

FIGHTING GAME COMMUNITY CODE OF CONDUCT

Last updated January 14, 2021

PREAMBLE

This is the Fighting Game Community Code of Conduct. Its goal is to prevent and expel predatory behavior and emotional, sexual, verbal, and physical abuse to create a safer and more inclusive FGC in which more people can enjoy the fun, exciting, grassroots spirit of our community.

It was put together by community volunteers, reviewed by other community volunteers, and agreed to by community leaders. It applies to all the players, attendees, tournament organizers, staff, streamers, commentators, posters, and so on who attend, run, or use the tournaments, online messaging platforms, chat rooms, servers, and other community gathering places that have signed on to enforce it.

In the wake of so many examples of abuse, bigotry, and other bad actions in our scene, we must recognize that we have not done enough to keep our community members safe. Previously, we've only relied on individual tournament organizers and professional tours to conduct their own disciplinary actions. Unfortunately, that kind of piecemeal approach not only places an unfair burden on those TOs, it also necessarily ends up in decisions that can come across as slow dogpiling, that can feel inconsistent, or that are made by people who may not be well connected to the community. We hope that this Code of Conduct will solve these problems by empowering faster, more uniform, and more community-focused action.

Please read the rest of this document, which we've tried to write in a way that doesn't take a law degree to get through. Remember, these rules will apply to everyone in any tournament, event, or discussion space that adopts this Code of Conduct, so make sure that you understand them. If you have any questions, please feel free to strike up a conversation at fgcoc.communications@gmail.com.

1. **AUTHORITY.**

- 1.1. **CODE OF CONDUCT.** This is the Fighting Game Community Code of Conduct, a set of rules to promote better behavior in the fighting game community as agreed upon by the FGC event organizers, tournament organizers, online chat server coordinators, web platform providers, broadcasters, and other community leaders who we're calling the Signatories. This Code of Conduct will be governed by a group called the Governing Body tasked with creating, enforcing, and updating both this Code of Conduct and its own rules.
- 1.2. **APPLICATION.** This Code of Conduct applies to and against all the people we're calling the Participants, including attendees, users, and players; tournament and event organizers, staff, and volunteers; individual representatives of teams, sponsors, and advertisers; the Signatories; and anyone else who attends, operates, or uses any in-person or online events or spaces run by any Signatories, which we're calling Community Spaces.
- 1.3. **RECOMMENDATIONS.** The Governing Body will have a Disciplinary Process allowing it to receive, investigate, and make decisions regarding reports of Violations of this Code of Conduct that will be known as Recommendations, which the Governing Body will then send to the Signatories. The Signatories will be encouraged to follow these Recommendations, but won't be required to.
- 1.4. **RESPONSIBILITY.** All Participants will be personally responsible for familiarizing themselves with this Code of Conduct. The Signatories will be responsible for promoting it and posting it in easily noticeable places, but this Code of Conduct will apply to all Participants regardless of whether they've read it.
- 1.5. **MINIMUM RULES.** This Code of Conduct will be considered the minimum standard rules for any Community Space. The Signatories may use additional Third Party Rules and may make their own decisions regarding behavior taking place in or targeting their Community Spaces if they want.
- 1.6. **LAST UPDATE.** The most recent publication date for this Code of Conduct is January 14, 2020.

2. OBJECTIVES.

- 2.1. OBJECTIVES. This Code of Conduct is guided by the following intentions, which we're calling the Objectives:
 - 2.1.1. INCLUSIVITY. The Inclusivity Objective states that this Code of Conduct is intended to make the FGC a safe and inclusive experience now and in the future in which everyone feels welcomed regardless of race, color, ethnicity, nationality, sex, sexual or romantic orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, neurodiversity, body size, pregnancy or maternity, citizenship, or any other personal characteristics.
 - 2.1.2. INTEGRITY. The Integrity Objective states that this Code of Conduct is intended to maintain and build integrity in the FGC through consistent and diverse leadership, fair tournament operations, and equitable Community Spaces.
 - 2.1.3. AUTHENTICITY. The Authenticity Objective states that this Code of Conduct is intended to pursue the above goals of Inclusivity and Integrity while preserving Authenticity in the FGC's unique feel, exciting fun, trash-talking spirit, and dedication to competition.
- 2.2. CRITERIA. The Disciplinary Process will be conducted with the following guidelines in mind, which we're calling the Criteria:
 - 2.2.1. OBJECTIVES. The entire disciplinary action and Recommendation process, from intake to investigations to final decisions, will be informed and guided by the Objectives.
 - 2.2.2. LOCATION. Recommendations may be made regardless of where any Violations take place, including not just in Community Spaces but also in venue areas, hotel rooms, private homes, bars and clubs, social media, public chat platforms and forums, other websites, and so on. However, due to potential privacy concerns, the Governing Body will not accept and will not make any decisions based on any private communications like text messages or direct messages.
 - 2.2.3. TIME. The Governing Body may make Recommendations under this Code of Conduct for Violations committed by Participants before this Code of Conduct was first adopted, as long as those Violations are part of an ongoing pattern that indicates that a Participant is likely to engage in more Violations in the future.

- 2.2.4. EXCUSES. Violations will not be excused just because Participants may have committed them under the influence of alcohol or drugs or any altered state of mind.
- 2.2.5. STANDARDS. This Code of Conduct doesn't replace the legal system and can't produce decisions as severe as those of the legal system. As a result, the Disciplinary Process should not and will not be bound by the standards and processes that might apply in a court of law. Recommendations will be based on the Governing Body's reasonable understanding of the facts of each case.
- 2.2.6. CONSISTENCY. The Disciplinary Process and Recommendations are intended to be consistent and foreseeable enough that Participants should expect to face consequences for Violations. That said, no two situations are the same, and different cases may have different outcomes.
- 2.2.7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST. When any person who would normally participate in the Disciplinary Process is confronted with a case involving any of their family members, close friends, romantic or sexual partners, or business partners, they will let the Governing Body know about that conflict of interest and withdraw themselves from any role in that case.

