



## Safety Standards Manual

Education and Policy Manual  
November 14, 2020

# **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of *The Safety Standards Manual* ("Manual") is to provide our collegiate and alumnus members with an outline of expectations regarding activities, behavior, and conduct – as individuals and as chapters. It will also assist chapters in carrying out their responsibilities in administrating a safety program at the chapter level.

The policies stated in this Manual are the International Fraternity's positions on and endorsement of acceptable behavior, safety and discipline within the chapters of Theta Chi Fraternity. Every member should be acquainted with the positions, expectations, and sanctions outlined in this Manual.

Finally, every member should realize that he represents his colony or chapter at all times and in all ways through his behavior.

When necessary, additional guidelines or modifications will be issued for inclusion in this Manual. Chapters are invited to submit suggested changes to the International Headquarters at:

P.O. Box 503  
Carmel, IN 46082  
Phone: 317-848-1856  
Email: [ihq@thetachi.org](mailto:ihq@thetachi.org)

# CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES

## Delegation of Duties

Although the entire chapter is responsible for implementing and adhering to safety standards, it is the duty of the chapter leadership to ensure that the policies are enforced. Each Chapter and Colony President is required to submit each year to the International Headquarters a Safety Standards Verification Form stating that he and his executive council have read and understand *The Constitution and Bylaws of Theta Chi Fraternity, Inc.*, as well as this *Safety Standards Manual* ("Manual"). The Executive Council's duties are as follows:

- Read *the Safety Standards Manual* ("Manual")
- Assist the chapter in implementing the safety standards of Theta Chi Fraternity as outlined in this Manual
- Be prepared to implement the chapter's emergency management plan
- Ensure the investigation of any violation and/or incident and reporting the incident to the alumni corporation officers, chapter advisory board, and the International Headquarters according to the instructions on how to report an incident contained in this Manual
- Seek advice as needed from the International Headquarters staff or the institution's Greek life office
- Educate the members about the safety standards of Theta Chi Fraternity
- Complete the Emergency Management Phone List and distribute it to all members and officers and post the list by telephones in the chapter house
- Meet regularly with the Social Chairman and House Manager to ensure compliance with the safety standards
- Complete the checklists from this Manual and the Social Event Guide with the other chapter officers to ensure that all chapter social events comply with the safety standards

## Delegation of Duties (Continued)

In conjunction with policy education and enforcement, it is important that the chapter is educated on safety and that the chapter provides a safe environment for its members. The following duties are to be completed by the Vice President of Health and Safety:

- Read *A Resource Guide for the Vice President of Health and Safety*
- Post an emergency evacuation plan on the back of each room door
- Assist the House Manager in developing and maintaining a fire safety and preparedness program that includes fire drills, fire alarm, and fire extinguisher inspections
- Assist the House Manager in using the house inspection checklist, which can be found in this Manual, prior to, during, and following occupancy each fall and spring
- Ensure that the House Manager and house corporation correct any safety hazards discovered through safety inspections or by other means
- At least once annually, organize a separate and distinct chapter educational program covering each of the following topics:
  - Hazing Prevention
  - Suicide Prevention/Intervention
  - Recognizing Depression and Getting Help
  - Responsible Use of Alcohol
  - Drug abuse prevention
  - Sexual Assault/Misconduct Prevention
  - Fire/Life Safety

# STANDARDS OF THETA CHI

## **Hazing**

Theta Chi is based on the belief that true fraternalism is nurtured in an atmosphere of social and moral responsibility, respect for duly constituted authority, and loyalty to the principles and values of higher education.

Theta Chi is also based on the understanding that while social behavior cannot be legislated, a fraternity without morally sound precepts and practices is not a constructive influence upon college men.

Theta Chi is further based on the belief that a fraternity has a solemn obligation to help develop its pledges, initiates, and alumni, and that this responsibility extends alike to the institutions where the fraternity is represented. This obligation also extends to parents and others who make possible the education of pledges and initiates as well as the communities where chapters are accountable for good citizenship. This obligation is also owed to the college fraternity system of which Theta Chi is a part.

Finally, Theta Chi is based on the firm conviction that one of the most damaging instruments to the fraternity system is the employment of a pledge education program which involves hazing, and that this unproductive and hazardous practice has no place in the fraternity system.

**From Article V, Section 11 of *The Constitution and Bylaws of Theta Chi Fraternity, Inc.***

### **Hazing Prohibited**

The Fraternity prohibits all physical hazing, paddling, uncalled-for humiliation, and public display in connection with Pledge education and pre-initiatory activities. The Fraternity condemns all forms of hazing in connection with Pledge education and pre-initiatory activities. The active chapters shall carry out the Fraternity's policy and conform to this policy, not only to avoid the danger of bringing discredit to the Fraternity and injuring members, Pledges, and the entire fraternity cause, but also to build higher respect for the chapters and the Fraternity in the minds of Pledges and to instill loyalty. The Fraternity prohibits all forms of public initiation, and pre-initiatory and initiation activities shall not be permitted to interfere in any way with the scholastic obligations or class attendance of those involved.

# Prohibited Hazing Activities

The following activities are hazing and will not be tolerated. This list is by no means all-inclusive; many other activities could be added. Keep in mind that the intent of the activity is as significant as the activity itself.

- Forced or coerced consumption of any beverage, alcoholic or nonalcoholic, or food
- Forced calisthenics of any type, or at any time
- Paddling, striking or any form of physical abuse
- Any type of abandonment (e.g., kidnaps, "ditches," or "bags")
- Scavenger hunts or treasurer hunts, including hunts for nonexistent items
- Any form of "line-ups" or forced interviews
- Requiring pledges to collect signatures from initiated members
- Prevention or deprivation of sleep or study time
- Duties not shared equally with members (e.g., house clean ups, answering telephones, giving rides, or serving meals)
- Requiring pledges to carry items or objects (e.g., paddles, matches, books, change, bricks, or *The Manual of Theta Chi*)
- Any act of personal servitude
- Verbal harassment
- Requiring or endorsing pranks that violate law or reflect poorly on the chapter (e.g., theft, destruction, or harassment)
- Requiring uncomfortable or inappropriate dress
- Restricting or requiring the use of certain doors, entrances, or public rooms or furniture in the chapter house
- Interrogations and testing that is inconsistent with normal testing of educational material (e.g., threatening or harassing pledges through psychological or verbal intimidation including the use of pledge courts or pledge reviews)
- Requiring inappropriate forms of address or greetings to members when answering the telephone
- Requiring pledges to recite the Creed or Greek alphabet "to a match" or in any other manner that is designed to denigrate or intimidate the pledges
- Misleading pledges to believe that they are brothers or "active"
- Use of blindfolds
- Requiring pledges to recite information, phrases, or spiels with no useful or educational purpose
- Keeping vigil over any object or device

# Alcohol and Other Drugs

In any activity or event sponsored or recognized by a chapter/colony, including those that occur on or off organizational/chapter premises:

1. The chapter/colony, members and guests must comply with all federal, state, provincial and local laws. No person under the legal drinking age may possess, consume, provide or be provided alcoholic beverages.
2. The chapter/colony, members and guests must follow federal law regarding illegal drugs and controlled substances. No person may possess, use, provide, distribute, sell, and/or manufacture illegal drugs or other controlled substances while on chapter/organizational premises or at any activity or event sponsored or endorsed by the chapter/colony.
3. If alcoholic beverages are present, they must either be:
  - a. Provided and sold on a per-drink basis by a licensed and insured third-party vendor (e.g., restaurant, bar, caterer, etc.); or
  - b. Brought by individual members and guests of legal age through a bring your own beverage ("BYOB") system.
4. Common sources of alcohol, including bulk quantities, which are not being served by a licensed and insured third party vendor, are prohibited (i.e., amounts of alcohol greater than what a reasonable person should consume over the duration of an event).
5. Alcoholic beverages must not be purchased with chapter/colony funds or funds pooled by members or guests (e.g., admission fees, cover fees, collecting funds through digital apps, etc.).
6. A chapter/colony must not co-host or co-sponsor, or in any way participate in, an activity or event with another group or entity that purchases or provides alcohol.
7. A chapter/colony must not co-host or co-sponsor an event with a bar, event promoter, or alcohol distributor; however, a chapter/colony may rent a bar, restaurant, or other licensed and insured third-party vendor to host a chapter/organization event in accordance with law.
8. Attendance by non-members at any event where alcohol is present must be by invitation only, and the chapter/colony must utilize a guest list system. Attendance at events with alcohol is limited to a 3:1 maximum guest-to-member ratio, and must not exceed local fire or building code capacity of the chapter/colony premises or host venue.
9. Any event or activity related to the new member joining process (e.g., recruitment, intake, rush, etc.) must be substance free. No alcohol or drugs may be present if the event or activity is related to pledging activities, meetings, or initiation into an organization, including but not limited to "bid night," "big/little" events or activities, "family" events or activities, and any ritual or ceremony.
10. The chapter/colony, members or guests must not permit, encourage, coerce, glorify or participate in any activities involving the rapid consumption of alcohol, such as drinking games.

