

Anti-Hazing Policy

Rhode Island College is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive campus environment. Hazing is strictly prohibited and is considered a violation of the College's Code of Conduct and a criminal offense under Rhode Island state law. No student, employee, or student organization at RIC may engage in, support, or allow hazing in any form. This ban applies to all activities on campus, off campus, and online. The policy aligns with federal and state laws and will be periodically reviewed and updated to reflect legal changes.

Hazing is defined as any action or situation, whether conducted on-campus, off-campus, or online, regardless of a person's willingness to participate, that is a condition directly or indirectly for joining, being admitted to, or remaining part of any organization or group. This includes any method of initiation, formal or informal, that:

- Willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of an individual, or
- Damages, destroys, or removes public or private property.

These acts are considered hazing whether or not the student organization or group is officially recognized by the College.

Examples of prohibited hazing activities include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging in acts such as whipping, beating, hitting, using electric shocks, applying harmful substances to someone's body, or any similar conduct;
- Forcing, including actual physical force, implied physical force or emotional force, pressuring, or otherwise causing someone to endure sleep deprivation, exposure to extreme weather, confinement in a small area, intense physical exercise, or similar actions;
- Forcing, pressuring, or otherwise causing someone to ingest food, liquids, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;
- Forcing, pressuring, or otherwise causing someone to engage in sexual behaviors;
- Engaging in actions or using threatening language that reasonably causes someone to fear physical harm;
- Committing any act against another person that constitutes a criminal offense under federal, state, local, or tribal law;
- Requiring, inducing, or causing someone to perform any duty or task that involves a criminal offense under federal, state, or local law;
- Forced, extended social isolation;
- Forced quests, treasure hunts, scavenger hunts, road trips, or similar activities;
- Required public stunts or performances meant to cause embarrassment, burden, or hardship;
- Forced alteration of physical appearance, whether temporary or permanent;
- Forced morally degrading or humiliating games or tasks;
- Required late-night work sessions that interfere with academic responsibilities
- Any forced physical activity that may harm a student's health or safety, or that of others

All members of the college community are expected to refrain from participating in, encouraging, or tolerating hazing in any form. All members of the college community are required to report such incidents as detailed below.

Rhode Island Anti-Hazing Law, [11-21-1 Penalty for hazing.](#)

(a) Any organizer of, or participant in, an activity constituting hazing, as defined in subsection (b) of this section, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars (\$500), or punished by imprisonment for not less than thirty (30) days nor more than one year, or both.

(b) “Hazing” as used in this chapter, means any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. This conduct shall include, but not be limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of the student or any other person, or which subjects the student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

[11-21-2 Penalty for school official permitting hazing.](#)

Every person, being a teacher, superintendent, commandant, or other person in charge of any public, private, parochial, or military school, college or other educational institution, who shall knowingly permit any activity constituting hazing, as defined in § 11-21-1, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be fined not less than ten dollars (\$10.00) nor more than one hundred dollars (\$100).

[11-21-3. Tattooing or permanent disfigurement.](#)

Every person being a student, or being a person in attendance at any public, private, parochial, or military school, college, or other educational institution, who shall tattoo or knowingly and willfully permanently disfigure the body, limbs, or features of any fellow student or person attending the institution by the use of nitrate of silver or any like substance, or by any other means, shall be held guilty of a crime of the degree of mayhem, and shall, upon conviction, be imprisoned not exceeding ten (10) years nor less than one year.

Reporting a Hazing Incident

Hazing is illegal and strictly prohibited at Rhode Island College (RIC) in accordance with Rhode Island State law and the College's Student Handbook. This policy applies to all students, student organizations including clubs, groups, athletic teams, fraternities, and sororities as well as college employees, contractors, consultants, and temporary staff.