3. CONDUCT.

- 3.1. LIST OF VIOLATIONS. The Violations of this Code of Conduct include:
 - 3.1.1. Engaging in assault, battery, physical harassment or abuse, or any other physical contact with any other person without their consent.
 - 3.1.2. Engaging in malicious bullying, baiting, trolling, or other non-physical harassment or abuse that rises to a level beyond commonly accepted FGC trash talking.
 - 3.1.3. Using or threatening to use a deadly or dangerous weapon except in reasonable defensive situations.
 - 3.1.4. Pestering or stalking any other person or otherwise not respecting any other person's reasonable desire to be left alone.
 - 3.1.5. Taking photographs of or recording any other person without their consent or Signatory authorization.

- 3.1.6. Engaging in discriminatory or hateful statements or behavior, including any based on race, color, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, sex, sexual or romantic orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, neurodiversity, body size, or any other personal characteristics.
- 3.1.7. Intentionally outing any other person's sexual orientation, gender, or other identities without their consent.
- 3.1.8. Intentionally causing fear or distress in or maliciously abusing power over any other person.
- 3.1.9. Disclosing confidential information or media, doxxing or sharing any personally identifiable information, or violating any other person's reasonable expectation of privacy.
- 3.1.10. Intentionally entering off-limit areas in Community Spaces.
- 3.1.11. DDOSing, swatting, spreading malware, phishing, hacking into any other person's accounts, or intentionally, recklessly, or negligently damaging, tampering with, or interfering with any other person's property, platform, equipment, other possessions, or network connection.
- 3.1.12. Scamming or engaging in fraud, impersonation, or defamatory statements or behavior against any other person.
- 3.1.13. Tampering with a tournament, fixing any match or bracket, colluding, entering multiple times in a single tournament, substituting or being substituted for any other player mid-tournament or without good faith permission from the organizer, using disallowed game code exploits, or any other unsportsmanlike conduct or conduct that violates commonly accepted FGC tournament etiquette.
- 3.1.14. Stealing, misappropriating, mishandling, or misrepresenting the amounts or uses of entry fees, prize pots, hotel or other lodging fees, viewer or other donations, or any other person's money.
- 3.1.15. Creating a nuisance or hazard by neglecting personal hygiene, refusing to take appropriate hygienic or medical precautions, or engaging in or encouraging others to commit any hygienically or medically unsafe behavior.
- 3.1.16. Failing to abide by any applicable Third Party Rules.

- 3.1.17. Advocating for, encouraging, being an accomplice to, or threatening to engage in any potential Violations.
- 3.1.18. Evading or attempting to evade any disciplinary action taken under this Code of Conduct.
- 3.2. **UNDERAGED PARTICIPANTS.** Any Participant under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult guardian when attending an in-person Community Space. Standards of behavior will be higher with or around anyone under the age of 18, meaning behavior that may not otherwise amount to Violations may be treated as Violations if the target is under 18. Anyone under the local age of majority will be deemed unable to consent, including to sexual activity.
- 3.3. **OTHER VIOLATIONS.** This list of Violations isn't exhaustive. Any other behavior that goes against commonly accepted FGC standards or norms or any of the Objectives may violate this Code of Conduct as well.

4. GOVERNANCE.

- 4.1. **GOVERNING BODY.** The Governing Body may organize itself as a nonprofit or other legal entity.
- 4.2. **MEMBERSHIP.** Membership in the Governing Body will include all the Signatories as well as anyone else who accepts the Governing Body's invitation to join.
- 4.3. **COMMITTEES.** The Governing Body will have eight committees: the Governance Committee, the Investigations Committee, the Code of Conduct Committee, the Tools and Record-Keeping Committee, the Legal Committee, the Inclusion and Diversity Committee, the Public Relations Committee, and the Collegiate Committee.
- 4.4. **MEETINGS.** The Governing Body will have meetings from time to time to decide issues of governance and amendments.

4.5. **UPDATES.** This Code of Conduct may be updated from time to time by the Governing Body to better serve the FGC, although any changes to it must remain in line with both the Objectives and commonly accepted FGC standards and norms. If the Governing Body ever does make changes, the Signatories will try to notify Participants of those changes, but the Participants will still be solely responsible for making sure that they stay informed about and for abiding by the terms of this Code of Conduct

5. INVESTIGATION, ADJUDICATION, AND ENFORCEMENT.

5.1. **POTENTIAL OUTCOMES.** Recommendations of penalties for Violations of this Code of Conduct may include but are not limited to warnings, refusals of entry or use, disqualifications, suspensions, bans, referrals to venue security or platform administrators, referrals to law enforcement or other authorities, community boycotts, and so on. Participants who engage in Violations and are the focus of resulting Recommendations may not be entitled to any refunds or repayments. If a Signatory is found to have committed a Violation, the Governing Body will release that information publicly and may expel the Signatory from the Governing Body.

5.2. **INVESTIGATION.** The Governing Body and the Signatories will have the ability to take in reports about and investigate any potential or alleged Violations and will attempt to maintain confidentiality throughout the Disciplinary Procedure.

5.3. **ADJUDICATION.** The Governing Body will have the power to make Recommendations against any Participants found to have committed Violations. The Signatories will still have the power to take disciplinary action against Participants who have attended or used or might attend or use their Community Spaces.

5.4. **ENFORCEMENT.** The Signatories will enforce disciplinary action in their own Community Spaces.