From Article V, Section 13 of *The Constitution and Bylaws of Theta Chi Fraternity, Inc.*

### **Alcoholic Beverages**

The rules and regulations governing the use of alcoholic beverages in the active Chapters and at all Fraternity functions shall be in conformance with the state, federal, and local laws pertaining to same, and with the *Safety Standards Manual of Theta Chi Fraternity*.

### **POLICY ON ALCOHOL PRODUCTS ABOVE 15% ABV.**

Effective February 1, 2019, Theta Chi Fraternity prohibits the presence of alcohol products above 15% ABV in any chapter/colony facility or at any chapter/colony event, except when served by a licensed third-party vendor.

## **Sexual Abuse**

The members of Theta Chi, while aspiring to lofty morals, regard all men and women as equals worthy of significant respect. It is because of the strict adherence to such morally righteous values that the members of Theta Chi deplore any and all instances of sexual harassment.

Recognizing that sexual harassment is an issue confronting campuses as well as the rest of society, Theta Chi Fraternity will not tolerate sexual harassment or abuse.

Examples of sexual harassment or activities which fall within this definition include: the use of strippers; posters, books, shirts, or advertisements which portray persons in a demeaning way; and the use of persons at recruitment events in a subservient or demeaning fashion. Additionally, Theta Chi Fraternity seeks to:

1. Educate its members about the varied forms which sexual harassment can take
2. Ensure adherence to the Fraternity's ideals by every member
3. Promote human dignity and respect for others
4. Encourage growth and development of our brothers
5. Foster proper attitudes towards sexual roles

The Fraternity will not tolerate or condone sexually abusive behavior on the part of its members, whether physical, mental, or emotional. This is to include any actions that are demeaning to women and/or men including but not limited to date rape, gang rape, or verbal harassment.

## Human Dignity

Theta Chi's position is that every person is due the same amount of respect and dignity no matter what race, creed, color, sex, religion, handicap, or sexual orientation.

No member or pledge should be required, coerced, forced, or influenced in any way to do anything that would be unbecoming of a member of Theta Chi Fraternity.

It follows that any activity or action that would cause a member to lose dignity might involve hazing. As stated in this document, Theta Chi Fraternity is opposed to hazing in any form.

## Good Samaritan Policy

A chapter or individual member that seeks immediate and appropriate medical assistance for a person in need related to the use or consumption of alcohol, drugs, or to another medical emergency, may be eligible for mitigation of potential charges related to violations of organizational policies. To be eligible for this potential mitigation, the chapter or individual member may be required to meet in person or by phone with an International Headquarters staff member or volunteer designated by the Fraternity. A chapter or individual member may benefit from this policy more than once, though repeated use of the policy may receive stricter scrutiny.

# **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

From time to time a serious accident or illness may occur in a chapter. The following suggestions are made to assist you in responding appropriately to such a situation. The information provided in this Manual should be reviewed with all chapter officers to prepare them for an emergency. Such preparation can save lives and minimize any loss that may occur.

The Chapter President or another designated officer or brother must take charge of every emergency situation involving injury or significant property damage. This does not mean that he cannot consult with other members who may have more expertise or insight, but it does mean that any final decision rests with the President or his designee. In the absence of the President or designated member, a predetermined hierarchy or the hierarchy of officers stated in our Ritual (President, Vice President, Vice President of Health and Safety, Secretary, Treasurer, and Marshal) should be followed in order to determine who is in charge during an emergency situation.

## **IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE:**

- Pull the house fire alarm
- Call 911 and report the event
- All members should meet in a predetermined area
- Take a head count and report missing individuals to the fire department
- Do not allow anyone to return to a burning building
- As soon as reasonably possible, notify the appropriate campus officials, chapter alumni officers, and the International Headquarters

## **IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY:**

(Serious illness or injury)

- Call 911 and report the emergency
- Notify the International Headquarters and alumni corporation president
- Inform members of the Fraternity's procedures during an emergency
- Close the house and only permit entry to members, law enforcement, emergency personnel, and campus officials
- Assemble all the members, including pledges, in a group
- Instruct the members to make no statements to anyone other than law enforcement, emergency personnel, International Headquarters staff, chapter advisory board members, alumni corporation officers, and campus officials during any investigation
- Instruct the members to direct all inquiries to the Chapter President and/or spokesman

Individual and group counseling is strongly recommended following an emergency crisis situation. There should be people available on campus who can assist in emergency management. The Vice President of Health and Safety should have these resources readily available. Your Greek adviser will be a valuable resource in dealing with any issues following an emergency and he or she should also be able to assist the chapter in finding a counselor if needed.

