

Hazing Policy Summary

General Information

Columbus State University prohibits hazing.

This prohibition applies to all students, student organizations, and members of the university community and covers conduct occurring on campus, at institution-sponsored or affiliated events, and off campus when it violates student conduct policies.

Hazing is any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed in connection with initiation into, affiliation with, or maintaining membership in a student organization that causes or creates a risk of physical or psychological injury. Hazing includes activities such as physical abuse, sleep deprivation, forced consumption of substances, coercive conduct, criminal acts, and actions that place a person in fear of bodily harm, regardless of the willingness of the person to participate.

Reports of hazing may be made by any individual through the online Hazing Report Form, the Ethics & Compliance Hotline, or by submitting a student conduct report to University officials. Reports may be submitted anonymously.

The complete policy and procedures can be found in the <https://www.columbusstate.edu/life-at-csu/docs/student-code-of-conduct/student-code-of-conduct-2026-2027.pdf> and on the <https://www.columbusstate.edu/student-affairs/hazing.php> webpage.

Investigation Process for Students and Student Organizations

Hazing allegations involving students or student organizations are investigated by the Office of the Dean of Students through the Student Conduct Officer, Conduct Resolution Officers, and designated investigators under the <https://www.columbusstate.edu/life-at-csu/docs/student-code-of-conduct/student-code-of-conduct-2026-2027.pdf>.

After a report is received, the Student Conduct Officer conducts the initial review and may impose temporary remedial measures or recommend interim suspension when necessary to protect the safety of individuals or the university community.

The accused student or organization receives written notice of the allegations and an opportunity to respond during a Preliminary Disciplinary Meeting and throughout the conduct process.

For serious or repeated violations, the Office of the Dean of Students conducts an investigation that may include interviews, review of documents and evidence, and preparation of an investigation report. The respondent may accept responsibility and sanctions through an

informal resolution or proceed to a formal hearing before an Administrative Hearing Officer or Student Conduct Hearing Panel. The standard of evidence is a preponderance of the evidence, meaning it is more likely than not that a violation occurred.

A written decision is provided through the University's email, and respondents may appeal based on new information, procedural error, bias, or inconsistency with the evidence. Appeals are reviewed by the President or designee, with additional discretionary review available through the Board of Regents.

Possible sanctions include reprimand, educational requirements, restrictions, restitution, conduct probation, separation measures, suspension, expulsion, and loss of recognition or privileges for student organizations.

Individuals are expected to cooperate with the investigation, and retaliation is prohibited.

Hazing violations involving school or student organizations are published in Columbus State University's Campus Hazing Transparency Report and Max Gruver Act Report, available on the Hazing Information and Policies webpage <https://www.columbusstate.edu/student-affairs/hazing.php>.

Investigation Process for Faculty and Staff

Hazing allegations involving faculty or staff are investigated by the Office of Human Resources and/or the Office of Legal Affairs, Ethics, and Compliance under the Columbus State University Staff Employee Handbook, applicable Board of Regents policies, and University policies prohibiting hazing, harassment, and employee misconduct.

After a report is received, Human Resources and/or designated University officials with investigative authority conduct the initial review and may impose administrative leave or other interim measures as appropriate to protect the integrity of the investigation and the campus community.

The accused employee receives notice of the allegations and an opportunity to respond during the investigation process.

Trained University personnel investigate allegations by gathering and reviewing relevant information and interviewing involved parties and witnesses. The employee is provided with an opportunity to respond to the allegations before a determination is made. Cases may be resolved through administrative action, corrective measures, or formal disciplinary proceedings, using a preponderance of the evidence standard.

A written decision is provided to the employee, and eligible staff employees may have grievance rights in accordance with applicable University System of Georgia and Columbus State University policies; appeal rights may vary depending on the employment action taken and the employee's status.

Possible sanctions include verbal counseling, written reprimand, performance improvement plans, suspension, final warning, demotion, termination of employment, or other corrective action deemed appropriate under University policy.

Employees must cooperate with the investigation, and retaliation is prohibited.