



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
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MCO 1700.28
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18 Jun 97

MARINE CORPS ORDER 1700.28

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: Distribution List

Subj: HAZING

Ref: (a) JAGINST 5800.7C (JAGMAN)

1. Purpose. To publish Marine Corps policy prohibiting hazing and to establish regulations to enforce that policy.

2. Background

a. The individual Marine is the Corps. How we recruit, train, and instill in Marines our core values and a sense of integrity and accountability, equip them to do their jobs, and treat them with dignity, care and concern must be our principal emphasis. This is a leadership issue. This is a warfighting issue. Marines do not go into harm's way, make the sacrifices they always have, or give up their precious lives because they have been hazed or initiated into some self-defined, "elite" sub-culture. They perform these heroic acts of selflessness because they are United States Marines and because they refuse to let their fellow Marines down.

b. Marines are also our most precious asset. We will protect them through fair, scrupulous, and unbiased treatment as individuals -- caring for them, teaching them, leading them. It is the obligation of each member of the chain of command, from top to bottom, to ensure that this sense of fairness is constant and genuine. Every Marine will treat every other Marine with dignity and respect.

c. 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 dinings 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. Unfortunately, some in our ranks confuse hazing with the tradition of certain military ceremonies and develop initiations or "rites of passage" they believe promote loyalty. They do not. Moreover, the occurrence of improper

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conduct is not limited to such activities. Any "at risk" activity should be strictly scrutinized and supervised by the chain of command to ensure that the dignity and respect of all participants is maintained, while preserving the customs and traditions historically associated with the activity.

3. Definition

a. Hazing is defined as any conduct whereby one military member, regardless of Service or rank, 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 excessively 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.

b. Hazing does not include mission or operational activities; the requisite training to prepare for such missions or operations; administrative corrective measures; extra military instruction as defined in the reference; command authorized physical training; authorized incentive training permitted at the Marine Corps Recruit Depots; and other similar activities authorized by the chain of command.

4. Policy. Hazing is prohibited. No Marine, or service member attached to a Marine command, including Marine detachments, may engage in hazing or consent to acts of hazing being committed upon them. No one in a supervisory position may, by act, word, or omission, condone or ignore hazing if he or she knows or reasonably should have known that hazing may occur. Consent to hazing is not a defense to violating this Order. Any violation, attempted violation, or solicitation of another to violate this order, subjects involved members to disciplinary action under Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). This Order does not prevent charging those who have engaged in acts of hazing under other applicable UCMJ articles to include, but not limited to Article 80 (attempts), Article 81 (conspiracy), Article 93 (cruelty and maltreatment), Article 124 (maiming), Article 128 (assault), Article 133 (conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman) and Article 134 (indecent assault, drunk and disorderly conduct, and/or solicitation). This Order is a lawful general order and is effective immediately without further implementation.

5. Action

a. Commanding Officers and Officers-in-Charge will:

(1) provide appropriate training as part of their unit's orientation and annual troop information programs to ensure that Marines are aware of the contents of this Order; and,

(2) foster a command climate that is conducive to the reporting of hazing incidents and be aware of the sensitive nature with which this type of report, as well as the victims privacy, must be handled.

b. The Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command will ensure the policy and prohibitions contained in this Order are presented:

(1) during entry level training to both officer and enlisted Marines;

(2) as part of leadership training in applicable PME courses;

(3) as an annual instruction requirement in the Marine Corps Troop Information Program; and,

(4) as part of the annual Commanders' Course.

c. Headquarters Marine Corps

(1) The Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (Code MP) will exercise staff cognizance for hazing policy.

(2) The Inspector General of the Marine Corps/Commanding Generals will:

(a) incorporate, as an inspection item, command compliance with the requirements as stated in paragraph 5a(2) of this Order; and,

(b) incorporate, as a special inspection item, command compliance with the annual training requirements as stated in paragraph 5b and sample the understanding of this Order by Marines throughout the command being inspected.

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6. Reserve Applicability. This Order is applicable to the Marine Corps Reserve.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. J. ...'. The signature is written over a faint, partially obscured stamp that includes the word 'RECEIVED'.

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