



Case No: 2025634201

Organization Name: Kappa Delta Rho

Incident Date: February 26, 2026

- Appeal
- Appeal decision

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Our organization's punishment of revocation is too harsh and is inconsistent with both prior precedent and the University's stated requirement that sanctions be commensurate with the violations and take into account aggravating and mitigating factors.

The University's own published outcomes demonstrate a consistent pattern in sanctioning hazing-related cases. Revocation has typically been reserved for cases involving clear aggravating factors such as hospitalization, physical injury, repeated falsification during the conduct process, or operating in defiance of an active suspension. For example, in cases such as Zeta Phi Beta, where conduct included physical assault "to the point of injury," and Alpha Tau Omega, where multiple new members required medical attention, the severity of harm clearly justified the highest level of sanction.

By contrast, the present case does not include any physical injury, hospitalization, or medical attention, nor does it involve findings of falsification, obstruction, or defiance of an active suspension which are factors that have historically distinguished revocation cases.

Moreover, multiple organizations with comparable or more severe conduct have received lesser sanctions. In Phi Kappa Tau 2022, the chapter was found responsible for forced alcohol consumption, coercive activities, and humiliating conduct, yet received Disciplinary Probation and Deferred Revocation. Similarly, Delta Kappa Epsilon in Spring 2023 involved hazing with alcohol and a new member seeking medical attention, but still resulted in Disciplinary Probation and Deferred Revocation. Delta Tau Delta has been involved in multiple conduct cases, including two instances involving hazing, yet has not been subject to revocation of recognition. Delta Tau Delta's cases took place in a small time frame too, with a conduct case in 2019, 2020, 2022, and 2024. Additional cases, including Phi Sigma Kappa and FarmHouse, further reinforce this consistent pattern of progressive discipline.

Importantly, the University has also publicly articulated how recurrence cases should be evaluated. Kelly Smith stated in a Lantern article published on February 27, 2025 that when there has been a meaningful passage of time over 2 years and a turnover in membership and leadership, "we have to start over. It's a different ship." This framework recognizes that a chapter with a new executive board and substantially different membership should not be treated as the same entity for sanctioning purposes.

That framework applies directly here. Nearly three years have passed since the 2023 case, the prior executive board has fully turned over, and the current leadership and membership were not involved in the previous violations. The Chapter also completed all prior sanctions and returned to good standing. Under the University's own stated approach, this matter should be evaluated as a substantially new case, not as a continuation warranting the most severe penalty.

Given these considerations, the imposed sanction represents a significant departure from both the University's established precedent and its publicly stated framework for evaluating recurrence cases. I believe that the current sanction is disproportionately severe relative to both the facts of this case and the University's own precedent and guidance. I ask that the sanction be reconsidered and adjusted to align with the principle of proportionality and the outcomes of comparable cases.

10.) Provide an alternative sanction (or sanctions) that would be proportionate (i.e., shorter probation/suspension periods; different effective start or end dates for a suspension period). A response to this question is REQUIRED to submit an appeal on the ground of "disproportionate sanction." The decision on whether to grant an appeal and alter a sanction, however, remains with the Senior Vice President of Student Life (or designee). If you are not submitting an appeal on this ground, enter "N/A."

Place the chapter on Deferred Suspension through May 2027, during which it will not be in good standing with the university but may operate in a limited capacity (e.g., chapter meetings, community service, brotherhood activities, and approved events).

Require the chapter to host the Love Like Adam Foundation in Fall 2026 for a comprehensive, in-person hazing prevention workshop (approximately four hours), focused on examining and improving chapter culture.

Establish an Alumni Advisory Board, including a primary advisor and additional support in key areas such as

new member education, finance, and risk management.

Implement a recruitment moratorium until Spring 2027.

11.) Is there additional information you wish to share?

I would first like to acknowledge that, in our efforts to address these issues, our organization did not follow all university policies. While our intentions were to improve the chapter and protect others, we recognize that our actions did not align with proper procedures. We take full responsibility for those shortcomings and understand the importance of adhering to established guidelines moving forward.

Additionally, I would like to revisit the origin of this case. As we initially communicated, the report was submitted by a new member who had been [REDACTED]

Our organization took these concerns very seriously and made the decision to [REDACTED] in an effort to promote a safer and more respectful environment, particularly for women, despite being aware of the potential consequences. This action was taken with the intention of doing what we believed was right and improving the overall culture of student life at The Ohio State University. It reflects our commitment to the well-being of others and to fostering a more accountable and responsible organization.

