

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## 2SHB 1751

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning hazing prevention and reduction at institutions of higher education.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Leavitt, Senn, Berry, Valdez, Bateman, Berg, Callan, Cody, Fitzgibbon, Santos, Simmons, Slatter, Bergquist and Pollet).

**House Committee on College & Workforce Development**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

### **Background:**

The definition of hazing includes any method of initiation into a student organization or living group that causes bodily danger or physical harm, or serious mental or emotional harm to a person attending a public or private institution of higher education or any other postsecondary educational institution.

Hazing is prohibited at public and private institutions of higher education or any other postsecondary educational institution in Washington. A person who participates in hazing forfeits any entitlement to state-funded grants, scholarships, or awards for a period of time determined by the institution, and any organization, association, or student living group that knowingly permits hazing is deprived of any official recognition or approval granted by the institution.

### **Summary:**

#### Hazing Definition.

The definition of hazing is expanded to apply to athletic teams in addition to student organizations and living groups. It includes any act committed as part of a person's

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recruitment, pledging, admission into, or affiliation with an athletic team, student organization, or living group in addition to initiation into such groups. The definition specifies that causing, directing, coercing, or forcing a person to consume any food, liquid, alcohol, drug, or other substance which subjects the person to risk of harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate, is considered hazing.

#### Hazing Violations Report.

Public and private institutions of higher education (institutions) must prohibit hazing both on and off campus in their codes of conduct. Beginning with the fall 2022 academic term, each institution must provide students with an educational program on hazing as part of new student orientation. The educational program must be posted on each institution's public website for parents, legal guardians, and volunteers.

Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, each institution must maintain and publicly report actual findings of hazing violations by any student organization, athletic team, or living group. Hazing violations include violations of the institution's code of conduct, antihazing policies, or state or federal laws relating to hazing or offenses related to alcohol, drugs, or sexual or physical assault. The report must include:

- the name of the student organization, athletic team, or living group;
- the date the investigation was initiated;
- the date on which the investigation ended with a finding that a violation occurred;
- a description of the incident;
- the details of the sanctions imposed; and
- the date the student organization, athletic team, or living group was charged with a violation.

The report must not include any personal or identifying information of individual students and is subject to the requirements of the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Institutions must maintain reports for five years and post them on their respective websites 45 calendar days before the start of the fall academic term and 10 days before the start of all other academic terms.

#### Duty to Report Hazing.

Beginning in the fall 2022 academic term, each institution must provide hazing prevention education to each employee at the institution, either in person or electronically. The training must be provided annually for each employee and before the start of the next academic term for new employees. Employees and volunteers who have witnessed hazing or have reasonable cause to believe that hazing has or will occur must report such information to a designated authority at the institution. A person reporting hazing in good faith may not be sanctioned or punished for hazing unless the person is directly engaged in the planning, directing, or act of hazing reported. A person is not prohibited from independently reporting hazing or suspected hazing activity to law enforcement.

An employee is a person who is receiving wages from the institution and is in a position

with direct ongoing contact with students in a supervisory role or position of authority. The definition of employee does not include confidential employees or a person employed as medical staff unless the person has a supervisory role or position of authority over students.

Social Fraternity and Sorority Organizations.

Social fraternity and sorority organizations (organizations) must notify institutions before chartering, rechartering, opening, or reopening a local chapter at the institution and must notify the institution when the organization instigates a hazing investigation of a local chapter. Beginning in the 2022 fall academic term, organizations seeking to obtain or maintain registration with any institution in Washington must certify in writing and provide weblinks to the institution that any websites owned by the organization contain a full list of all hazing violations of policies, state or federal laws, or the institution's code of conduct against the local chapter within the last five years. If an organization does not comply with these requirements, the organization will automatically lose recognition at the institution until it comes into compliance.

Hazing Prevention Committee.

Each public institution of higher education must establish a hazing prevention committee to promote and address hazing prevention. The committee must have at least six members including a chair that is designated by the president of the university. Fifty percent of the committee positions must be students currently attending the institution, with at least one position filled by a student from a student organization, athletic team, or living group. The other 50 percent must include at least one faculty member and one parent or legal guardian of a student currently enrolled at the institution. A student who is a member of a student organization, athletic team, or living group that was affiliated with a hazing violation within the last twelve months may not participate in or be a member of the hazing prevention committee.

The act is titled the "Sam's Law Act."

The act is null and void unless funded in the budget.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	97	1	
Senate	46	0	(Senate amended)
House	97	0	(House concurred)

**Effective:** June 9, 2022