

Hazing Policy¹

2025-2026

1. Introduction

Kutztown University of Pennsylvania prohibits hazing and takes any allegation of hazing very seriously. Consistent with university policy and state law, Kutztown University will respond to all reports of hazing to the fullest extent possible and encourages all members of the community to promptly report allegations of any conduct that constitutes hazing.

A copy of the Kutztown University *Hazing Policy* is published in the online student handbook, *The Key*, posted on the university's website, and is distributed to active/recognized student-based organizations on an annual basis. For additional information on hazing policies, bi-annual hazing transparency reports, and hazing prevention resources please refer to <http://www.kutztown.edu/studentconduct>.

2. Definitions

Student: The *Student Code of Conduct* (Article 1) defines a student as: (2a) any person enrolled in courses at Kutztown University either full-time or part-time, pursuing undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies; (2b) all persons who are not officially enrolled for a particular term but have not officially withdrawn from the university and maintain eligibility to enroll; (3) all persons defined under item 2a or 2b who withdraw after allegedly violating the *Student Code of Conduct*.

Student Organization: For the purposes of reporting and classifying hazing statistics under The Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act (Clery Act), a student organization is defined as an organization at Kutztown University (such as a club, society, association, varsity or junior varsity athletic team, club sports team, fraternity, sorority, band, or student government) in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at the institution of higher education, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution.

Recognized Student Organization: Any student organization that is currently registered or is actively in the process of registering with the Office of Student Involvement (OSI) as a student organization under registered, maroon or gold status.

¹ The official Hazing Policy is published in the KU student handbook, *The Key*. This standalone copy of the policy is made available as a reference. Please consult the official policy in the student handbook as needed.

3. What is Hazing?

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:

1. is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization; and
2. 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 including:
 - whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone's body, or similar activity;
 - causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, 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, alcohol, 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;
 - any activity against another person that includes a criminal violation of local, State, or Federal law; and
 - any activity that induces, causes, or requires another person to perform a duty or task that involves a criminal violation of local, State, or Federal law.

Consent is not a defense to a criminal charge of hazing or a charge under Kutztown University's *Student Code of Conduct*, or this policy. The sanctioning or approval of the conduct by a university employee/volunteer is not a defense to a criminal charge of hazing or a charge under the university's *Student Code of Conduct*, or this policy.

Kutztown University and its organizations are subject to criminal penalties for intentionally, knowingly and recklessly promoting or facilitating hazing or aggravated hazing.

4. Penalty & Enforcement

Any Recognized Student Organization found to have engaged in hazing is subject to discipline under but not limited to, the *Student Organization Conduct Review Policy*, and the sanctions noted below. Any individual student who participates in hazing is subject to discipline under the *Student Code of Conduct*. As noted above, hazing is also subject to criminal penalties. Individuals and members of organizations who participate in hazing may be arrested and prosecuted in accordance with state law including Pennsylvania's Timothy J. Piazza Anti-Hazing Law (18 Pa. C.S. §§ 2808-2809). Allegations of hazing by employees or university volunteers may be reported to the Office of Human Resources and Public Safety & Police Services (Public Safety); allegations against other individuals may also be reported to Public Safety.

Individual students accused of hazing as part of a student organization, club, or group that is not an officially Recognized Student Organization under the Office of Student Involvement (e.g., intercollegiate athletic teams, academic groups, music groups/bands, etc.) are subject to the student conduct process under the *Student Code of Conduct* for their actions. Reported incidents of hazing involving unrecognized student organizations, clubs, teams, or groups will also be reported to the appropriate university authority that has oversight for a particular student group (e.g., coach) for follow-up and action (as needed).

5. Sanctions

Students violating this policy may face sanctions including, but not limited to, the withholding of a diploma or transcript pending compliance with issued sanctions including meeting all conditions of probation, suspension, or dismissal as defined in the *Student Code of Conduct*.

Recognized Student Organizations violating this policy may face sanctions including, but not limited to, probation, restitution, suspension of recognition, or indefinite revocation of recognition at Kutztown University as defined in the *Student Organization Conduct Review Policy*.

6. Scope of Policy

Consistent with the *Student Code of Conduct's* Jurisdiction policy (Article 3), this policy prohibits hazing on or off campus including on privately-owned property.

7. Reporting & Enforcement

For **EMERGENCY** situations please call 911 or Public Safety at 610-683-4001.

