



Fraternization Policy Statement

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The Marine Corps has historically relied upon customs and traditions to define the bounds of acceptable personal relationships among its members. Unduly familiar relationships between Marines and Sailors of different ranks have traditionally been contrary to Naval custom because they undermine the respect for authority. **Ranks are broken into several groups: 1) LCpl and below, 2) NCOs, 3) SNCOs, 4) Company Grade Officers, and 5) Field Grade Officers.**

Per Navy Regulation 1165, fraternization is defined as an **unduly familiar personal relationship** between Marines and/or Sailors of **different rank groupings** that does not respect the difference in rank or grade. Relationships between Marines and Sailors of different ranks that are prejudicial to good order and discipline or of a nature to bring discredit on the Naval service are unduly familiar and constitute fraternization. Fraternization is a violation of both Article 92 and Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

Fraternization is prejudicial to good order and discipline because it calls into question the senior's objectivity, results in actual or an appearance of preferential treatment, undermines the senior's authority, **does not respect differences in rank or grade**, and compromises the chain of command. Fraternization is gender neutral and does not require a direct senior-subordinate supervisory relationship.

Examples of relationships that are prejudicial to good order and discipline include: dating, babysitting, visiting personal residences outside of unit sponsored events, shared living accommodations, sexual relations, commercial solicitations, private business partnerships, hosting after-hours events that are not unit sponsored, failing to abide by customs and courtesies at after-hour events, gambling, and borrowing money.

As your Commanding Officer, it is my responsibility to ensure our Battalion continues to **maintain good order and discipline**. I challenge each and every one of you to uphold our customs and traditions in order to ensure we are continually ready to accomplish our mission. If you are in question about what constitutes fraternization, I encourage you to raise those questions with your chain of command.

Semper Fidelis,

A. S. HARKINS
Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding