

Towson University
Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life



New Member Process Policy

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, EDUCATION,
INITIATION AND PRESENTATION

Updated August 2026

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Towson University supports the right of assembly for all members of the university community. Students are therefore free to organize and assemble if they abide by local, state, and federal law. University-recognized fraternities and sororities are affiliated with the Student Government Association (SGA) through their respective governing councils. The SGA-budgeted governing councils are as follows: Independent Greek Council (IGC) Interfraternity Council (IFC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), Panhellenic Association (PHA), and Multicultural Greek Council (MGC). No local chapters may exist at Towson University unless they belong to one of the five governing councils. Chapters under the auspices are expected to abide by the following guidelines regarding the recruitment, selection, education, presentation, and initiation of new members.

KEY TERMS

- A. **Potential New Members/Interest:** Eligible student seeking or identified for membership into a fraternity or sorority at Towson University.
- B. **New member process:** The entire period from recruitment, selection, education, initiation and presentation of new members into the organization.
- C. **Recruitment:** The process in which fraternities and sororities attract potential new members to join their organizations.
- D. **Selection:** The process in which an organization decides what candidates should join their organization. Typically, this is done through interviews followed by some form of voting procedure. Subsequently, once selected candidates are offered an invitation to membership
- E. **Bid:** A term used predominately by IFC, PHA and IGC organizations, which is an invitation to membership
- F. **Intake:** a term traditionally used by NPHC and MGC organization to describe the new member process.
- G. **New member Education:** After Potential New Members are selected to join, they go through a series of education sessions to learn more about the organization they are joining. Once educated members are subsequently initiated and presented.
- H. **Initiation:** An official ceremony where potential new members officially become members of their respective organization.
- I. **New Member Presentation:** This is an event that celebrates the initiation of new members and reveals the new members to the campus at large. This event is traditionally

held by NPHC and MGC organizations and is sometimes referred to as a probate or new member debut.

NEW MEMBER RECRUITMENT

1. Recruitment Periods

The Interfraternity Council and the independent Greek Council host a 2 week semi structured recruitment period each fall and spring semester. The recruitment takes place within the first month of the semester. The Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life and that specific council will declare the recruitment period one semester prior. Once the semi-structured recruitment period has concluded, organizations will give out bids for their selected potential new members. After the first wave of bids are given out, chapters have the right to continue to recruit and select additional eligible potential new members.

Due to the district and regionally structured new member recruitment, selection, education, and initiation for majority of the organizations of **the National Pan-Hellenic Council and the Multicultural Greek Council**, their recruitment period is decentralized. Meaning, each chapter has their own timeline on if and when the new member process happens. Organizations a part of these councils must submit an Intake Intent form the first week of classes. Organizations that do not submit the paperwork are declaring they are not taking new members that semester. Organizations that submit the paperwork will also submit their new member education plan outlined by the district, region, or national office. Even when a group submits the Intake Intent form, it does not guarantee a group will host membership intake that semester.

The **Panhellenic Association** is a deferred recruitment community. This means the community forgoes the recruitment of freshmen students for their first semester at Towson University. Therefore, in the fall semester, Panhellenic has a semi-structured continuous open bidding period that begins on the first day of classes and offers memberships to non-first semester freshmen women. In the Spring semester, the panhellenic community hosts a fully structured recruitment period called primary recruitment. Fully structured means that each chapter conducts the entire recruitment and selection process together and recruits from the same pool of potential new members. Primary recruitment begins the second weekend of school and concludes the following weekend.

2. Potential New Member Eligibility

Chapters may only recruit and select potential new members who are **full-time undergraduate students (attempting 12 or more credits)** and possess a **cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or above**. Transfer students are exempt from the GPA requirement due to not establishing a campus GPA yet.

Eligible student will have to complete the eligibility form online at [How to Join | Towson University](#): This link will take you to the “how to join” section of the University website and

potential new members must scroll down and complete the TU recruitment/intake eligibility form. This link can also be found within the link tree of the TUGreekLife Instagram page as well.

All potential new members must fill out and submit this form to be eligible to participate in any new member recruitment, education, and initiation activities.

Chapters are to ensure that every person they aim to recruit completes the form. The online form is non-binding.

