



HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS
SQUADRON

COMMANDING OFFICER'S
HAZING POLICY



Hazing violates the trust and confidence our nation has placed in our Marine Corps, undermines our core values and adversely affects our readiness when we fail to treat each and every Marine with dignity and respect.

Hazing is defined as any conduct whereby one military member causes another military member, regardless of service or rank, to suffer or be exposed to an activity which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, or oppressive. Hazing includes, but is not limited to, any form of initiation or congratulatory act that involves physically striking another to inflict pain, piercing another's skin in any manner, verbally berating another, encouraging another to consume alcohol, or encouraging another to engage in illegal, harmful, demeaning or dangerous acts. Soliciting or coercing another to participate in 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. Nor is consent an excuse for hazing. **Consent has nothing to do with the unprofessional act of hazing.**

Many time-honored customs of the Marine Corps include traditional events that celebrate personal milestones and professional achievements. These events are part of our heritage and include hails and farewells, promotion and graduation ceremonies, mess nights and dining in/out, and other similar activities. When properly organized and supervised, these events serve to enhance morale, esprit de corps, pride, professionalism and unit cohesiveness. Don't confuse hazing with the tradition of certain military ceremonies and allow the development of initiations that some might believe promote loyalty.

In the past, some communities may have instituted what they called "rites of passage." No longer! **There is only one rite of passage, and it culminated at boot-camp or officer candidate school graduation day... the day you earned the title, United States Marine!**

Leaders in this command are to ensure that every Marine and Sailor understands this policy and will work to ensure compliance. Hazing is unprofessional, counterproductive and contrary to our Corps' ethos. **Hazing is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated within this command.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K.R. Arbogast'.

K.R. ARBOGAST
LtCol, U.S. Marine Corps