



## 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 is some Marines and sailors 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 greatest institutions in the world and to expect any Marine or sailor to do more to belong than he or she has already done is unnecessary.

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 is no Marine or sailor participates in or consents to any act of hazing.

Many national events have shown how dangerous and irresponsible hazing is. We must work together to identify potential hazing behavior. Commanders should share their values and expectations with their commands and everyone should report any hazing behavior to their senior enlisted or officer leadership immediately.

Bottom line: Treat everyone with dignity and respect.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. A. Hashimoto".

M. A. HASHIMOTO

Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve  
Commanding General, Force Headquarters Group