Anyone who witnesses, becomes aware of, or is informed of hazing is required to report it to the [Dean of Students Office](#) or [RIC Campus Police](#). Reports can be made through the following channels:

- [Hazing Report Form](#)
- **Dean of Students Office:** 401-456-8355
- **RIC Campus Police:** 401-456-8888
- **National Hazing Hotline:** 1-800-NOT-HAZE (1-800-668-4293)

Reports may be submitted anonymously and will be investigated promptly and thoroughly, to the extent possible. All members of the Rhode Island College community are expected to cooperate in good faith with any investigation related to hazing. The College strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports hazing or participates in an investigation or disciplinary process under this policy and maybe subject to additional disciplinary action by the College. All faculty, staff, student advisors, athletic coaches, and Campus Security Authorities (CSAs) are required to report any suspected or known hazing to the appropriate college authorities. Failure to report individuals may be subject to disciplinary action.

CONDUCT REVIEW PROCESS

Preliminary Review

Allegations of hazing involving students and/or student organizations or groups may be investigated by the Dean of Student Office, Campus Police and/or any other College office responsible for enforcing College policy. Interim measures up to and including suspension from the College may be implemented during the course of the investigation.

Upon receipt of a report alleging that a student or student organization has engaged in conduct in violation of the Anti-Hazing policy, the Dean of Students or designee will determine whether the alleged conduct, if proven true, would constitute a violation. If it is determined that the alleged conduct, even if proven true, would not constitute a violation of the Anti-Hazing policy, no further action will be taken on the hazing allegation. If it is determined that the alleged conduct, if proven true, would constitute a violation of the Anti-Hazing policy, the Dean of Students or designee will determine whether the violation is serious enough that it may result in a sanction of suspension or dismissal from the College. If the Dean of Students or designee determines that the alleged conduct, if proven true, is serious enough that it may result in suspension or dismissal from the College, the Dean of Students or designee will refer the case to a hearing for adjudication. All other alleged conduct will be adjudicated under the College's Code of Conduct Process. Students found responsible for hazing may face

disciplinary sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct and may also face criminal charges under state or federal law.

Reports of hazing that include acts of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct will be referred to the Office of Institutional Equity for review. If the Office of Institutional Equity determines there is sufficient evidence to proceed then it will be adjudicated according to the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner's Title IX Policy and Procedure, or the Nondiscrimination Policy and Procedure. In these instances, allegations of hazing may be listed as collateral misconduct and referred to the Dean of Students Office for adjudication under the Student Code of Conduct and Conduct Review Process.



Written Notice and Scheduling

If it is determined that the alleged conduct, if proven true, would constitute a violation of the Code, the Dean of Students or designee, within five business days, will provide the

Respondent(s) with written notice, which will include: a description of the alleged conduct or complaint, the specific sections of the Code alleged to have been violated; contact information for the individuals facilitating the Conduct Review Process; and a statement that the Respondent is presumed not responsible for violating the Code until the conclusion of the Administrative Process or Hearing and only if the Respondent is found responsible at that time.

The Respondent and any witnesses will be contacted via their college email within three business days to schedule an Administrative Process meeting or hearing as applicable.

Students' Procedural Rights

The following guidelines are designed to help ensure a fair and accurate Conduct Review Process.

Adequate Time to Prepare: Respondent shall have three business days to prepare for all phases of the Conduct Review Process described herein. Notwithstanding, the Conduct Review Process cannot be unduly delayed.

- Access to Evidence: Respondents shall, as permitted by law, be given access to review evidence obtained by the College.
- Burden of Proof: The College has the burden of proof to establish each provision of the Code that the Respondent is alleged to have violated. The College must use the preponderance of the evidence standard when making decisions concerning responsibility. Preponderance of the evidence is a standard of proof that based on the information available, it is more likely than not that a violation occurred, greater than 50% likelihood that the violation is true.
- Presumption of Not Responsible: Respondents will be presumed to be not responsible unless and until the Conduct Review Process finds the Respondent is responsible for a violation of the Policy.
- Past Conduct: Respondents have the right to participate in the Conduct Review Process without having their past conduct records revealed or used to influence a decision concerning responsibility for a new alleged violation of the Code. Students should be aware that records of past violations of the Code may, however, be considered in determining sanction(s) if it is determined that the Respondent is responsible for the new alleged violation of the Code.
- Rescheduling Meetings or Hearings: The College has the discretion to reschedule a meeting or Hearing if necessary. A meeting or Hearing may be postponed if the Respondent can satisfactorily demonstrate that more time is necessary.

- Communications: Respondents will not be restricted from discussing the Conduct Review Process with individuals who can assist the Respondent in gathering relevant evidence and/or providing the Respondent with advice or support related to the Conduct Review Process.

Acknowledgment of Responsibility

At any point prior to the Administrative Process or Hearing, Respondents may acknowledge responsibility for violations of the Code and waive their rights to the Administrative Process or Hearing, including their right to appeal. In the case that the Respondent acknowledges responsibility, the sanction(s) will be imposed according to the nature and severity of the prohibited conduct and any past violations of the Code by the Respondent.

Administrative Process

The Dean of Students or designee may appoint a Decision-Maker(s) to conduct the Administrative Process. This Decision-Maker(s) may be a faculty or staff member.

The Decision-Maker(s) will determine whether the Respondent is responsible for violating the Code by using the preponderance of evidence standard, and, if applicable, impose appropriate sanction(s). Prior to meeting with the Respondent, the Decision-Maker(s) will engage in an information-gathering process. After the information-gathering process is complete, the Decision-Maker(s) will schedule a meeting with the Respondent. During this meeting, the Respondent will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation(s), rebut any inculpatory evidence, and ask related questions.

Based on the information obtained and/or discussed during the meeting and during the information-gathering process, the Decision-Maker(s) will render a decision concerning responsibility and, if applicable, impose a sanction(s). The Decision-Maker(s) will provide the Respondent with written notice of the decision and the sanction(s) imposed. The written notice will include information regarding how to file an appeal. If a Respondent fails to participate in the Administrative Process without good cause, a decision concerning responsibility and sanction(s) will be made in the Respondent's absence.

Hearing

The Hearing will be conducted by three individual Hearing Board Members who will act as the Decision-Maker(s). Consensus by a majority of the hearing board members Decision-Maker(s) is sufficient to constitute a finding regarding responsibility.

The College will undertake its best effort to ensure that at least one faculty and one staff member serve as Decision-Maker(s) at each Hearing. Students may also serve as board members Decision-Maker(s), for certain alleged violations of the Code at the discretion of the Dean of Students or designee.

Prevention and Awareness

Rhode Island College is committed to fostering a safe campus environment by preventing hazing before it occurs. All incoming students are required to complete a research-informed online prevention training and awareness program. The Dean of Students Office oversees all aspects of the Student Conduct Process for hazing allegations involving RIC Students and Student Organizations, including investigation, adjudication, and sanctioning.

Policy Education: The College offers clear and accessible information about RIC's anti-hazing policies, ensuring that all community members understand both the consequences of hazing and their responsibility to uphold a hazing-free environment.

Student Group Training Strategies: Student organizations are provided with effective methods to build unity, trust, and a sense of belonging without relying on hazing.

Multiple departments within RIC collaborate on the prevention of and responses to Hazing:

Prevention Education: Upon entering the College, all new students are required to complete online hazing prevention and awareness training. The College facilitates online training through Vector Solutions.

Student Engagement and Leadership Development leads hazing prevention efforts within recognized Student Organizations including the Fraternity and Sorority community and addresses concerns related to hazing in partnership with the Dean of Student Office.

Student Health Services delivers medical care and health resources to all students.

Counseling Services provides mental health support and resources for all students.

Campus Police investigates criminal Hazing reports, compiles statistics on reported incidents of Hazing, enforces Rhode Island's anti-hazing laws, and ensures proper legal interpretation and application.

Athletics implements hazing prevention initiatives for intercollegiate athletics and responds to hazing concerns within athletic teams.

Faculty and staff designated Campus Security Authorities (CSAs) are required to complete annual anti-hazing training that includes awareness and prevention.

Public Reporting

In compliance with federal law, the College shares information related to campus safety, including hazing incidents that occur within specified geographic areas and ongoing efforts to enhance safety. Starting in 2026, statistics on reported hazing incidents will be included in the College's *Annual Security and Fire Safety Report (ASFR)* in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act, available on the RIC Police Department website.

Additionally, the College publicly discloses any findings of hazing policy violations or related code of conduct breaches involving recognized student organizations. Beginning in December 2025, these findings will be published in the *Campus Hazing Transparency Report*, available on the RIC Police Department website.