

# Standards Board Communications

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## CONCERN REFERRAL/INTAKE TEMPLATE

The goal of member accountability is to assist and support members who fail to uphold Phi Sigma Sigma's Constitution, bylaws and policies as well as the chapter constitution and standing rules.

**What:** When a member or new member of the chapter exhibits concerning behavior, a referral should be made to the member-at-large. Referrals should have as much detailed and specific information as possible to assist the MAL in determining the path forward.

**Who:** All members and new members of the chapter may make referrals and share their concerns.

**When:** Notice to the MAL shall be provided as soon as it is known. While there is not a restriction on the amount of time that has passed between the incident/concern and the time it is reported, members are not permitted to collect and refer multiple concerns at one time to initiate escalating hearings. Past behaviors that support the case or provide context to the concern may be accepted to provide the standards board a broader understanding of the overall issue.

**How:** Referrals are best collected electronically to assist the MAL and standards board in good record keeping. Avoid accepting referrals via text message. Referrals should include most, if not all of the following information from the person reporting:

- Names of members and/or new members involved;
- Date and time of the incident or behavior;
- Location of the incident or behavior;
- Nature of the incident, behavior or concern;
- Potential policies that may have been violated (if any);
  - Fraternity Policies: (list);
  - Chapter Policies: (list article and section);
  - University Policies: (list);
  - Laws & Local Regulations: (list);
- Description of the of the incident, behavior or concern;
- Names of any witnesses that may be able to speak to the concern;
- Supporting documentation (photos, video, email, screenshots); and
- Whether there been any action by the member or other members to correct the situation.

Once received, the MAL will determine if the information is credible and determine the right format for accountability:

- **No Action:** Action is not required for every referral.
- **Care Conversation:** Informal, one-on-one or small group conversations seeking to support the positive expression of emotions through rational conflict resolution. These conversations are intended to assist all members in working together to foster a space that allows people to take responsibility and grow from their mistakes.
- **Administrative Meeting:** Meetings called to address administrative and operational requirements (attendance, financial, academic, etc.) are documented and submitted as a written record. Administrative meetings do not result in a finding by the standards board and are heard by a modified board.
- **Hearing:** Hearings addressing conduct and behavior will result in a finding, outcome and conditions.

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## MEETING/HEARING NOTIFICATION TO MEMBER

The MAL is to notify the member being heard at least 24 hours before the hearing. This notification should be provided via email.

### Template Notification

Hello **XXXXXX**,

After receiving information outlining concerns and/or alleged policy violations, I have scheduled [an administrative meeting / a standards board hearing] for [Day, Month XX, 20XX] at [XX:XX A.M./P.M.]

At the time of the meeting you will join via Zoom, using the following meeting ID:

Link: **XXXXXXXXXX**

Join Zoom Meeting ID: **XXX-XXX-XXXX**

PW: **XXXXX**

During the [meeting/hearing], we will be discussing behaviors or concerns related to:

- Alleged violations of the following policies: [list specific policies, articles/sections, etc.]
- Alleged to occur on or around: [Month XX, 20XX]

The [meeting/hearing] is an opportunity for you to engage in a discussion with the standards board about the concern. It is important to us that you are provided the space to be heard in your own words. You are invited to prepare any supporting documentation or statements you plan to reference or provide.

Since we are convening virtually, we ask that you be alone in a quiet space with access to secure internet. We do require that your camera be on.

I am happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have leading up to the scheduled appointment.

Thank you,

**NAME**

Member-at-Large

## HEARING PROCEDURES

Hearings are held to address member conduct, behavior and/or concerns affecting the larger chapter. A standards board hearing requires a board of four (4)/five (5) voting members\*:

- Member-at-large;
- One (1) member of each academic class year represented in the chapter; and
- Vice archon (ex-officio member).

As a reminder:

- All five/six\* representatives must be present to conduct a hearing.
- Advisors/alumnae are NOT permitted to attend in-person or over the phone.
- Hearings are guided by the agenda and script outlined.
- Minutes must be submitted on the Phi Sigma Sigma website.

*\*Number of members varies on the time of year and recruitment restrictions on freshmen students.*

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*ENTER ZOOM – WAITING ROOM TURNED ON*

## **Pre-Hearing**

1. Concern is read to the members of the standards board.
2. Evidence/documentation is presented to the standards board.
3. As a group, prepare questions that need to be addressed to capture the cause, intent and impact of the concern.

## **Hearing Begins**

*MEMBER ENTERS FROM THE ZOOM WAITING ROOM*

**Chairman:** Thank you for meeting with us today. You are being called before the standards board to discuss the following concern:

**(Summarize the description of the concern, removing any details that would identify the reporting member.)**

The concern as described potentially violates the following Fraternity and chapter policies and expectations:

**(Read the list of indicated policies/expectations from the notification email)**

**Chairman:** Do you accept responsibility for the concerns outlined?

- **NO** - If no, proceed with the following script.
- **YES** - If yes, pick up at the closing statement section and proceed from there.

## **Does Not Accept Responsibility**

**Chairman:** Before we begin, is there any reason that any member of the assembled standards board would not be able to render a fair and impartial decision in this matter? *If yes, please ask that any member with a valid conflict recuse themselves from the board and leave the Zoom room.*

**Chairman:** We invite you to present any information you believe is relevant to your defense. You may take advantage of the opportunity to be heard now, in your own words, or you may provide response to the questions prepared by the standards board. Please feel free to present any documentation or evidence to support your account.