Our chapter is composed of individuals who strive to make positive impacts, despite the mistakes we have made. We have consistently been recognized through SFL and IFC awards and have worked to contribute meaningfully to the campus community. Throughout this process, we fully complied with all directives from Student Conduct and adhered to the terms of our interim suspension. We were committed to being transparent and truthful in all communications throughout the conduct process. In addition, we proactively requested modifications that would allow us to continue philanthropic and service efforts, as well as remain engaged with IFC and SFL meetings in order to stay connected to the broader community.

One of the three primary factors cited in the decision was "concerns regarding the organization's ability to make necessary internal changes, based on the lack of consistent oversight from a local, involved advisor and the absence of a definable corrective action plan from headquarters." Respectfully, I do not believe this factor is a valid basis for the decision.

Our national headquarters made a clear effort to engage with Student Conduct by reaching out to Brett Welsh to discuss strategies for implementing a meaningful cultural shift within the chapter and to collaborate on a path forward. However, this outreach did not receive a response from Mr. Welsh or any representative from Student Conduct. As a result, the cited "absence of a definable corrective action plan" can not reasonably be attributed to a lack of initiative or willingness from headquarters, but rather to a lack of communication from the Office of Student Conduct.

Given these circumstances, it is difficult to conclude that the organization was unable or unwilling to implement necessary changes when attempts to establish a plan and engage with the appropriate parties were not reciprocated. Therefore, I argue that this factor should be reconsidered in the evaluation of the case.

At present, we are not being given the opportunity to demonstrate growth, improve our organization, and implement meaningful change. University spokesperson Dave Isaacs stated, "It is the intent of the university to uphold the Code of Student Conduct, to promote the education and development of students, and to provide a framework for future success of student organizations," in a Lantern article published on April 9, 2026. We believe our organization has not been fairly afforded this opportunity for education, development, and reform.

Finally, I respectfully request that Student Conduct conduct a thorough and impartial review that includes consideration of the reporting individual's background, as well as the full context in which the report was made. Taking these factors into account will help ensure a fair and comprehensive evaluation of the situation.

12.) If you are submitting other material with this appeal, please describe that material below.

Attached is documentation of the email correspondence between our national headquarters and Brett Welsh, in which headquarters requested to schedule a follow-up meeting to discuss next steps for the chapter. Additionally, included is an email I sent to headquarters on the day the new member was depledged, outlining the concerns related to allegations of sexual misconduct.

Attachments

appealdocument.jpg

appealdocument.png

Pending IR #00105915. Submitted from 140.254.77.193.

Processed by routing rule #1133. Routed to Kelly B. Smith (she/her), Director.

Copies to: studentconduct@osu.edu

Email from Brett: One item that will be important to consider is how the chapter/larger organization plans to address hazing. This chapter was found in violation for hazing a couple years ago, we were told hazing occurred last spring, and now we are looking at hazing allegations for Spring 2026. We have some serious concerns about the cultural norms of this chapter and are concerned some of the lower-level interventions might not be effective in creating the type of change expected. Any ideas you can provide on how this chapter can make a significant cultural shift may be helpful in future conversations.

My Response: Hi Brett - Thank you for the update. Looking forward to connecting soon on next steps. We have some thoughts on how to make a significant cultural shift in the chapter. Let's plan to connect after a letter goes out.

[Redacted]



[Redacted]

Wednesday, February 25, 2026 at 8:56 PM

To: Irving Montgomery

Hey Irving,

I wanted to inform you that we made the decision today to [Redacted]

[Redacted]

When notified of the decision, he reacted with frustration and made statements such as, “you will regret this.” Given his response, I wanted to make you aware of the situation in advance in case any issues arise.

Best,

[Redacted]

May 6, 2026

Sent electronically to [REDACTED]

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Regarding Case Number: 2025634201

Dear [REDACTED],

I have received your appeal of the sanctions that resulted from Kappa Delta Rho's disciplinary case. The Code of Student Conduct ("Code") requires that an appeal state the basis on which you are appealing the outcome. Your appeal is based on your claim that the sanction imposed is grossly disproportionate to the violation committed. Pursuant to the Code, an appeal is not intended to re-hear or re-argue the same case and is limited to the specific grounds outlined in the Code. A decision by a hearing body will not be altered unless it is determined that the appeal standards provided by the Code have been met.

I have given your appeal careful consideration. Based on my independent review of the record and supporting documents, I do not find that the sanction imposed is grossly disproportionate to the violations committed. I have, therefore, decided to support the decision that resulted from this process.

If you have questions regarding your case, please contact the Student Conduct office at (614) 292-0748.

Sincerely,



Matt Couch, PhD
Associate Dean of Students

CC: Director of Student Conduct - Kelly Smith, J.D.
Anti-Hazing Compliance Specialist - Brett Welsh
Student Conduct Officer - Malcolm Bello

