

TEXAS A&M IRON SPIKES

Rookie Handbook

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The following needs to be completed, and verified by the rookie coordinators, by the conclusion of your final Rookie Workout, in order for you to become an active member of Texas A&M Iron Spikes.

Minimum Requirements	RC 1 Initial	RC 2 Initial
30 Active Sigs		
Special Requirements Per Semester		
No more than 2 missed workouts		
No more than 2 missed general meetings		
Paid \$250 in dues		

Ball Signature Log

	Active Sig 1	Active Sig 2	Active Sig 3
Week 1			
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			
Week 5			
Week 6			
Week 7			
Week 8			
Week 9			
Week 10			

Weekly Check List

This will be signed by a Rookie Coordinator at every general meeting.

	Attended Workout	Attended Meeting	Has 3 Sigs
Week 1			
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			
Week 5			
Week 6			
Week 7			
Week 8			
Week 9			
Week 10			

The Rookie Handbook is considered to be a section of the Texas A&M Iron Spikes By Laws.

Dues

Dues are necessary for our organization to function, if you believe that you will be unable to pay your dues in full by the required date you may ask the Vice President to have a meeting with the “Individual Finances Review Board”.

You are required to have paid **\$250.00** to the Vice President no later than the established date. The established date will be decided on by the officer team each semester.

Failure to meet these requirements will result in being called before the “Individual Finances Review Board.”

Hazing Policy

Texas A&M Iron Spikes complies with all University policies and State laws (see “Hazing; Laws and University Policies”) regarding hazing and has a strict no hazing organizational policy.

Included in this handbook are all University policies and State laws regarding hazing. If at any time you feel that you are at risk of being subjected to hazing, please notify the Sergeant at Arms or a Tier-1 officer. Any rookie can reference Appendix VI of the student rules if they are confused about any hazing policies.

Rookies may also report hazing straight to the university by accessing the Offices of the Dean of Student Life.

Appendix VI: <https://student-rules.tamu.edu/append6/>

The Offices of the Dean of Student Life: <https://studentlife.tamu.edu/sco/stophazing/>

Anonymous Reporting website: <https://tellsomebody.tamu.edu/>

Rookie Workouts

Rookie workouts are a tradition of Texas A&M Iron Spikes, that is designed to strengthen the bond between Rookie classes and gauge a rookie's dedication to the organization.

Rookie workouts will be determined at the discretion of the Rookie Coordinators but must take place on a week day. Workouts will not exceed more than once a week and will take place from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. You are required to be at The TAMU Student Recreation Center by 5:50 a.m. The location is subjected to change, at the discretion of the Rookie Coordinators

You are allowed to miss a maximum of **two** rookie workouts. If you miss more than two workouts you will be called before the Rookie Review Board, with the possibility to be denied Active Membership to Texas A&M Iron Spikes.

If you arrive to a Rookie Workout late, it will be up to the discretion of the Rookie Coordinators to determine whether or not you will be considered absent.

Texas A&M Iron Spikes recognizes that physical activity can be defined as hazing in certain circumstances and complies with the limitations outlined in the Texas Education Code (37.151.6.B) so that Rookies will not be subjected “to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.” Texas A&M Iron Spikes asks the Rookies and Texas A&M University recognize that rookie workouts are not used as a form of punishment or hazing but is intended to act as a medium to build camaraderie and engage in team building exercises, in accordance with our core values and vision of leadership, communication, and responsibility.

Signature Requirements

Having your baseball signed by Active Members is a tradition of Texas A&M Iron Spikes, with the intended purpose of providing every rookie with an incentive to attend non-mandatory events and get to know every Active Member on a personal level. Rookies are encouraged to personally create opportunities to get signatures by contacting members individually and posting invitations to lunch, the gym, and any other social forum.

Additionally, it is up to the discretion of the active member on whether or not they want to give you their signature. The only thing you are entitled to is life, liberty, pursuit of happiness, and to be given a baseball at the beginning of your rookie semester.

Even though signatures are a required aspect of Iron Spikes. Active members have a duty to maintain a safe environment for all rookies. Meaning, active members of Iron Spikes cannot ask rookies to perform duties that would put the rookie at physical or emotional harm in exchange for a signature. Also, all active members must remain within the boundaries of TAMU hazing policies.

Example:

Appropriate Behavior: Asking a rookie to have lunch with an active in exchange for a signature

Inappropriate Behavior: Asking a rookie to buy alcohol for an active in exchange for a signature.

Each rookie will be given a baseball at the beginning of their rookie semester.

Each week you will be required to obtain **three** signatures from an active member on your ball.

Your ball will be checked by the rookie coordinators at every general meeting. Meaning that, you are required to bring your ball to every general meeting, if you forget to bring your ball to a general meeting you will be considered as not having the required number of signatures for that week.

You may only fail to obtain the required number of signatures for a week **twice** before you are called before the Rookie Review Board.

It is your responsibility to keep a list of active members who have signed your ball.

Attendance Requirements

Rookies are required to attend every General Meeting and bring their Ball to the meeting.

Rookies are required to attend any events deemed mandatory. Failure to attend these events will result in being called before the Rookie Review Board.

You may be granted an excused absence by a Tier-1 officer, dependent on the circumstances that led to your absence and in accordance to Texas A&M University approved absences.

Rookie Fundraiser

The rookie fundraiser holds a greater intended purpose than raising money. The rookie fundraiser is another one of the many challenges that make the rookies work as a team towards a goal that will require their collective ingenuity, communication, and creativity to achieve.

Each semester the Rookies will host a fundraiser. The fundraiser needs to be completed before rookie initiation and must have an established fundraising goal.

The money raised will either be absorbed by Iron Spikes and deposited in SOFC, or be donated to a charity designated by the Service Director.

Special Requirements based on Semester

Fall Semester: Rookies are required to help set up and tear down **two** tailgates, and attend **one** Kyle Field clean up.

Spring Semester; Rookies are required to obtain a minimum of **four** Drag points.

Failure to meet these requirements will result in being called before the Rookie Review Board.

Rookie President

At the beginning of your rookie semester, the rookies will elect a Rookie president. This person will be at the weekly Officers meeting, and will speak on behalf of the Rookies at those meetings.

He is not considered an Officer of Texas A&M Iron Spikes, but does provide Rookies representation due to their limited voting power.

Officers; Frequent situations and who to contact for what.

My stomach hurts and I don't think I can make it to the rookie work out this morning
Contact one of your Rookie Coordinators, and bring a doctor note to the next meeting.

I need to pay my dues.

Give your money to the Vice President at the next general meeting.

I can't access the website.

Contact the Administrative Director.

I have a test review at A+ on Wednesday, and can't make it to the meeting.

Contact a Tier-1 officer who may or may NOT deem the absence as excused. Save your receipt, because they will check at the next meeting.

I signed up to do a field drag, but forgot I have a lab that night.

Contact the Athletics Director, before the day of the game, and don't be so stupid next time.

Hazing; Laws and University Policies

Texas Education Code; SUBCHAPTER F. HAZING

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.37.htm>

Sec. 37.151. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

- (1) "Educational institution" includes a public or private high school.
- (2) "Pledge" means any person who has been accepted by, is considering an offer of membership from, or is in the process of qualifying for membership in an organization.
- (3) "Pledging" means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.
- (4) "Student" means any person who:
 - (A) is registered in or in attendance at an educational institution;
 - (B) has been accepted for admission at the educational institution where the hazing incident occurs; or
 - (C) intends to attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after a period of scheduled vacation.
- (5) "Organization" means a fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, club, or service, social, or similar group, whose members are primarily students.
- (6) "Hazing" means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization. The term includes:
 - (A) any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity;

- (B) any type of physical activity, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student;
- (C) any activity involving consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student;
- (D) any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects the student to extreme mental stress, shame, or humiliation, that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from entering or remaining registered in an educational institution, or that may reasonably be expected to cause a student to leave the organization or the institution rather than submit to acts described in this subdivision; and
- (E) any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that involves a violation of the Penal Code.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 37.152. PERSONAL HAZING OFFENSE. (a) A person commits an offense if the person:

- (1) engages in hazing;
 - (2) solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing;
 - (3) recklessly permits hazing to occur; or
 - (4) has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution, or has firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report that knowledge in writing to the dean of students or other appropriate official of the institution.
- (b) The offense of failing to report is a Class B misdemeanor.
- (c) Any other offense under this section that does not cause serious bodily injury to another is a Class B misdemeanor.
- (d) Any other offense under this section that causes serious bodily injury to another is a Class A misdemeanor.
- (e) Any other offense under this section that causes the death of another is a state jail felony.
- (f) Except if an offense causes the death of a student, in sentencing a person convicted of an offense under this section, the court may require the person to perform community service, subject to the same conditions imposed on a person placed on community supervision under Section 11, Article [42.12](#), Code of Criminal Procedure, for an appropriate period of time in lieu of confinement in county jail or in lieu of a part of the time the person is sentenced to confinement in county jail.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 37.153. ORGANIZATION HAZING OFFENSE. (a) An organization commits an offense if the organization condones or encourages hazing or if an officer or any combination of members, pledges, or alumni of the organization commits or assists in the commission of hazing.

(b) An offense under this section is a misdemeanor punishable by:

- (1) a fine of not less than \$5,000 nor more than \$10,000; or
- (2) if the court finds that the offense caused personal injury, property damage, or other loss, a fine of not less than \$5,000 nor more than double the amount lost or expenses incurred because of the injury, damage, or loss.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 37.154. CONSENT NOT A DEFENSE. It is not a defense to prosecution of an offense under this subchapter that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Texas A&M University Student Activities Organization Manual; General Policies and Student Rules

<http://studentactivities.tamu.edu/orgmanual/policies>

According to Student Rule Appendix VI, "hazing" is defined as any intentional, knowing or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include students at an educational institution. Examples of hazing may include:

- Any type of physical brutality.
- Any type of activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of mental or physical harm.
- Any activity involving forced consumption of a food, liquid, alcohol beverage, drug, or other substance subjecting the student to risk of harm.
- Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, subjects the student to extreme mental stress or humiliation, or adversely affects the mental health of the student.
- Any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to violate local, state, or federal laws or university rules.

Both individuals and organizations are subjected to harsh legal and university penalties for engaging in hazing, soliciting or encouraging hazing practices, or knowingly or recklessly permitting hazing to occur. Please note that hazing may have occurred regardless of whether or

not the intent was to harm an individual, and regardless of whether or not the student agrees to the activity. Detailed information about hazing offenses, penalties, and legal issues can be found at <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/append6>

A student organization can suffer great consequences for hazing, but the Department of Student Activities recognizes and appreciates the value of formal and informal initiation processes for new members of student organizations. There are numerous creative ways to orient new members in challenging and positive manners, without engaging in hazing practices. To envision alternative practices for your organization, consider the ultimate goals of your orientation or initiation activity. Here are some examples of goals and relevant activities:

- **Unity:** Have the members of your organization work together on a community service project, or engage in team-building activities like visiting a ropes course. Focus on achieving group cohesiveness and communication.
- **Problem-Solving Skills:** Have new members and old members collaborative brainstorm areas of improvement for the organization and plan solutions or objectives for the upcoming year.
- **Mentorship:** Develop a peer mentor program within your organization.
- **Friendship:** Plan special events for the entire organization to gather and get to know each other. Have a "membership circle" where old and new members can express what membership in the organization means to them.
- **Organizational History:** Invite an older member to speak about the foundation, special traditions, and prominent former members of the organization.
- **Knowledge:** Have leaders of affiliated organizations (e.g. speakers from national Greek systems) speak about the governance, expectations, and goals of the overall system.

Hazing is sometimes defended as a way to teach respect, develop discipline, and strengthen bonds between members. Consider that respect must be EARNED - not taught. Victims of hazing offenses rarely report having respect for those that caused them harm. Even if "nothing goes wrong", hazing is a form of victimization that will breed mistrust, apathy, and alienation instead of discipline or friendship. Instead, you should focus on developing orientation or initiation processes that are welcoming, goal-oriented, safe, and affirming to new members!