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PHONE LIST

**Ambulance:** 911

**Fire Department:** 911

**Police:** 911

**International Headquarters:** 317-848-1856

\*\*\*After hours contact for International Headquarters: 602-888-1856

**Chapter Adviser:** Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Alumni Corporation President:** Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Greek Adviser:** Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Property Insurance Agent:** Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

When contacting the International Headquarters for an emergency, have the following information available:

- Name, telephone number, and location of the chapter/colony
- Name, address, and telephone number of person reporting the incident
- Name, address, and telephone number of injured persons (if known)
- Exact time, date, and location of injury or damage
- Description of the incident
- Names of any witnesses
- A list of all of the people or agencies that have been notified

**NOTE:** Obtain the full legal name, home address, and telephone number for any injured person or witness.

Copy this Emergency Management Phone List and provide an updated copy to all of the chapter officers and members. Also, keep an updated list near any telephone and a copy should be placed inside this Manual.

## Special Events

In addition to regular social functions, many chapters often conduct or sponsor special events involving large numbers of people. Examples include a fundraising project for a charity, or alumni events such as Homecoming.

No chapter shall host open parties at which alcohol is present. But even if alcohol is not consumed at a special event, the large number of people usually involved at these activities can create safety risks.

Precautions should be taken for:

- Traffic control
- Crowd control
- Safety of the facility, including fire safety-know the evacuation route(s)
- Risk of injury resulting from any activities or games in which attendees might participate

Also, if an event is held away from the chapter house, an attorney for the chapter should review any contract signed with the property owner.

## Alumni Events

Your chapter will be able to host more successful alumni events if they are planned in association with your alumni corporation. Be sure the corporation officers are familiar with the policies and procedures of this Manual when planning the event. This will help to eliminate any confusion. Additionally, you will want to ensure that the appropriate alumnus members will help to explain and enforce these guidelines with other alumnus members prior to the event.

The alumnus brothers who attend your Homecoming or other event will most likely be above the legal drinking age. Nonetheless, all of the procedures regarding consumption of alcohol and concern for your guests still apply. The chapter may not furnish alcohol to alumni. Ideally, members of your alumni corporation or chapter advisory board will be on hand to greet alumni and deal with any issues that may arise.

If you become concerned about an alumnus who has had too much to drink, seek the help of the local authorities or other alumni to ensure that this brother avoids injury.

# CHAPTER HOUSE SAFETY

A house corporation member should review the chapter property with the House Manager or Vice President of Health and Safety once a semester for a maintenance assessment and to identify opportunities for projects to improve safety for the chapter. If there is an area that does not meet these regulations, the Chapter President should coordinate with the property owner to develop an action plan that ensures that the issue is corrected within a timely manner.

## **Fire Safety**

At the beginning of each semester, the chapter should make an assessment of fire safety devices and the following procedures:

### **Emergency Evacuation Preparedness**

- All halls, stairways, and other escape routes are free from obstructions/debris
- All halls, stairways, and other escape routes are well-lit
- All stairways have secure banisters/railings
- Fire drills are practiced every six months
  - Date of last drill: \_\_\_\_\_
- A written emergency evacuation plan has been established and is reviewed by members regularly
- An escape route map is posted in all bedrooms and at the main entrance to the facility
- Exits and escape routes are clearly marked with lighted signs
- Interior and exterior doors along escape routes are easily opened without keys or special devices
- Self-closing fire doors are present to reduce potentially rapid-spreading fire
- Fire doors remain closed and are kept clear of door stops or obstructions
- Exterior exit doors open outwards/exteriorly

