



Plymouth State University Hazing Prevention & Response Policy

Effective June 23, 2025

1. Anti-Hazing Policy Statement

Hazing is abusive, degrading, psychologically damaging, and may be life-threatening. It is unacceptable in all forms and has no place in the Plymouth State University community. Student groups, organizations, and athletic teams are important contributors to a vibrant and positive campus life and are expected to act in accordance with all University policies and to treat others with respect. Hazing by an individual or group is prohibited whether the conduct occurs on campus or off campus. The University also prohibits retaliation against any person participating in any hazing report, investigation, or proceeding.

1.1 Accountability for Hazing

Individuals found responsible for committing, soliciting, encouraging, directing, aiding, or recklessly permitting hazing to occur will be subject to disciplinary sanctions that could include suspension, expulsion, and/or termination.

2. Prohibited Conduct

2.1 Hazing

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:

- Is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a [student organization](#); and
- 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 to any person 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 applicable 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; or
- Destroys or removes public or private property.

2.2 Retaliation

Any materially adverse action taken against an individual because they were involved in the disclosure, reporting, investigation, or resolution of a report of Prohibited Conduct. Retaliation includes threats, intimidation, harassment, coercion, discrimination, violence, or any other conduct against any person by the University, a student, or an employee. Adverse action does not include perceived or petty slights or trivial annoyances.

The prohibition on retaliation applies to any individuals who participate (or any student who refuses to participate) in any manner in an investigation or hearing. Employees may have other requirements to participate in an investigation or resolution process that do not otherwise violate applicable state or federal law.

Retaliation may occur even where there is a finding of “not responsible” under this policy. Good faith actions lawfully pursued in response to a report of Prohibited Conduct are not retaliation.

3.0 New Hampshire State Law

In addition to University policy, [NH RSA 631:7](#) makes it a crime for an individual or organization to participate in “student hazing” or to fail to report incidents of student hazing.

Under NH RSA 631::7, an educational institution or an organization operating at or in conjunction with an educational institution is guilty of a misdemeanor if it knowingly permits or condones student hazing; or knowingly or negligently fails to take reasonable measures within the scope of its authority to prevent student hazing; or fails to report to law enforcement authorities any hazing reported to it by others or of which it otherwise has knowledge.

4.0 Reporting Hazing

All reports on Prohibited Conduct defined in this policy will be taken seriously and in good faith. The University encourages prompt reporting of incidents of hazing so that it may take responsive action. To support the University’s hazing prevention efforts, individuals who are uncertain as to whether an activity constitutes hazing are encouraged to consult the Community Standards office.

4.1 How to Make a Report

Reporting to the University: Any person may report hazing in person, by electronic mail, or by using the online reporting form below.

Community Standards

Frost House

17 High St. MSC 65

Plymouth, NH 03264

(603) 535-2206

ajgrazioso@plymouth.edu

[Online Reporting Form](#) (can be submitted anonymously)

Reporting to Law Enforcement:

University Police Department

2 High St.

Plymouth, NH 03264

(603) 535-2330

<https://www.plymouth.edu/police>

Anonymous reports to law enforcement may be made to the [Silent Witness Program](#).

4.2 Supportive Measures

Individuals who report allegations of Prohibited Conduct may seek [supportive measures](#).

Supportive measures are individualized measures offered to restore or preserve access to campus education programs or activities, including measures designed to protect the safety of parties, and/or provide support during an investigation process.

4.3 Amnesty

The University recognizes that students are sometimes reluctant to report hazing activity, due to a fear of potential consequences for their own conduct. For this reason, the University may provide amnesty for students who act in good faith to report hazing and hazing-related retaliation and who cooperate as a witness in the investigation and disciplinary process. Individuals who receive amnesty may not be subject to student conduct sanctions related to their own participation in Prohibited Conduct or behavior related to alcohol and/or other drug violations.

In the event amnesty is granted for self-reported conduct, if evidence is presented that the student has continued to engage in Prohibited Conduct or has knowledge of Prohibited Conduct that was not reported, then amnesty for individual violations may no longer be granted, and the student may receive sanctions for prior reported Prohibited Conduct and be referred for any additional incidents of Prohibited Conduct and/or other applicable Student Conduct charges.

Amnesty under this policy does not apply to any criminal action that may be taken by a law enforcement agency, including University Police, or civil action.

4.4 Privacy and Confidentiality

Plymouth State University will respect the privacy of reporting individuals but cannot guarantee confidentiality for hazing reports. The information provided in a report or during an investigation will be relayed only as necessary to investigate and/or seek a resolution and/or to comply with University policies and procedures, and any federal, state, and/or local laws, rules, and regulations. Plymouth State University will limit the disclosure as much as possible, even when it is determined that a request for confidentiality cannot be honored.

4.5 Confidential Resources

The Plymouth State University Counseling Center is a confidential resource for students. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call the PSU Counseling Center at (603) 535-2461.

