hazing. At Henderson Hall, hazing will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Hazing is a leadership issue. I expect leaders and supervisors to know what hazing is, and remain vigilant for activities that constitute hazing or indications that hazing may be occurring. Furthermore, anyone who is subjected to or witnesses hazing is required to report it to the chain of command immediately.

Marines sometimes attempt to justify hazing as an effort to build cohesion, morale, and esprit de corps, or sometimes disguise it as an "initiation" event. Simply stated, hazing is nothing more than a feckless attempt to justify abusive, degrading treatment; and hazing is a symptom of poor leadership. The only acceptable initiation activities conducted in the Marine Corps take place at entry level training (Marine Corps Recruit Depots or Officer Candidate School).

No Marine may engage in hazing or consent to acts of hazing being committed upon them. No one in a supervisory position may, by act, word, or omission, condone or ignore hazing if he or she knows or should have known that hazing may occur. Consent to hazing is not a defense to violating the Marine Corps Order.

As the commanding officer, it is my responsibility to foster a command climate that eliminates hazing and is conducive to the reporting of hazing incidents. I take this responsibility seriously. Therefore, allegations of hazing will be investigated, and, if substantiated, subject to legal action.

Hazing must be eliminated using the fundamental tenants of Marine Corps leadership. As stated in my command philosophy, all personnel will be treated with dignity and respect. There will be no tolerance for hazing.

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew R. Winthrop".

ANDREW R. WINTHROP
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps