

Resolution 2

Improve the Fraternal Experience through Nationwide Substance-free Facilities

WHEREAS

In 1901, our founders justified the establishment of a new fraternal organization by a commitment not only to be different from, but to improve upon, those which had existed prior; and

WHEREAS

SigEp demonstrates a rich pedigree of such advancements: from opening our doors to all men by refusing to discriminate on race, religion and sexual orientation, to redefining the member experience via the universal adoption of the Balanced Man Program (BMP); and

WHEREAS

This pioneering history has elevated SigEp's status as a leader of our fraternal peers, thus the bold steps made to improve our Fraternity often propagate throughout the fraternity system to the benefit of all men thereof; and

WHEREAS

The use of alcohol and other controlled substances is not inherently negative, its use in fraternity environments is linked to higher rates of substance abuse among members — a burden that impedes upon academic endeavors, lowers inhibitions to hazing and sexual violence, neglects our Cardinal Principles of Virtue, Diligence, and Brotherly love, and does not advance our mission of building balanced men; and

WHEREAS

At the 54th Grand Chapter Conclave, our Fraternity made the bold move to universally adopt the BMP and excel in the development of fraternity, intellect, physical health and wellness, leadership, and profession — none of which are aided by the use of alcohol and controlled substances; and

WHEREAS

The establishment of the Residential Learning Community (RLC), a hallmark feature of which was the designation of chapter spaces as substance-free, forged the national Fraternity's ideal environment for fraternal living, successful implementation of the BMP, and stronger university partnership, producing 0.08 higher chapter GPAs, 20 percent higher member and alumni retention, and 30 percent higher manpower than non-RLC chapters; and

WHEREAS

The poor image of the fraternity experience, which is imbued with a dependence on these substances, has effectively limited our recruitment potential, as only 11 percent of college-bound men seek fraternity involvement — many of whom are drawn to us by the very behaviors that have proven detrimental to our fraternal experience and community

image; and

WHEREAS

The faculty, staff and administrators of our university partners — who have a responsibility to protect the well-being of their students — are not blind to the threats of our fraternity system and have never been more prepared to take drastic action against us; and

WHEREAS

The use of alcohol and other controlled substances in chapter facilities have played an indelible role in the insurance claims that have produced the lion's share of awarded liability damages — resulting in a 60 percent increase in premiums since 2013; and

WHEREAS

Those chapters that currently employ some form of substance-free policy file 44 percent fewer liability claims, which are 95 percent less costly than chapters that have not implemented any substance-free policies; and

WHEREAS

Without corrective action our Fraternity will rapidly face the existential threat of becoming uninsurable, in addition to hindering our progress in improving member safety, implementing the BMP, operating the RLCs, recruiting quality men and strengthening university partnerships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED

That by August 1, 2020, all SigEp chapters shall implement a substance-free facilities policy; and be it further

RESOLVED

That “substance-free facility” shall be defined to prohibit the possession, use, distribution or consumption of all illegal and illicit substances, alcohol, marijuana, or controlled substances without an appropriate prescription issued to the user by a licensed professional; and be it further

RESOLVED

That by August 1, 2018, all chapters adopt a transitional substance-free facilities policy restricting the presence, consumption and use of alcohol to private rooms of members of the legal drinking age; and be it further

RESOLVED

That by August 1, 2018, all chapters adopt this policy that all common areas will be substance-free; and be it further

RESOLVED

That common areas shall be defined as communal spaces, study spaces, dining facilities, any area of a chapter facility that is open for common or public use, and all outdoor spaces associated with or adjacent to the chapter facility, including parking lots; and be it further

RESOLVED

That by August 1, 2018, chapters shall prohibit substance use in common areas and prohibit events involving substances, with the exception of an approved special event as defined in this resolution. Those of legal drinking age are allowed to responsibly consume legal substances in their private rooms; and be it further

RESOLVED

It will not be a violation of the substance-free facilities policy outlined in this resolution for there to be up to six AVC-hosted events permitted for application per calendar year where, using chapter facilities (except rooms reserved as “alcohol-free” pursuant to RLC standards), alcoholic beverages may be served, provided the following provisions are met. Events must be primarily aimed toward socialization with alumni, parents or faculty. All alcohol is bought, sold and distributed by a third-party vendor. All events must be approved by three of the following four persons: the AVC president, the faculty fellow, the university Greek life coordinator or the appropriate campus life official. Additionally, all events must follow SigEp risk management policies, as well as be in accordance with all national, state, and local ordinances, host institution policies and third-party guidelines. The application shall include, but not be limited to, the following information: a detailed description of the event, including date, start and end times, estimated and maximum guest numbers, and vendor information; and be it further

RESOLVED

That chapter facilities shall be defined to include all facilities and grounds owned, operated, or leased by the chapter directly, by its host institution or its Alumni Volunteer Corporation (AVC); and be it further

RESOLVED

That chapter facilities will follow the transitional substance-free facilities policy between August 1, 2018, and July 31, 2020, and follow the complete substance-free facilities policy beginning on August 1, 2020, regardless of who makes use of those facilities, be they the chapter membership, the AVC or fraternity alumni, inclusive of all guests and the public; and be it further

RESOLVED

That the Headquarters staff will support all chapters as they transition to a substance-free facilities model by providing augmented resources to educate undergraduates and volunteers at all Carlson Leadership Academies, all Cox Volunteer Institutes, all Ruck Leadership Institutes and all Grand Chapter Conclaves, and augmented education from regional directors on substance-free programming and risk management policies, in addition to current education on recruitment, member development and chapter

leadership, paying special attention to the requests of chapters transitioning to the substance-free facilities model from current models on non-dry campuses; and be it further

RESOLVED

The National Board of Directors and Headquarters staff will establish an educational grant program to offset the chapter cost of shifting recruitment models and facilitation of third-party education on substance abuse and interpersonal violence prevention; and be it further

RESOLVED

That the Headquarters staff develop a regional peer-mentorship network to connect the leadership of chapters that have embraced a substance-free facilities policy with those in the process of adopting substance-free facilities policies in accordance with this resolution, so they may share best practices and support one another in this time of change; and be it further

RESOLVED

That the Headquarters staff will support all chapters as they transition to a substance-free facilities policy by providing augmented resources and education to Fraternity alumni on the implementation of this resolution and how they can be supportive of undergraduate chapters; and be it further

RESOLVED

That the national organization provides resources and support pertaining to substance education and safe programming to all SigEp chapters as they transition to a substance-free facilities model; and be it further

RESOLVED

That the national organization provides educational resources to all undergraduate members pertaining to liability and insurance coverage, including the reasoning behind the current substance rules; and be it further

RESOLVED

That the National Board of Directors and Headquarters staff will advocate for the universal adoption of similar substance-free facilities policies among all national Greek-letter organizations at the national and regional levels; and be it further

RESOLVED

That the executive committee and trusted officers in conjunction with or addition to representatives of the AVC, regional directors and other volunteer organizations related to local chapters will advocate for the universal adoption of similar substance-free facilities policies among all national Greek-letter organizations at the local level as a step toward building balanced men, both within the chapter and in the community; and be it

further

RESOLVED

That the National Board of Directors and Headquarters staff shall amend the ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SECTION 4 – RISK MANAGEMENT POLICIES OF SIGMA PHI EPSILON FRATERNITY to reflect this policy; and be it further

RESOLVED

By the 2019 Grand Chapter Conclave, Headquarters staff and the National Board of Directors shall create a report to assess the success and effectiveness of substance-free common areas; and be it

FINALLY RESOLVED

That the National Board of Directors will address and may take charter action on any chapter that refuses to implement a substance-free transitional policy by August 1, 2018, and a complete substance-free facilities policy by August 1, 2020.

Committee: Resolutions Purple
Committee Recommends: Pass as amended
Grand Chapter Action: Pass as amended

Jake Guhy, Chairman, Resolutions Purple Committee
55th Grand Chapter Conclave – Orlando, Fla. – August 2-6, 2017