

3d Battalion, 3d Marines

Commanding Officer's Policy on Hazing

In my commander's intent I have emphasized the imperative to take care of our people. In that document I stated that, "**We take care of our people:** We always accomplish the mission with and through our people. Our people includes our Marines, Sailors, Civilian Employees, and their families." I emphasized loyalty to our country, our Corps, our unit and each other, as well as mutual respect, dignity, tactfulness and teamwork. Acts of hazing are not compatible with any of those concepts.

Any act of hazing is a direct attack at the heart of our unit – our people. These attacks will not be tolerated. Acts of hazing are committed by those individuals who have chosen to take an easy path of cowardice and cruelty instead of the harder path of courage, positive influence, and leadership by example. They defeat our readiness, they attack our esprit de corps, and undermine mission accomplishment.

Reference: Marine Corps Order 1700.28B Hazing

Definitions:

- Hazing is defined as any conduct whereby one 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. Soliciting or coercing another to perpetrate any such activity is also considered hazing. Hazing need not involve physical contact among or between military members; it can be verbal or psychological in nature. Actual or complied consent to acts of hazing does not eliminate culpability of the perpetrator.
- Hazing does not include command-authorized or operational activities; the requisite training to prepare for such missions or operations; verbal counseling addressing performance or conduct deficiencies; administrative corrective measures; properly administered Extra Military Instruction; athletic events; command authorized physical training; authorized incentive training permitted **ONLY (exclusively)** at the Marine Corps Recruit Depots; and other similar activities authorized by the chain of command.

Common pitfalls – when and how leaders get in trouble with hazing: The following are some examples of where even well intentioned leaders mistakenly cross the line and commit acts of hazing.

- "Rights of passage" or "initiations": Hazing is violation of a sacred trust between fellow warriors. Acts labeled as "rights of passage" or "initiations," are not authorized in this battalion. Marines and Sailors have all completed entry level training. They have earned the place in our organization by the mere fact that they volunteered to serve their nation and they completed the legal and authorized training events sanctioned by the US Marine Corps and the US Navy. There are no other requirements. They are already in our family – no other tests are required.
- Additional Punishment: There are only six individuals in this battalion who are authorized by the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) to initiate punishment. Those six people are the battalion commander and the five company commanders. No other form or measure of

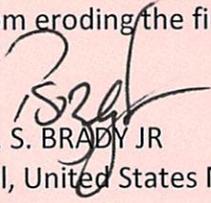
punishment is authorized without the authority of one of those individuals. These types of punishments will be implemented in accordance with the UCMJ. Leaders who are considering organizing or assigning an action or requirement to a Marine and Sailor that is meant to punish should immediately ask themselves, "Has this action been authorized by a commanding officer?" If the answer is no then they must not proceed.

- Non-duty hours physical fitness: In *Trinity*, unit physical training (PT) occurs during duty hours as a part of a company training schedule. Ad hoc PT done after-hours, "behind the scenes" with non-standard objectives is not authorized and will not be conducted. PT is never conducted inside individual Marines or Sailors barracks rooms. If you as a leader are looking over your shoulder to see if anyone is watching the event take place then you are likely in the wrong.
- Incentive training: This type of training is only authorized as Marine Corps Recruit Depots.
- "The victim volunteered to participate": Just because a hazing victim volunteered to participate in an act does not mean the act was not hazing. Marines and Sailors can feel enormous pressure to participate because they have been led to believe that the event is sanctioned or important to their standing or status in the unit and thus will be pressured into volunteering.

Hazing in any form is strictly prohibited. No Marine or Sailor assigned to this battalion will engage in hazing or consent to acts of hazing being committed upon them. No leader will allow, excuse or overlook any incident of hazing. As stated previously, consent to hazing is not a defense to violating this policy. Any violation, attempted violation or solicitation of another to violate this policy will subject those involved to disciplinary action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Whether a victim, witness, or participant, all hands who suspect hazing has occurred will immediately report the suspected incident via their chain of command.

Acts of hazing defeat our readiness, attack our esprit de corps and undermine mission accomplishment. I charge leaders of *Trinity* to prevent hazing from eroding the fine reputation of our unit.



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