Potential New Members MUST:

1. Complete the eligibility form online at [How to Join | Towson University](#):
2. Have a 2.5 cumulative GPA (Grade Point Average). *(First semester freshmen or transfers are exempt from this) *
3. Must be a full-time student (attempting 12 credits or more).

By completing the eligibility form, a student releases their grades to the chapter, national organization, and the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life and agrees to adhere to the university hazing policy.

NEW MEMBER SELECTION

The office of Fraternity & Sorority Life (FSL) will verify the student(s) has completed the form and meets the eligibility requirement. The FSL staff will ensure verification will happen within 2 (two) business days of the chapter requesting to verify their list of potential new members they wish to select. For verification, chapters must provide the students (Name, TU ID number, Phone # and email). Chapters are required to submit a new member education plan to the office of Fraternity & Sorority Life at the time or prior to the selection of potential new members.

NEW MEMBER EDUCATION

1. Education schedule

New member education schedules submitted to the office of Fraternity & Sorority Life must be detailed with the date, time, location (specific address if off campus) and brief description of the education activity.

The new member education period for fraternities and sororities may not be longer than six **(6) weeks in the Fall and seven (7) weeks in the Spring (including spring break)**. New member education should end no later than two weeks before the first day of finals. All education sessions should be held on the campus of Towson University unless an off campus is required based on your national office's determination and approval from the Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life.

2. Notice of Deviation

The Director/Coordinator of Fraternity and Sorority Life must be notified in writing of any recruitment-related activities taking place outside the scope of the guidelines provided. **A Deviation Letter must be submitted when the recruitment schedule is submitted.**

Submission of this letter does not grant automatic approval for deviation. Those chapters, whose

national headquarters prohibit them from participating in the Towson University designated period, must adhere to the following no less than 5 Business days before any recruitment activity:

- A. The chapter must submit a formal letter with letterhead from the district, regional or national office indicating the reasons and areas in which deviation from the Towson University guidelines are necessary to adhere to the guidelines set out by your organization.
- B. The letter should be signed, and the advisor of the sponsoring chapter should be prepared to meet with the Fraternity and Sorority Life office to further discuss the deviation.

3. Potential new members rights

The new member education process should be conducted in a manner that respects the dignity of aspirants and protects their mental and physical well-being. Examples of acceptable behavior include activities that are not classified as hazing, but support good academic performance, promote service, develop leadership and/or social skills, assist career goals, improve relations with others, build awareness of fraternity or sorority history, instill a sense of brotherhood or sisterhood, foster chapter solidarity or otherwise promote the institutional mission of the University. New members have the right to report any concern they have with the process with the office of Fraternity & Sorority Life/ The University without the fear of retaliation.

COMMUNITY STANDARD FOR THE NEW MEMBER PROCESS

In addition to the guidelines in this document, here are Towson University community standards related to the new member process for fraternities and sororities. Organizations are expected to abide by the following:

- 1. All forms of hazing outlined in the Towson University Hazing Policy are prohibited.
- 2. No drugs or alcohol is allowed at any activity during the new member process, including bid days, new member debuts, recruitment activities, etc.
- 2. Only members of the active chapter members, official advisors, persons designated by your national organization, and potential new members shall be involved in the new member process.
- 3. Potential new members will be selected on the criteria set forth by your (inter)national organization and Towson University.
- 4. New member education schedules shall be submitted to the office of Fraternity & Sorority Life at the time or prior to beginning of new member education or any required activity associated with membership. Schedules must be detailed with the date, time, location (address required if off campus) and a brief description of the educational activity.

5. No digital or physical forms of promotion for the new member process can be with associated items not aligned with your organizational principles and values (i.e. alcohol, fraternities promoting women, references to physical abuse, any forms of hazing, etc.)
6. All new members' activities must end no later than 10:30pm and should not begin earlier than 8:00 am.
7. No member of an active chapter may provide transportation to a potential new member to or from a licensed liquor establishment or any location where alcohol is present, regardless of age.
8. All activities associated with the new member process (recruitment, selection, education, presentation and Initiation) should take place on campus unless otherwise approved by your national office and Towson University.
9. For organizations that host new member activities off campus, transportation must be provided for all potential new members free of charge. If an organization must host an event outside of the Baltimore County/city, it must be approved by the Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life.
10. The chapter will be responsible for providing the times and location of all new member process activities in advance to potential new members (at minimum 72 hours).
11. The new membership process will only take place during the Fall and Spring semesters, within the designed window of time provided by Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life. No student should participate in the new member process during other periods of time.
12. The new membership process shall conclude two (2) weeks prior to the first day of finals to ensure students can focus their attention on being successful during finals.
13. The chapter will educate new members regarding the expectations of the chapter's assessment program after they are initiated.
14. Organization who hosts a New Member Presentation must adhere to the following guidelines when presenting new members to the campus community:
 - a. Presentation of new members must take place no more than 14 calendar days after the members have been initiated into the organization.
 - i. This is considered part of the new member education section therefore the presentation must be within the 6 to 7 weeks allotted.
 - b. The Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life must be notified of the date, time, and confirmed reservation location of the new member presentation no less than two weeks in advance. This information must be shared with the Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life.
 - c. No explicit or revealing attire is to be worn by the new members.
 - d. No profanity, no sexually explicit language, themes, or scenarios. This includes music played by DJs.
 - e. Visiting chapters, alumni and/or graduate member behavior is to be managed by the members of the active chapter at Towson University. It's imperative that advisors and active members work with those members to adhere to university policies.
 - f. Members who are visibly intoxicated/under the influence will not be allowed to stay for the show.
 - g. Masks may be worn during the presentation; however, the ability to breathe without issues must be possible within the constraints of the mask. Additionally,

there must be periods of pause within the show for water breaks to ensure proper hydration of participants.

- h. No physical abuse will be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to: slapping, kicking, spitting, punching, pushing, poking, caning, etc. (Canes, staffs, sticks, etc. may be used as a part of the performance but may not be used as a weapon to harm another individual)
 - i. Absolutely NO references to hazing and/or other illegal activities. This includes chants, songs, disses, or gestures, etc.
 - j. If a new member decides that they cannot, or decides not to participate in the show, a written and signed letter by the new member must be submitted to the Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life no more than 72 hours before the show explaining why they cannot or have decided not to participate.
 - k. No blatant skipping of numbers will be allowed. (ex: 1,2,4,5, etc.)
 - l. The duration of the presentation show should be no longer than 2 and a half hours in total. This includes the time from when the doors are open for guests to the point where the reserved space is clear. Shows must start within 30 minutes of the scheduled time. Chapters will be fined \$50 for every 15 minutes that it starts late AFTER the 15-minute grace period. Exceptions can be made when events related to Acts of God.
 - m. An alumni or faculty/staff advisor must attend the new member presentation.
 - n. No bats, and/or paddles will be allowed at any new member presentations.
 - o. New Member Presentations are a privilege, and the right to have one is not guaranteed. FSL reserves the right to prohibit organizations from having a New Member Presentation if violations have occurred.
 - p. If a New Member Presentation does not occur, new members must be presented in some formal way (reception, tweet, email, flyer, Instagram post, etc.) acknowledging all new members within 48 hours of their initiation.
- 15.** Charges may be brought against the chapter and/or individual chapter member(s) through the Office of Student Accountability & Restorative practices for violating any of the above-listed community standards.

Hazing

National offices of local affiliate chapters, and Towson University have a “zero tolerance” approach to hazing. Any form of hazing is against Maryland State Law.

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MD CODE 1957, Art. 27, s
Code 1957, Art. 27, s 268H

ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND
CODE OF 1957
ARTICLE 27. CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS.
I CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS

Hazing

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Current through End of 1997 Reg. Sess.
s 268H Hazing students prohibited.

(a) Haze defined. -- In this section "haze" means doing any act or causing any situation which recklessly or intentionally subjects a student to the risk of serious bodily injury for the purpose of initiation into a student organization of a school, college, or university.

(b) Violation constitutes misdemeanor; penalty. -- A person who hazes a student to cause serious bodily injury to the student at any school, college, or university is guilty of a misdemeanor and, on conviction, is subject to a fine of not more than \$500, or imprisonment for not more than 6 months, or both.

(c) Consent of student not defense. -- The implied or expressed consent of a student to hazing may not be a defense under this section.

CREDIT
(1985, Ch. 153.)
Code 1957, Art. 27, s 268H
MD CODE 1957, Art. 27, s 268