



## Commanding General's Policy on Hazing



The Commandant of the Marine Corps defines hazing as “any conduct whereby a military member or members, regardless of service or rank, without proper authority causes another military member or members, regardless of service or rank, to suffer or be exposed to any activity which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, oppressive, demeaning, or harmful.” Simply put: hazing is abuse.

Much of the problem with hazing in the Marine Corps is that some Marines are unable to identify the behaviors that constitute hazing. It is often confused for pranks, jokes, or “good fun” resulting in an environment that inadvertently tolerates it. As a rule, any unsafe, humiliating, or cruel behavior required of an individual to be part of any group qualifies as hazing. Regrettably, events of hazing are often mislabeled as “traditions” or “rites of passage”. Examples include pinning, tacking-on, forced alcohol ingestion, knowledge games, branding, shaving, excessive physical exercise and several others. We belong to one of the most elite institutions in the world and to expect any Marine to do more to belong to the Marines than he or she has already done is an insult.



Unfortunately, victims often willingly participate in hazing. If a victim does give implied or actual consent, both the perpetrator *and* the victim will be charged under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. I want to make it very clear that my expectation as well as the Marine Corps' is that no service member participate in or consent to any act of hazing. Many national events have shown the public how dangerous and irresponsible hazing is. In all ways, Marines should be above any behavior that can be construed as hazing.

We must work together to identify potential hazing behavior that puts Marines at risk. In order to eliminate hazing: potential victims should not consent to anything that is not being asked of other fellow Marines. Commanders should share their values and expectations with their commands, and every Marine should report any hazing behavior to their senior enlisted or officer leadership immediately.

We are Marines! We have worked hard and worked together to get this designation. We have nothing more to prove to anyone.

  
H. G. PRATT

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