

Effective Date: June 23, 2025

POLICY

EMPLOYMENT, SAFETY, STUDENT LIFE

Interim Hazing Prevention Policy

RESPONSIBLE OFFICES

Office of the Dean of Students, Office of the Senior Vice President Operations, Office of the University Provost

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth Boston University's approach to preventing, reporting, and responding to Hazing and to ensure compliance with applicable laws, with the goal of creating a campus community that is safer and intolerant of Hazing.

Covered Parties

This Policy applies to all members of the Boston University community, including but not limited to students, staff, faculty, members of student groups, athletic teams, volunteers, and affiliates.

Defined Terms

Hazing

Hazing includes 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 or admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a student organization (e.g., a club, student government, athletic team, fraternity, or sorority), and (ii) endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, causes or creates a risk of injury, causes mental or physical fatigue or distress or discomfort 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), or embarrassment, ridicule, or intimidation, causes damage to or destruction of property, or which is a violation of University policy or any applicable law.

Non-exclusive examples of hazing include whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone's body, causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing

sleep deprivation or rest or extended isolation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity, causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to consume food, liquid, beverage, alcohol, liquor, drugs, or other substances, causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to perform sexual acts, any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct, branding, exposure to the weather, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of a person, or which subjects a person to extreme mental stress.

Note that this definition encompasses both the Massachusetts [\[1\]](#) and federal law [\[2\]](#) definitions of Hazing. By law, a person cannot consent to Hazing.

Hazing Violation

When a Covered Party or Student Organization is found to have committed Hazing.

Student Organization

Student Organizations are groups in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at Boston University, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution. This includes organizations registered with the Student Activities Office, as well as Student Organizations that are not registered with the Student Activities Office, student groups, student teams, student organizations that are permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities, or are known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group. Student Organizations at Boston University include, but are not limited to, the BU Band, all Boston University athletics teams, which includes varsity athletics and club sports programs and teams, fraternities, sororities, clubs, and student government, as examples.

University Policy

Boston University is committed to fostering a safe and respectful environment for our community, including students, staff, and faculty, to socialize, create networks, and enjoy common experiences. Community members should not be subject to Hazing in connection with their initiation in, affiliation with, or participation or membership in a group, club,

opportunity, or student organization.

I. Hazing

Boston University strictly prohibits all forms of Hazing, and Hazing is also prohibited by Massachusetts and federal law. No **Covered Parties** shall engage in Hazing or be a participant in the Hazing.

II. Reporting Requirements

If a member of the University community knows that a student is being hazed, is directed by another to haze someone, witnesses an act of Hazing, or they are made aware of Hazing at or within the Boston University community, they are required to report it to the University.

Massachusetts law also provides that, if a person knows that another person is the victim of Hazing and is at the scene of such crime, they should report the crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable, to the extent they can do so without danger or peril to themselves or others. Failure to report a Hazing crime is punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000. [\[3\]](#)

A. Process for Reporting Hazing

1. Emergency Reporting

If the Hazing is life threatening, dangerous, violent, or otherwise poses risk of harm, immediately:

- Contact the [Boston University Police Department](#) at 617-353-2121 if you are on campus; or
- Call 911 or local law enforcement authorities if you are off campus.

After fulfilling the Emergency Reporting obligations outlined above, you must also report the same incident of Hazing using the confidential [online Hazing report form](#) administered through the Office of the Dean of Students.

The Office of the Dean of Students must know about every incident of Hazing so that they may coordinate the University's response and ensure the behavior is addressed appropriately.

2. Non-Emergency Reporting

For Hazing that does not constitute an emergency, please use the confidential [online Hazing report form](#) administered through the Office of the Dean of Students. Your report can be anonymous.

III. Notice Requirements

A. Student Organizations

Boston University offices or departments, including but not limited to the Student Activities Office, the Athletics Department, the Department of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (PERD) have developed the following notice procedures in accordance with the Massachusetts Hazing law [\[4\]](#):

- i. At the time of registration, or on an annual basis, the president or leadership of each student organization shall receive a copy of the law and will be required to sign a statement acknowledging that they have received such copy of the law, that they shall distribute a copy of this law to every member, plebe, pledge, or applicant for membership of the student organization, and that the student organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this law.
- ii. This statement will be kept in the student organization's permanent file in the corresponding responsible office.
- iii. The responsible office shall provide copies of the law to each student organization when (1) the student organization registers for the year, and (2) throughout the year as necessary to ensure that the organization can comply with its responsibilities under Massachusetts law.

IV. Investigations

The University office or offices responsible for investigating incidents of Hazing will depend upon the individual or individuals involved, and whether they are students, staff, faculty, or other Boston University community members. However, in general, the University Office responsible for Disciplinary Action (as identified in Section VI of this Policy) is the Office primarily responsible for investigation of the Hazing, and they would follow the investigation procedures followed by their office.