### **Discussion & Questions**

*In detail, outline the response provided to the standards board and any discussion between the member and standards board. If it is appropriate, evidence or documentation may be presented to the member in question for discussion.*

**Chairman:** At this time, we would like to offer you the opportunity to provide us with any additional comments, considerations, witnesses or evidence you would like the standards board to consider prior to deliberation.

### **Member's Closing Statement**

**Chairman:** Again, thank you for your time. The standards board will now deliberate and determine a finding and appropriate outcome. We will provide you written notice within 48 hours. *Empathetically acknowledge any hardship or disclosure throughout.*

*DISMISS THE MEMBER – LOCK THE ZOOM ROOM*

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**Witnesses** - Only if applicable – skip to deliberation if no witnesses

Witnesses should be limited to members/new members of the chapter unless permission has been granted otherwise.

Witnesses only need to be called if the board does not feel they have all the relevant information necessary to make a decision.

*CALL WITNESS ON SPEAKER OR UNLOCK THE ZOOM ROOM & SHARE LINK TO JOIN*

**Chairman:** I am calling on behalf of the standards board, we would like to inquire about any information you have on the following matter:

(Read the summary concern before asking any specific questions)

**Notes from the Witness:** Record and collect notes and documents presented by the witness during the hearing

**Chairman:** Thank you for your participation.

*DISMISS THE WITNESS – LOCK THE ZOOM ROOM*

## **Does Accept Responsibility**

**Chairman:** At this time, we would like to offer you the opportunity to provide us with any additional comments or considerations you would like the standards board to consider prior to deliberation.

## **Member's Remarks**

**Chairman:** Again, thank you for your time. The standards board will now deliberate and determine a finding and appropriate outcome. We will provide you written notice within 48 hours.

*DISMISS THE MEMBER – LOCK THE ZOOM ROOM*

## **Deliberation**

While the board is still in the Zoom room, deliberate if the member is responsible for the alleged concerns/violations, assign an outcome and develop conditions, if applicable.

**Finding:** Responsible or Not Responsible

### **Outcome:**

- **Notice** – reserved for not responsible findings.
- **Warning** – first responsible finding after a period of being in good standing.
- **Probation** – increased outcome resulting from failing to complete conditions associated with a warning OR an additional responsible finding closely following a warning.
- **Dismissal** – considered only after probation has been violated, unless the concern exceeds the threshold for immediate disaffiliation. Dismissal/disaffiliation is a recommendation the board may make to Headquarters.

*Note: you can only be increased one level at a time.*

**Conditions:** Productive and impactful exercises or requirements relating to the violation with set deadlines for completion. Privileges may be restored when the conditions are completed by the specified time.

*MOVE ON TO THE NEXT HEARING OR END ZOOM MEETING*

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## **OUTCOME NOTIFICATION TO MEMBER**

The chairman is to notify the member of the results of the standards board hearing in writing within 48 hours of the hearing (except in cases of a recommendation for disaffiliation).

### **Notification – Finding, Outcome Conditions – When Member Participated**

Hello **XXXXXX**,

Thank you for meeting with the standards board. The findings of your meeting are as follows:

You have been found **[responsible/not responsible]**. As a result of a responsible finding, the standards board may offer outcomes and conditions.

The outcome is placement on **[Notice/Warning/Probation]** for **[XX weeks/months]** and until you complete the prescribed conditions.

In addition, the following conditions must be met:

- **[insert conditions]**

After the conditions have been met and the determined length of time has lapsed, you will be returned to good standing. Should you fail to meet these conditions, or be found responsible for any additional policy violations, further outcomes could be a result.

Please remain in communication with us as you complete your conditions.

Thank you,

**NAME**

Member-at-Large

### **Notification – Finding, Outcome Conditions – When Member DID NOT Participate**

Hello **XXXXXX**,

After receiving notification of your hearing, you did not attend and/or participate to be heard in your own words. The standards board moved forward with the information they had previously been provided and the findings are as follows:

You have been found **[responsible/not responsible]**. As a result of a responsible finding, the standards board may offer outcomes and conditions.

The outcome is placement on **[Notice/Warning/Probation]** for **[XX weeks/months]** and until you complete the prescribed conditions.

In addition, the following conditions must be met:

- **[insert conditions]**

After the conditions have been met and the determined length of time has lapsed, you will be returned to good standing. Should you fail to meet these conditions, or be found responsible for any additional policy violations, further outcomes could be a result.

Please remain in communication with us as you complete your conditions.

Thank you,

**NAME**

Member-at-Large

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## **Recommended for Disaffiliation – Member Suspended – Pending Review Notification**

Hello XXXXXX,

Thank you for meeting with the standards board.

The outcome of your hearing has been referred to Phi Sigma Sigma's international Headquarters staff for further review.

While it is being reviewed you have been suspended by the [Alpha Alpha] Chapter. You are not permitted to participate in any chapter activities, events or meetings during the suspension.

Any attempt to participate with the chapter, retaliate or violate additional policies will be documented and referred to Phi Sigma Sigma personnel.

Thank you,

NAME

Member-at-Large