DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
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WASHINGTON, DC 20350-3000

MCO 1700.28A
MPO
1 Feb 2012

MARINE CORPS ORDER 1700.28A

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: Distribution List

Subj: HAZING

Ref: (a) JAGINST 5800.7E w/Ch 1-2
(b) MCO P5800.16A
(c) SECNAVINST 1610.2A
(d) MCO 3504.2
(e) Leaders Guide to Managing Marines in Distress

Encl: (1) Prohibition of Hazing Policy

1. Situation. This Order promulgates policy prohibiting hazing, establishes enforcement guidelines, and identifies assistance to hazing victims and witnesses.

2. Cancellation. MCO 1700.28.

3. Mission. Ensure hazing does not occur, in any form, at any level of command.

4. Execution

a. Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations

(1) Commander's Intent

(a) Purpose. To prevent instances of hazing throughout the Marine Corps and improve overall effectiveness as a fighting force.

(b) Method. Commanders at all echelons will implement this Order to ensure all Marines understand that hazing violates our Corps Values and impairs our ability to fight and win the nation's battles. Commanders will pursue appropriate action in cases of substantiated hazing.

(c) End State. All allegations of hazing will be investigated and violators subjected to appropriate action, in order to ultimately prevent acts of hazing and ensure all Marines are treated with dignity and respect.

(2) Concept of Operations. Through training and leadership, Marines will have an understanding of the policy prohibiting hazing and the consequences of failing to uphold that policy.

b. Subordinate Element Missions. Comply with the policy and procedures contained in this Order and enclosure (1) to prohibit hazing in the Marine Corps.

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(1) The Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs will exercise staff cognizance for the Marine Corps policy on hazing.

(2) The Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command will:

(a) Ensure the policy and prohibitions contained in the enclosure are included during entry level training of both officer and enlisted Marines.

(b) Include the prohibition contained in the enclosure as part of leadership training in applicable Professional Military Education courses and the annual Commander's Course.

(c) Incorporate the prohibition contained in the enclosure as an annual instruction requirement in the Marine Corps Troop Information Program.

(3) The Inspector General of the Marine Corps and all Commanding Generals will:

(a) Incorporate command compliance as an inspection item of the Inspector General (IG) Checklist.

(b) Incorporate command compliance with the annual training requirements as an inspection item of the IG Checklist and sample the understanding of this Order by Marines throughout the command being inspected.

(4) Commanding Officers and Officers-in-Charge will:

(a) Ensure the contents of this Order are known by all personnel under their command.

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

(d) Report substantiated incidents of hazing via Operations Event/Incident Report (OPREP-3) to the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

(e) Publish a commanding officer or officer-in-charge policy statement on hazing which addresses the tenets of this Order. The policy statement should be prominently posted on all unit bulletin boards, in common areas, and in high traffic areas and should be discussed during leadership training.

5. Administration and Logistics. Recommendations for changes to this Order should be submitted to CMC (MPO) via the chain of command.

6. Command and Signal

a. Command. This Order is applicable to the Marine Corps Reserve.

b. Signal. This Order is effective the date signed.

JAMES F. AMOS
Commandant of the Marine Corps

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Prohibition of Hazing Policy

1. Background

a. Hazing is contrary to our Core Values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment and is prejudicial to good order and discipline. It is a willful and demeaning act that degrades and diminishes the ability of victims, and in some cases witnesses, to function effectively within their units. At its core, hazing exploits and creates an environment of fear and reprisal, destroying the confidence and trust that is central to unit cohesion, teamwork, and combat readiness – the very lifeblood of our Corps. Hazing is contrary to our ethos of "taking care of our own" and violates the high standards of virtuous conduct and soldierly repute earned by Marines who have served our Corps honorably since its inception. Hazing violates our institutional character and disrespects our most precious asset – our Marines and Sailors. Hazing will absolutely not be tolerated in the Marine Corps.

b. Many time-honored customs of the Marine Corps include traditional events that celebrate personal milestones and professional achievements. These events are part of the Marine Corps heritage and include hails and farewells, promotion and graduation ceremonies, mess nights and dinings in/out, and other similar activities. These events serve to enhance morale, esprit de corps, pride, professionalism and unit cohesiveness. Unfortunately, some Marines may confuse hazing with the tradition of certain military ceremonies and develop initiations or "rites of passage" they believe promote loyalty or tradition. They do not. Moreover, the occurrence of improper 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 are maintained, while preserving the customs and traditions historically associated with the activity.

2. Definition

a. Hazing is defined as any conduct whereby a 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 implied consent to acts of hazing does not eliminate culpability of the perpetrator.

b. Hazing can include, but is not limited to, the following: 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; playing abusive or ridiculous tricks; threatening or offering violence or bodily harm to another; striking; branding; taping; tattooing; shaving; greasing;

painting; requiring excessive physical exercise beyond what is required to meet standards; "pinning"; "tacking on"; "blood wing(ing);" or the forced consumption of food, alcohol, drugs, or any other substance.

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

d. Hazing is not limited to superior-subordinate relationships. It may also occur between peers or may involve actions towards senior military personnel by those junior in rank or grade to them.

3. Policy

a. Hazing is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

b. 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.

c. No commander or individuals in supervisory positions may, by act, word, deed, or omission, condone or ignore hazing if they know or reasonably should have known that hazing may or did occur.

d. It is the responsibility of every Marine to ensure that hazing does not occur in any form at any level. Every Service member has the responsibility to make the appropriate authorities aware of each violation of this policy.

e. Commanders or individuals in supervisory positions are responsible for ensuring that all events conducted within their organizations or commands comply with this policy.

f. Any violation, attempted violation, or solicitation of another to violate this Order, will subject involved members to potential administrative or disciplinary action under Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). This does not preclude charging those who have engaged in acts of hazing under other applicable Articles of the UCMJ to include, but not limited to, Article 80 (attempt), Article 81 (conspiracy), Article 92 (violation of a lawful general order), 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 punitive lawful general order Actual or implied consent to acts of hazing are not a defense to violating this Order.

g. Reprisal actions against any victim(s) or witness(es) of hazing incidents are strictly prohibited.

4. Victim and Witness Assistance. The commanding officer must be informed immediately of any allegations of hazing. Anyone who has been hazed, or anyone whose command believes may have been subjected to hazing, will be considered to be a victim or witness as defined in chapter 6 of reference (b). Commanding Officers will conduct a preliminary investigation of every reported incident of hazing in accordance with reference (a). Per reference (c), substantiated incidents of hazing must be reported to the Commandant of the Marine Corps via OPREP-3 (reference (d)). Depending on the severity of a confirmed incident, notification to the installation Provost Marshall Office should be considered.

a. Hazing victims/witnesses shall be advised of their victim's rights immediately and offered legal advice, medical assistance, and counseling as necessary. Commanders shall ensure that victims/witnesses are advised of and given access to victim/witness advocacy services in accordance with chapter 6 of reference (c).

b. Extreme caution and sensitivity must be exercised throughout the course of the investigation to minimize re-victimization of victims. The investigation should also focus on the system which allowed the victim to be hazed and the surrounding organizational climate with a view to determine how to change or improve the environment, thus preventing further hazing incidents.

c. Marines who are victims of abuse are potentially at higher risk for stress reactions. The same is true for Marines who are the subject of an investigation (e.g., hazing). Commanding officers should increase monitoring of both these groups of Marines and, when appropriate, intervene to mitigate stress reactions per reference (e). This reference is available online at http://www.usmc-mccs.org/leadersguide/.