

Nichols College Hazing Policy

Effective Date: June 21, 2025
Date Last Revised: New Policy

Nichols College will not tolerate any instance of hazing among students. In compliance with the hazing laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Massachusetts Law on Hazing ([M.G.L. c. 269, secs. 17 to 19](#)) and the Stop Campus Hazing Act, Nichols College does not permit hazing in any of its forms by student organizations or individual students. Hazing will not be tolerated in any form both on campus and off campus.

A Student Organization is defined as an organization at an institution of higher education (such as a club, society, association, varsity or junior varsity athletic team, club sports team, fraternity, sorority, 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.

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or as a group) against another person or persons, regardless of their willingness 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 IHE or the organization, of physical or psychological harm or injury. The consent of the individual subjected to hazing is not a defense under the law. This policy applies to on- and off-campus behavior.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Applying any substance to a person's body or belongings such as whipped cream or paint;
- Forced listening to loud, repetitive music or recordings;
- Whipping, paddling or other beating;
- Personal servitude;
- Pranks such as streaking/panty raids, scavenger hunts, etc.
- Forced or coerced wearing of conspicuous clothing not normally in good taste such as togas;
- Extended deprivation of sleep or adequate study time or rest or extended isolation;
- Forced or coerced branding/tattoos;
- Deprivation of food or water;
- Forced calisthenics;

- Exposure to settings or conditions that adversely affect the physical health or safety of any student or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress;
- Individual or group interrogations;
- Involuntary consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance or
Any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any student or other person.

Reporting an Act of Hazing

In addition to Nichols College policy, Massachusetts State Law (M.G.L. c. 269, secs. 17 to 19, RSA § 631:7) makes it a crime for an individual or organization to participate in or fail to report incidents of student hazing.

If you believe that you or someone you know is experiencing behaviors or activities that could be considered hazing, you should report the incident to prevent continued or future behaviors from occurring. You can report suspected occurrences of hazing behaviors to the Office of Community Standards, Public Safety or through an online submission of an [incident reporting form](#).

The Office of Community Standards

508-213-2027

Community.Standards@nichols.edu

Fels Student Center, 3rd floor, in the Student Life Suite

Public Safety

508-213-2298

publicsafety@nichols.edu

Daniels Auditorium Lower-Level

College Response to Reports

Upon receipt of a hazing report, the Office of Community Standards will investigate and adjudicate the matter in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in the Nichols College Student Code of Conduct. Violations of this Policy may also be referred to law enforcement authorities for further investigation and/or charges. Students and/or students organizations found responsible for violating the Nichols College Hazing Policy are subject to sanctions ranging from Probation to Expulsion from Nichols College.

Retaliation

Retaliation against any individual who reports hazing or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Prevention and Education

Nichols College is committed to maintaining a healthy, respectful, and positive educational environment. To that end, Nichols College Departments implement prevention programs and primary prevention strategies to raise awareness and prevent hazing. Each year, Nichols College distributes the Hazing Policy and the full text of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Sections 17-19, to all enrolled students and all student organizations, clubs, and athletic teams.

Information related to occurrences of hazing will be available in the annual Nichols College Security and Fire Safety Report published by October 1st of each year. The Campus Hazing Transparency Report will be published and updated twice a year. Both reports can be located on <https://hub.nichols.edu/departments/community-standards/>.

As mandated by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 19, Nichols College will:

- Distribute a copy of the anti-hazing law to every full-time student and to each student group, team, or organization recognized by or operating under the sanction of the school.
- Require each student group, team, or organization to distribute a copy of the law to every member, plebe, pledge, or applicant for membership.
- Obtain an annual attested acknowledgment from each student group, team, or organization stating that they have received and understand the anti-hazing law and agree to comply with its provisions.

Massachusetts State Law (General Laws/Part IV/ Title I/Chapter 269 Section 17-19)

Section 17: Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean 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. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Section 18: Failure to Report Hazing

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Section 19: Issuance to students and student groups, teams, and organization: report

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence

of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.