### **Fire Detection System and Fire Extinguishers**

- A working smoke/carbon monoxide detector is installed in each room
- The facility is fully protected by a hard-wired, automatic fire detection/alarm system that is linked to an alarm monitoring agency (which can alert the fire department)
- The system has been serviced and tested by a licensed contractor within the last year
  - Date of last inspection: \_\_\_\_\_
- Manual fire alarm pull boxes are in all hallways and next to all exits
- If smoke detectors are battery operated, detectors are tested monthly and batteries are changed every six months
  - Date of last battery change: \_\_\_\_\_
- An emergency lighting system is present
- Emergency lighting system is tested monthly
  - Date of last test: \_\_\_\_\_
- There is one fire extinguisher for every 3,000 square feet of the building, or there is at least one extinguisher on each floor
- Fire extinguishers are in the kitchen and laundry room
- Fire extinguisher locations are accessible and clearly marked

- Fire extinguishers are checked monthly and fully charged
  - o Date of last monthly inspection: \_\_\_\_\_
- Fire extinguishers are inspected annually by licensed professional
  - o Date of last annual inspection: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Sprinkler System (if applicable)**

- Fire sprinklers are installed (recommended)
- All sprinkler heads are free from obstruction
- The sprinkler system has been inspected by a licensed contractor within the last year (some states require inspections every 6 months)
  - o Date of last inspection: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Electrical**

- All circuits are correctly fused and grounded
- There is no evidence of temporary wiring or tampering
- Electrical covers are in place with none broken
- A "no multiple plug/appliance" policy is in effect and enforced
- The use of extension cords is restricted, especially with high voltage appliances
- Power lines to the facility are clear of obstructions such as tree limbs
- Grounded Fault Interrupters are functional and installed in bathrooms, kitchens, and other wet areas

#### **Kitchen**

- All cooking areas and equipment are protected by a fire hood extinguishing system
- The fire hood extinguishing system has been serviced within the last six months by a licensed professional
  - o Date of last service/inspection: \_\_\_\_\_
- Removable grease filters are cleaned regularly (daily)
- The kitchen is well-supervised, cleaned daily, and operated in a sanitary manner

#### **Furnace and Water Heater**

- The furnace and water heater are located in a separate, fully-enclosed room
- All doors to the room close and latch properly
- The room is free of combustible materials
- Equipment has been inspected within the last year by a licensed contractor
  - o Date of last inspection: \_\_\_\_\_
- An emergency shut-off is installed and is labeled and accessible

#### **Storage**

- Fuels, flammable liquids, and other explosives are prohibited and not stored in the building
- Gas-powered motors are prohibited and not stored or operated in the building
- All cleaning supplies, paint and other chemicals are stored in a secure, well-ventilated area

### **Security**

- Facility access is restricted to members only by key, electronic keyed entry (recommended), or code
- There is adequate exterior lighting
- There is a specific person (i.e. House Manager) responsible for securing the facility at a specific time each evening
- The property is secured and supervised during periods of vacancy (i.e. student breaks)
- Campus security/local police patrol the property regularly for increased security, especially during periods of vacancy

### **Other Building Maintenance**

- The roof is in good condition with no leaks
  - Last roof inspection by licensed contractor: \_\_\_\_\_
- All interior and exterior walls are in good condition; there are no holes in the drywall
- All interior and exterior doors and windows are in good condition; doors/windows close and latch
- Gutters are attached securely and are unobstructed, discharging water away from facility
- Floor surfaces are free of slip, trip and fall hazards
- Non-slip surfaces are provided in entrances, bathrooms, stairwells, exit areas, kitchen, fire escapes, and other areas
- Laundry dryer filters are cleaned regularly
- Areas behind the dryer and washer are clear of lint and debris
- Floors and walls are clean throughout the building
- Trash is removed from the building daily
- Exterior exit doors are kept free from obstruction, including snow and ice

### **Other House Policies**

- The use and storage of firearms, bows, and other weapons is prohibited in the facility and elsewhere on the property
- Smoking is prohibited inside
- If smoking is allowed inside:
  - It is confined to designated areas and is prohibited in bedrooms
  - Ashtrays with large lips are used
  - Butts are collected in metal containers
- Roof access is prohibited
- Emergency phone numbers are clearly posted at each phone

### **Inspection**

- Campus/City fire marshal has inspected the building within last six months
  - Date of last inspection: \_\_\_\_\_
- A self-inspection is performed monthly
- Procedures are in place for correcting code violations or other deficiencies

## Water Features

Temporary self-constructed swimming pools, bodies of water, whether self-constructed or professionally constructed, or any other temporary water feature (including “slip-and-slides” and similar features) are prohibited for use on chapter/colony property or at any chapter/colony-sponsored or co-sponsored event.