



# Bullying and Hazing

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## **Schools must have an anti-hazing policy under state law.**

### 20-A MRS § 6553. Prohibition of hazing

1. DEFINITIONS. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Injurious hazing" means any action or situation, including harassing behavior, that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of any school personnel or a student enrolled in a public school.

B. "Violator" means any person or any organization which engages in injurious hazing.

2. ADOPTION OF POLICY. The school board shall adopt a policy which establishes that "injurious hazing," either on or off school property, by any student, staff member, group or organization affiliated with the public school is prohibited.

3. PENALTIES. The school board shall establish penalties for violation of the rules established in subsection 2. The penalties shall include, but not be limited to, provisions for:

A. In the case of a person not associated with the public school, the ejection of the violator from school property;

B. In the case of a student, administrator or staff violator, the individual's suspension, expulsion or other appropriate disciplinary action; and

C. In the case of an organization affiliated with the public school which authorizes hazing, rescission of permission for that organization to operate on school property or receive any other benefit of affiliation with the public school.

These penalties shall be in addition to any other civil or criminal penalty to which the violator or organization may be subject.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY. The school board shall assign responsibility for administering the policy to the superintendent of schools and establish procedures for appealing the action or lack of action of the superintendent.

5. DISSEMINATION. The school board shall clearly set forth the policy and penalties adopted and shall distribute copies of them to all students enrolled in the public school.

**School boards are responsible for drafting school policy.**

**The standard of conduct that is developed must include input from parents, students and community members. This means it could be you!**

**There must also be a crisis plan regarding violence approved every year.**

20-A MRS § 1001 defines school board duties. Among those duties are the following:

ADOPTION OF POLICIES. They shall adopt policies that govern the school administrative units.

ADOPTION OF STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT. With input from educators, administrators, parents, students and community members, they shall adopt a district-wide student code of conduct consistent with the statewide standards for student behavior developed under section 254, subsection 11. The student code of conduct must:

- A. Define unacceptable student behavior;
- B. Establish standards of student responsibility for behavior;
- C. Prescribe consequences for violation of the student code of conduct, including first-time violations, when appropriate;
- D. Describe appropriate procedures for referring students in need of special services to those services;
- E. Establish criteria to determine when further assessment of a current individual education plan is necessary, based on removal of the student from class;
- F. Establish policies and procedures concerning the removal of disruptive or violent students or students threatening death or bodily harm to others from a classroom or a school bus, as well as student disciplinary and placement decisions, when appropriate; and
- G. Establish guidelines and criteria concerning the appropriate circumstances when the superintendent or the superintendent's designee may provide information to the local police or other appropriate law enforcement authorities regarding an offense that involves violence committed by any person on school grounds or other school property.

The school board is responsible for ensuring that school officials inform students, parents and community members of the student code of conduct.

**CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN.** They shall annually approve a plan developed by the school unit administration working with local public safety, mental health and law enforcement officials to deal with crises and potential crisis situations involving violent acts by or against students in each school in the school administrative unit.

**Notice**



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