

HAZING AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe learning and team environment for all athletes and staff members at Plainfield Community Aquatics.

Examples of Hazing and Bullying activities

“Hazing” refers to any activity expected of someone joining a student organization that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

“Bullying” is any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism; that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in the swim club.

Hazing or bullying is any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or club or USA Swimming policies or regulations.

It's not difficult to decide if an activity is hazing or bullying if you use common sense. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Will active/current members of the group refuse to participate with the new members and do exactly what they're being asked to do?
- Does the activity risk emotional or physical abuse?
- Is there risk of injury or a question of safety?
- Is the purpose of the activity to embarrass, deem or humiliate the person?
- Do you have any reservation describing the activity to your parents, to a coach or Board member?
- Would you object to the activity being photographed for the newspaper or filmed by the local TV news crew?

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," the activity is probably hazing or bullying.

Hazing or Bullying vs. Team Building

<u>Hazing or Bullying</u>	<u>Team Building</u>
Humiliates and degrades	Promotes respect and dignity
Tears down individuals	Supports and empowers

Creates division	Creates real teamwork
Lifelong nightmares	Lifelong memories
Shame and secrecy	Pride and integrity
Is a power trip	Is a shared positive experience!

Reporting Procedures

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing or bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing or bullying must report the alleged acts immediately to a coach or board member. The coach or board member receiving the report is to immediately notify the Head Coach who will also notify the Board President. In the absence of the Head Coach, the Board President is responsible for receiving reports of hazing or bullying. Club members, students and staff shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events that might include hazing or bullying. Failure to report such information can result in suspension or termination from employment or club membership.

The club can only respond to first hand testimony, therefore the student who is alleging the hazing or bullying will be interviewed during the investigation. There are no express time limits for initiating complaints; however, every effort should be made to bring complaints to the attention of appropriate authorities as soon as possible while memories are fresh and witnesses continue to be available.

Complaints will be investigated using PCA's Disciplinary Procedures. During the investigation, confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible. Complainants will be offered counseling and other assistance when appropriate and will be informed of the results of any investigation. Persons making allegations should be aware that a basic, yet thorough investigation may take as long as thirty

(30) days from the date of reporting. More involved cases could take longer in for the club to gather all of the needed information.

Swim Club Action

Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, PCA's Disciplinary Procedures will be implemented. The Board President may also exercise his/her discretion under the by-laws to call a special meeting of the board depending upon the severity of the matter.

PCA may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students or others pending completion of an investigation of hazing.

Reprisal

PCA will take appropriate action against any student, staff or member of PCA, or any contractor or volunteer who retaliates against anyone who makes a good faith report of hazing, or who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation or hearing about a hazing incident. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment and is defined in the Whistleblower Policy, in the employee handbook.