Voices Against Violence is the local crisis services agency offering confidential advocacy for matters involving sexual and interpersonal violence. Contact an advocate at (603) 536-5999 or 24/7 crisis line: (877) 221-6176.

Confidential resources will not report to law enforcement or university officials without the consent of the person who supplied the information, except for in extreme circumstances involving life safety.

4.6 Medical Considerations

Individuals who have sustained physical injury as a result of an incident of hazing are encouraged to seek medical attention for prompt treatment.

When an incident of hazing also involves sexual violence, a forensic medical examination can also secure valuable evidence that could be used later if a person makes a report to law enforcement. Physical evidence may exist up to five (5) days, or longer, after a sexual assault, though individuals are recommended to receive an examination as soon as possible. Spare

Memorial Hospital can arrange to have a specially trained [Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner](#) (SANE) conduct a forensic examination.

4.7 Employee Reporting Obligations

All employees, with limited exceptions as identified by the University, are required to immediately report to Community Standards any incidents of hazing disclosed to them by others or incidents of hazing of which they may otherwise have knowledge.

5. Investigating Reports of Hazing

When a report is received by the Community Standards office, the Community Standards office will review the information, notify the University Police Department of the report of hazing, and determine the next appropriate actions.

The University will investigate to prevent a recurrence of the alleged hazing and to determine if there are potential violations of the Student Code of Conduct and/or any other applicable processes depending upon the nature of the reported conduct.

When a report includes allegations of sexual misconduct, the matter will be referred to the Title IX Coordinator for oversight of the investigation and resolution.

When a report is first made to the University Police Department, the University Police Department will provide a minimal fact summary to the Community Standards office to ensure the University is able to take administrative responsive action concurrent with any law enforcement investigation that may be underway.

6. Hazing Prevention and Awareness Programs

Plymouth State University aims to be proactive in the prevention of hazing by providing resources, training, and education to the campus community. In addition to this policy, information about the University's prohibition on hazing may be found in the Student Athlete Handbook, and resources provided to Student Organizations by Student Life. Employees are provided with information via an email communication regarding this policy, including how to refer a report of hazing to the appropriate office.

All Plymouth State University students are provided with prevention education delivered via online learning module, "Hazing Awareness and Prevention for Students," an evidence-based hazing prevention and awareness course offered through Vector Solutions, a third-party vendor that specializes in prevention and education.

Residential Life Community Advisors are trained to follow established protocols when students disclose incidents of hazing, violence, and/or sexual misconduct.

The University has a longstanding, established partnership with the local crisis center, Voices Against Violence, resulting in programmatic offerings to student organizations, classes, and the campus at large on bystander intervention and violence prevention.

7. Key Terms

7.1 Coercion

The use of pressure to compel another individual to initiate or engage in conduct against an individual's will.

7.2 Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Forensic Exam

Local medical facilities can arrange to have a specially trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) conduct a forensic examination, which collects evidence from a person's body, clothes, and other belongings. A confidential advocate can meet with an individual at the hospital to provide support, which would be arranged by the hospital. The results of this examination can be provided to law enforcement anonymously. Transportation to and from Speare Memorial Hospital is available through the University Police Department or Campus Safety, if requested, by individuals who have experienced sexual or relationship violence.

When an individual seeks a forensic examination at the hospital, there is no charge. Medical, counseling, and other expenses related to the incident may also be provided at no cost to the individual through the [Victim's Compensation Program](#).

7.3 Student Organization

For the purpose of reporting and addressing Prohibited Conduct under this policy and under the Student Code of Conduct related to hazing, a Student Organization is any group at Plymouth State University (such as a club, society, association, 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, whether or not the group is established or recognized by Plymouth State University. *This definition does not equate to Plymouth State University bestowing recognition on a group. To obtain and maintain official university-recognition to become a sanctioned organization on the PSU campus, groups must engage with the process outlined by the Office of Student Life.*

7.4 Supportive Measures

Supportive measures are individualized measures offered to restore or preserve access to campus education programs or activities, including measures designed to protect the safety of parties, and/or provide support during an investigation process.

Supportive measures may include but are not limited to: access to confidential counseling; extensions of deadlines and other course-related adjustments; increased monitoring of certain areas of the campus; leaves of absence; changes in class, work, housing, extracurricular, or other activity, administrative no contact order, and training and prevention education related to hazing and retaliation.

Any supportive measures put in place will be kept private, except when doing so impairs the ability of the University to provide the supportive measures.

The administrator coordinating the University's response to the report of hazing will offer and coordinate supportive measures as appropriate for the parties as applicable to restore or preserve their access to the University's program or activity or provide support during the University's investigation process.

8. Policy Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed collaboratively by Community Standards, Residential Life, Student Life, Student Advocacy and Wellbeing, Athletics, and Title IX. This policy may be updated as changes in the law dictate.

This policy may be revised at any time without notice. All revisions supersede prior policy and are effective immediately upon posting to the University website.