Any person experiencing, witnessing, or having knowledge of any behavior, conduct, or activity that may constitute hazing is encouraged to report the behavior to Public Safety, Office of Student Involvement, and/or the Dean of Students Office by submitting a [Hazing Report Form](#) or by contacting one of the offices listed below. Student organization, team, or club members should also immediately report any hazing incidents that occur within their organization through this process. While anonymous reports are accepted, the university may be limited in the scope of its response based on available information disclosed.

<https://www.kutztown.edu/studentconduct> or,
https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?KutztownUniv&layout_id=2

Public Safety & Police Services
Old Main, I Wing
Emergencies: 610-683-4001
Non-Emergencies: 610-683-4002
Web: <http://www.kutztown.edu/publicsafety>

Student Involvement Office
153 McFarland Student Union

Phone: 610-683-1383

Web: <http://www.kutztown.edu/involvement>

Dean of Students Office

119 Stratton Administration Center

Phone: 610-683-1396

Web: <http://www.kutztown.edu/deanofstudents>

Student Conduct

119 Stratton Administration Center

Phone: 610-683-1320

Web: <http://www.kutztown.edu/studentconduct>

Upon submission of the online *Hazing Report Form*, a copy of the report will automatically be routed to Public Safety, Student Involvement, Dean of Students and Student Conduct offices for appropriate follow-up and investigation. **If an emergency exists, please do not rely on this reporting form alone and contact Public Safety & Police Services at 610-683-4001 or call 911 immediately.**

8. Investigation of Allegations

Upon receiving a report of alleged hazing by a student and/or a student organization, group, or club, an investigation will occur. Consistent with the process defined in the *Student Organization Conduct Review Policy*, all hazing related matters involving students will include the following steps:

1. Conduct outreach and make contact (if possible) with the individual(s) reporting allegations of hazing.
2. Contact the individual(s) alleged to have perpetrated hazing. As applicable, the organization president and/or the advisor/coach of the student organization will be notified.
3. Interviews with the parties, including victims, the respondent(s), witnesses, and/or organization members will occur.
4. Interim actions as described in the *Student Code of Conduct* and *Student Organization Conduct Review Policy* may be issued at any point during the investigatory process.
5. The investigator will provide a written investigative report and any other appropriate administrative authority, for review and consideration of formal charging under the appropriate policy including, but not limited to, the *Student Code of Conduct* and/or *Student Organization Conduct Review Policy*.
6. On a case-by-case basis, determine whether any violations of this policy are individual and/or organizational in nature. The criteria established in the *Student Organization Conduct Review Policy* will be used to determine whether the allegation was organization-based.

Hazing that may violate a criminal statute under state law will be investigated by Public Safety if the incident occurs on campus or referred to another police agency of jurisdiction by Public Safety, as warranted. Matters involving hazing perpetrated by university employees or volunteers will be referred to Human Resources.

9. Prevention, Education, and Awareness

Kutztown University aims to reduce incidents of hazing through preventive and educational efforts. The Hazing Policy is disseminated to student organization groups and their advisors annually through the Dean of Students Office and Office of Student Involvement. The university offers campuswide education to recognized students, student officers, and faculty/staff advisors participating in specific student organization groups, including but not limited to fraternities and sororities, athletic teams, club sports, and the marching band. An online, research-informed prevention hazing program (e.g., *Hazing Awareness and Prevention for Students*) is provided to promote anti-hazing efforts and to educate community members on its harmful effects and consequences. Anonymous assessment data from the program may be utilized to inform and plan future prevention efforts and gauge the climate around the hazing.

Programming also occurs on campus that supplements prevention efforts. Examples include a campuswide Anti-Hazing Week every Fall spearheaded by Greek Life and through routine student organization leadership training. Other campus programs, such as the Green Dot bystander intervention program, provide community members with skill-building on how to mitigate high-risk situations in campus settings to prevent adverse outcomes. A Campus Hazing Transparency Report is also published bi-annually and posted on the Student Conduct website summarizing findings for any incident in which a student organization was found to violate the Hazing Policy.

10. Amnesty & Retaliation

Consistent with university policy, the university encourages the reporting of *Student Code of Conduct* (Article 13) violations and crimes, including hazing, therefore the university will follow a policy of offering victims of serious crimes or offenses amnesty from secondary student conduct infractions related to the incident question. Students who make a hazing complaint in good faith, or victims of hazing who participate in an investigation, will not be charged with other conduct policy violations that are brought to light in the course of the investigation that arose out of, or was committed as a direct result of, the hazing incident(s) under investigation (e.g., alcohol or drug violations).

It is a violation of the *Student Code of Conduct* (Article 4.5.f) to retaliate against, or to take and/or threaten, adverse action toward any person, for reporting an alleged violation, including hazing, or for cooperating with a university investigation or conduct proceeding.