

**COMMANDING OFFICER HEADQUARTERS & SUPPORT (H&S) BATTALION
HAZING POLICY LETTER DATED FRIDAY 26 OCTOBER 2012**



Ref: (A) MCO 1700.28A: HAZING, signed by General Amos on 1 FEB 2012 (6 pages long)
(B) BGen Coglianeses's HAZING Policy Letter Dated 4 APR 2012 (1 page long)

A) People are truly the most valuable and precious asset that the United States Marine Corps has in our inventory. Thus, make no mistake that **HAZING is a crime** that is not restricted to any gender, race, religion, rank, age, MOS, etcetera. The references contain guidance for identifying, reporting, addressing, and most importantly **stopping** any and all forms of hazing.

B) Our Commandant's and Commanding General's Policy Letters on the **stupidity of hazing** is quite clear = it shall not be conducted nor condoned nor tolerated by anyone regardless of rank, billet, etcetera....**THE GOLDEN RULE ALWAYS APPLIES!** The references are very clear that everyone deserves- -and shall be- -treated with dignity & respect. I want to offer another perspective as noted at the following website < <http://www.stophazing.org/definition.html> >:

"Hazing" refers to any activity expected of someone joining a group (or to maintain full status in a group) that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. In years past, hazing practices were typically considered harmless pranks or comical antics associated with young men in college fraternities. Today we know that hazing extends far beyond college fraternities and is experienced by boys/men and girls/women in school groups, university organizations, athletic teams, the military, and other social and professional organizations. Hazing is a complex social problem that is shaped by power dynamics operating in a group and/or organization and within a particular cultural context. Hazing activities are generally considered to be: physically abusive, hazardous, and/or sexually violating. The specific behaviors or activities within these categories vary widely among participants, groups and settings. While alcohol use is common in many types of hazing, other examples of typical hazing practices include: personal servitude; sleep deprivation and restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling, swearing and insulting new members/rookies; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such on one's skin; brandings; physical beatings; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault.

C) All interactions in the workplace or while one is on duty must be professional & positive in nature. Immature & Dangerous acts have no place in the Finest Fighting Force the World Has Ever Known! That includes **bullying- -a cowardly act** usually performed by insecure people that have nothing better to do with their time than to attempt to harass or intimidate others so that they can make themselves look "bigger" in other folk's eyes.

D) Let me be clear - -I will absolutely not tolerate hazing or any perception of hazing. Many of us have read or heard about incidents in America that have led to the deaths of some fine citizens as well as some committing suicide in order to "escape" the persecution. Any incidents of hazing shall be investigated **and** reported to our Sergeant Major and to a Field Grade Officer in that person(s) operational chain of command in order to ensure that it is dealt with both swiftly and appropriately. The tragic examples of Robert Champion at Florida's A&M University (November 2011) and Lance Corporal Harry Lew (3 April 2011) depict that hazing is still a problem in American society. As our Sergeant Major - -SgtMaj James E. Smith- -has stated on many occasions, **"Don't do something that you would not want your Mother to read about you in the newspapers or view on the evening news channels"**....your reputation is too important to risk due to a **violation** of our Core Values!

E) All of us on active duty have already passed the initiation into our Beloved Marine Corps by successfully completing Recruit Training and/or Officer Candidates School. Our Federal Employees have also been screened & interviewed in order to be found fit for employment with the Department of the Navy (DON). Those of us who are now in leadership positions are in a critical role where we can make an overt, positive difference in the way the Marine Corps operates today. However, I totally believe that it is the responsibility of **everyone** affiliated with America's Department of Defense (DoD) to question/challenge/speak up about anything he or she believes is a degrading, humiliating or dangerous activity/act that serves no useful benefit to the mission. As a big believer in that we have two ears and one mouth in order to make us better listeners, rest assured that any instances of hazing that come to my attention shall also get the attention of the Battalion Executive Officer & SgtMaj and GySgt Marsha E. Stokes who is our Equal Opportunity Representative (EOR). Anyone who has a question & concern about hazing or has knowledge about such an event/possible incident can also contact her at phone number 760-274-3767.

Semper Fidelis and may GOD continue to Bless the United States of America!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael E. Cordero". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Colonel Michael E. Cordero, USMC