



College of the Atlantic Hazing Policy and Procedure

I. Anti-Hazing Policy Statement

College of the Atlantic (COA) is committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful educational environment. Hazing is strictly prohibited under both federal and Maine state law, and this policy reflects our commitment to prevention, education, transparency, and accountability. Hazing is abusive, degrading, psychologically damaging, and may be life-threatening. It is unacceptable in all forms and has no place in the COA community.

Student groups and organizations are important contributors to a vibrant and positive campus life and are expected to act in accordance with college policy and to treat others with respect. Hazing by individuals and student organizations is prohibited in any form both on campus and off campus.

II. Legal Framework

This policy complies with:

- The Stop Campus Hazing Act (2024), a federal law requiring higher education institutions to increase hazing education, reporting, and public transparency.
- Maine State Law Title 20-A §10004, which mandates hazing prevention policies and disciplinary procedures at educational institutions.

III. Definitions

1. Hazing

Any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with other persons) against another person or persons regardless of the willingness of such other person or persons to participate, that:

- Is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization; and
- Causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or the organization, of physical or

psychological injury. The following are non-exhaustive examples of conduct that causes or creates such a risk:

- Whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone's body, or similar activity;
- Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;
- Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to consume food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;
- Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to perform sexual acts;
- Any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct;
- Any activity against another person that includes a criminal violation of applicable local, Maine State, Tribal, or Federal law; and
- Any activity that induces, causes, or requires another person to perform a duty or task that involves a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law.

2. Student Organization

An organization at an institution of higher education (such as a club, society, association, athletic team, club sports team, band, or student government) in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at the institution of higher education, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution.

IV. Policy Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students, student organizations (recognized and unrecognized), athletic teams, and college-affiliated groups;
- All faculty, staff, and advisors involved in student activities;
- Activities occurring both on and off campus, and online; and
- Third-party affiliates acting on behalf of or under the direction of any college group.

V. Reporting Incidents of Hazing

COA encourages the reporting of incidents of hazing and takes every such report seriously. It will investigate all reports diligently and thoroughly in accordance with Social Misconduct Policy and/or Sexual Misconduct Policy. Individuals found responsible for committing, soliciting, encouraging, directing, aiding, or recklessly permitting hazing to occur will be subject to disciplinary sanction that could include:

- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Rescission of permission for an organization to operate on campus property or receive any other benefit of affiliation with the institution
- Other appropriate disciplinary action

These sanctions shall be in addition to any other civil or criminal penalty to which the violator or organization may be subject.

A Note on Mandatory Reporting: Under Maine Law §10004, all college employees (including faculty and staff) who become aware of hazing must report the incident to the Office of Student Life or the Office of Title IX and Civil Rights Compliance.

Any person may report hazing in person, by telephone or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed below:

Josh Luce, *Dean of Student Life*
 jluce@coa.edu
 207.801.5670

Maya Caines, *Director of Residence Life & the Student Experience*
 mcaines@coa.edu
 207.801.5676

Puranjot Kaur, *Title IX Coordinator*
 pkaur@coa.edu
 207.801.5614

VI. Private vs. Confidential Reporting

COA will respect the privacy of reporters but cannot guarantee confidentiality for hazing reports. The information you provide to a non-confidential resource will be relayed only as necessary to investigate and/or seek a resolution and/or to comply with other appropriate COA policies and procedures, and any federal, state and/or local laws, rules and regulations. COA will limit the disclosure as much as possible, even if the institution determines that the request for confidentiality cannot be honored.

Individuals wishing to maintain absolute confidentiality can seek support from COA mental health counselors and nurses, the COA Confidential Resource Advisor (Pamela Gagnon da Silva, LCPC), from other mental health practitioners or clergy in town, or from various community

partners. Campus counselors are available to help you free of charge. These people can offer you confidentiality, discuss options and offer advice without any obligation to tell anyone, except in instances of extreme health and/or safety emergencies.

VII. Amnesty Related to Hazing Reports

COA recognizes that students are sometimes reluctant to report hazing activity, due to a fear of potential consequences for their own conduct. For this reason, the college has adopted an amnesty policy which states that a student who acts in good faith to report activity that may fall within the definition of hazing and/or a victim who cooperates fully as a witness in the investigation and disciplinary process may not be subject to social misconduct sanctions related to their own participation in hazing behavior and other behavior related to alcohol and/or drug violations, as determined by the college in its sole discretion.

In the event amnesty is granted for self-reported behaviors, if evidence is presented that the student has continued to engage in hazing behaviors or has knowledge of hazing activity that was not reported, they may be held accountable for past behavior. Students who choose to report and request amnesty for their own conduct should know that amnesty does not apply to any criminal or civil action that may be taken by any law enforcement agencies.

VIII. Investigation Process

After a report is received, COA will quickly review the submission and determine the next appropriate actions. If a report is criminal in nature, Campus Safety and/or local law enforcement will be contacted. COA will also conduct its own investigation to prevent a recurrence of the alleged hazing and to determine if there are potential violations of applicable policies/processes depending upon the nature of the complaint.

IX. Retaliation

No person may intimidate, threaten, coerce or discriminate against any individual because the individual made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this Hazing Policy and Procedure.

Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the Social Misconduct Policy and/or applicable policies within the Employee/Faculty Manuals.

X. Education and Prevention

In accordance with both federal and state requirements, COA will:

1. Require annual hazing prevention training for all students, faculty, staff, and student organizations.
2. Incorporate hazing education into student orientation and leadership development programming.
3. Provide special training for leaders of student groups, including skill building for bystander intervention, information on ethical leadership, and the promotion of strategies for building group cohesion without hazing.
4. Clearly post this policy and related resources on the college website and in campus handbooks.

XI. Public Disclosure (Stop Campus Hazing Act)

Beginning on December 23, 2025, the college will publish a bi-annual Campus Hazing Transparency Report, available on its website, that includes:

- Organization name
- Date and nature of the hazing incident
- Investigation outcomes and sanctions
 - This log will maintain a rolling five-year archive.

Additionally, the college will comply with all annual reporting requirements to the U.S. Department of Education.

XII. Policy Review and Maintenance

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Student Life Committee, in coordination with legal counsel, to ensure compliance with evolving federal and state hazing laws and best practices in student safety.