A. Hazing Involving Students

For incidents of Hazing involving students, the Office of the Dean of Students or a designee will investigate in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Code of Student Responsibilities.

B. Hazing Involving Staff

For incidents of Hazing involving staff, the Office of the Dean of Students will forward the report to Human Resources for investigation. Staff conduct is governed by the policies outlined in the [Employee Handbook](#).

C. Hazing Involving Faculty

For incidents of Hazing involving faculty, the Office of the Dean of Students will forward the report to the University Provost for investigation.

Faculty conduct is governed by the policies outlined in the Employee Handbook and [Faculty Handbook](#).

For any incidents of Hazing that may involve criminal conduct, the Boston University Police Department will be notified as appropriate so they may investigate the matter.

V. Publishing Incidents of Hazing

A. Campus Hazing Transparency Report

Boston University will publish findings of Hazing Violations committed by an established or recognized University Student Organization in a Campus Hazing Transparency Report starting on December 23, 2025, for the period beginning July 1, 2025, and updated bi-annually thereafter. Bi-annual updates will only be made to the report when new Hazing Violations have occurred. The report will be published on a Boston University website. [5]

The Office of the Dean of Students coordinates the publishing of this report.

i. Information Published in the Report

For each incident where an established or recognized Student Organization was found to have committed a Hazing Violation, the report will include details of that incident, including the name of the organization, the date(s) of the Hazing Violation, and a description of the violation. The report will not include Personally Identifiable Information (PII), in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

B. Clery Annual Security Report

Beginning on October 1, 2026, the University will include statistics about Hazing in its Annual Security Report. [6]

C. Annual Report with the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education

The University is required to file a report with the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education annually certifying that the institution has complied with the requirement “to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled” about the Massachusetts Hazing Laws §§ 17-18, and also certifying that the institution has a disciplinary policy to address incidents of Hazing. [7]

The Dean of Students is responsible for completing this certification.

VI. Disciplinary Action

Covered Parties and Student Organizations that have been found to have violated this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

A. Disciplinary Process

i. Students

Allegations against students, as defined in the Code of Student Responsibilities, will be adjudicated through the Office of the Dean of Students or a designee.

ii. Organizations

Allegations against varsity athletics and club sports programs and teams, fraternities, sororities, clubs, student government, and other student groups will be adjudicated by the departments with responsibility over the organization, in consultation with the Dean of Students. Student Organizations or Clubs registered with the University that are found in violation of this Policy may have their University recognition withdrawn and/or be subject to disciplinary action.

iii. Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff will be subject to the process for discipline or sanction by their Dean, Office of Human Resources, or other University department or official, as appropriate, in accordance with any applicable policies or collective bargaining agreements.

iv. Others, including Non-Affiliates

Incidents of Hazing involving Others, including non-affiliates, that involve criminal conduct may be addressed via the Boston University Police Department or another law enforcement agency. The University may take other appropriate action,

as necessary. Others and non-affiliates include but are not limited to alumni, those who serve as advisors to the Student Organizations but who are not current Boston University staff or faculty, and non-affiliates of the University.

VII. Recordkeeping

Records related to compliance with this Policy must be retained for 5 calendar years^[8]

[1] M.G.L. c. 269, §§ 17

[2] Stop Campus Hazing Act, Public Law 118-173, enacted December 23, 2024.

[3] M.G.L. c. 269, §§ 18.

[4] M.G.L. c. 269, §§ 19.

[5] This bi-annual report must be completed pursuant to the Federal Stop Campus Hazing Act. *Stop Campus Hazing Act, Public Law 118-173, enacted December 23, 2024.*

[6] This Clery reporting is a requirement pursuant to the Federal Stop Campus Hazing Act . *Stop Campus Hazing Act, Public Law 118-173, enacted December 23, 2024.*

[7] M.G.L. c. 269, §§ 19.

[8] This record retention requirement comes from the Federal Stop Campus Hazing Act . *Stop Campus Hazing Act, Public Law 118-173, enacted December 23, 2024.*

END OF POLICY TEXT

Additional Resources Regarding This Policy

Related Policies

[Student Lifebook Hazing Prevention and Reporting Policy, Lifebook](#), Boston University Office of the Dean of Students

[Student Code of Responsibilities, Boston University Office of the Dean of Students](#)

[Employee Handbook – Human Resources Policies Manual, Human Resources](#)

[Faculty Handbook](#), Office of the Provost

Additional Resources Regarding This Policy

[President's Statement of Commitment to Ethical Conduct](#)

BU Websites and Information

[Faculty & Staff Assistance Office](#)

Forms

[Report Hazing Now](#), Form to Report Incidents of Hazing

stop campus hazing act