



## Southern Methodist University Statement on Hazing

Hazing is a violation of Texas law and the Southern Methodist University *Student Code of Conduct*. Below is a notification sent twice yearly from the Office of the Dean of Students regarding hazing. Individuals or organizations engaging in hazing could be subject to fines and charged with a criminal offense as well as face disciplinary action from the University.

### **Hazing Defined**

The Texas anti-hazing statute is found in the Texas Education Code, Chapter 37, Subchapter F at §37.151 and defines hazing as: *any intentional, knowing or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization if the act is:*

Any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electric shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body or similar activity;

Involves sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other similar activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student;

Involves consumption of food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug or other substance, other than as described by Paragraph (E), that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or which adversely affects the mental or physical health of the student;

Is any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that involves a violation of the Penal code; or involves coercing, as defined by Section 1.07, Penal Code, the student to consume an alcoholic beverage, liquor, or drug in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student is intoxicated, as defined by Section 49.01, Penal Code.

\*\*The fact that a person consented, voluntarily participated, or acquiesced to a hazing activity is not a defense to prosecution for hazing under the law.

## **Reporting Hazing**

According to the law, a person can commit hazing by not only engaging in the activity, but also soliciting, encouraging, directing, aiding or attempting to aid another in engaging in hazing; and by intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly allowing hazing to occur. Witnessing hazing or having first-hand knowledge that a hazing incident is planned or has occurred, and knowingly failing to report that knowledge to the Dean of Students, can also be considered hazing, as defined by law.

**Beta Theta Pi**

**Date of Incident(s):** February 26 and March 2, 2020

**Date Investigation was Initiated:** March 10, 2020

**General Description of Incident:** Beta Theta Pi was allegedly hazing new members of their organization by requiring members to send pornographic images to other members of the chapter. It was also reported that new members were required to engage in activities that can be considered servitude. Beta Theta Pi was charged with violating the following policies: Hazing, Alcohol, Irresponsible Conduct, and Harassment.

**Resolution:** Beta Theta Pi was found responsible for violating the following policies: Hazing, Alcohol, Irresponsible Conduct, and Harassment. Resolution includes Conduct Probation through December 31, 2021 and the completion of an Organization Accountability Agreement, which outlines several educational programs and requirements.

**Date Investigation Concluded:** March 12, 2020

- **Beta Theta Pi**

**Date of Incident(s):** Between January 24, 2021 and January 31, 2021

**Date Investigation was Initiated:** February 1, 2021

**General Description of Incident:** Beta Theta Pi was allegedly hazing new members of their organization by requiring new members to perform calisthenics, consume distasteful food, and perform acts of servitude. New members were also exposed to activities that adversely affected their physical health and safety.

Beta Theta Pi was charged with violating the following policies: Hazing, Irresponsible Conduct, and Laws and University Policy.

**Resolution:** Resolution includes an Organization Accountability Agreement, which outlines several educational programs and requirements effective until May 15, 2023.

**Date Investigation Concluded:** May 11, 2021

- **Beta Theta Pi**

**Date of Incident(s):** Between January 15, 2023 and February 9, 2023

**Date Investigation was Initiated:** February 10, 2023

**General Description of Incident:** Beta Theta Pi was allegedly hazing by requiring new members to perform calisthenics, consume distasteful food, and perform acts of servitude. New members were also exposed to activities that adversely affected their physical health and safety.

Beta Theta Pi was charged with violating the following policies: Hazing, Irresponsible Conduct, Failure to Comply, and Laws and University Policy.

**Resolution:** The national organization Beta Theta Pi entered into a mutual agreement with SMU through May 15, 2026, that includes the deferred suspension of the SMU chapter through May 15, 2026 and additional educational programs and requirements.

**Date Investigation Concluded:** June 28, 2023



members through forced consumption of alcohol at an off-campus location. New members were also exposed to activities that adversely affected their physical health and safety.

**Resolution:** The national organization Kappa Alpha Theta entered into an Organizational Accountability Agreement with SMU through May 15, 2026, which includes removal from campus for a period of time and additional educational programs and requirements.

**Date Investigation Concluded:** July 24, 2022

**Pi Beta Phi**

**Date of Incident:** Between January 15, 2023 and February 2, 2023

**Date Investigation was Initiated:** February 8, 2023

**General Description of Incident:** ~~11~~eW\*nBTZf10~~11~~m@G:

