

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

BULLETIN NO. 24

ANTI-HAZING POLICY

August 2013

Preface

The District of Columbia Fire & Emergency Medical Services Department seeks to promote a safe environment where employees may function without compromise to their health, safety, and welfare.

It is the Department's policy that hazing is prohibited. The impact of hazing activities can result in irrevocable harm to its victims, their families, and the community as a whole. It is the responsibility of every employee of the Department to support the prevention of hazing and to report any violation of this policy. Supervisors as well as each individual must accept the personal obligation to uphold the basic values of being just, civil, and respectful of the rights of others.

The welfare of our personnel is one of our highest Departmental values. Our commitment to this value is the foundation for maintaining a high-quality workforce. We expect our leaders to demonstrate this commitment by aggressively eliminating barriers to success for all people. All personnel will share responsibility for ensuring that the talents and capabilities of our employees and the Department as a whole are used in a manner that contributes to the accomplishment of our mission.

Hazing Defined

Hazing is any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by an individual, whether individually or in concert with other persons, against another employee, in which both of the following apply:

1. The act was committed in connection with an initiation into a work group, station, shift, or division in or affiliated with the Department
2. The act contributes to a substantial risk of potential physical injury, mental harm, or degradation, or causes physical injury, mental harm, or personal degradation.

Hazing Prohibited

Hazing is prohibited. All personnel must take reasonable measures within the scope of their individual authority to prevent violations of this policy.

Aiding and abetting another person who is engaged in hazing is prohibited. It is not a defense to a violation of this policy that the hazing victim consented to, or participated in, the hazing activity. Infringement on bodily integrity includes roping, tying, choking, taping, handcuffing, holding down, etc., and is unacceptable. Violation of this policy will be met with swift appropriate action.

Acceptable activities may include those not mentioned above that enhance station life by fostering team building activities, which ultimately improves job performance, increases effectiveness, and builds crew continuity.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the officers in charge to set the tone and maintain a workplace environment where all employees feel safe and are able to carry out their duties. It is imperative that the employee who is the subject of the offensive conduct ask the person(s) committing the offense to stop the undesired behavior. If the behavior continues, the employee being offended is to immediately inform their officer.

Any retaliation or sanction against an employee for reporting hazing activity is prohibited and will be met with swift appropriate action.

Hazing Violations

Violators of this policy, or interference in an investigation under this policy, are subject to discipline. Any Department member who knowingly permits, authorizes, or condones hazing activity is also subject to disciplinary action.

The Department will investigate all complaints received. Suspected violations may be reported through the chain of command or to the Department's EEO and Diversity Manager. Violations of this policy may also be reported confidentially to the Internal Affairs Division. Any violation involving a crime, emergency, or an imminent threat to the health or safety of any person should be reported immediately to the Metropolitan Police Department.