

# Play! Pokémon Standards of Conduct

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**ENGLISH VERSION**

Date of last revision: [February 13, 2024](#)

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# 1 Introduction

As a game of skill, Pokémon is enjoyed for its complex strategies, entertaining characters, and atmosphere of friendly competition. To ensure that this atmosphere is maintained, Pokémon Organized Play has developed the following Standards of Conduct for all who participate in the Play! Pokémon program, whether as a player, Professor, or event attendee.

It is the responsibility of all Play! Pokémon program members to familiarize themselves with these Standards, and to promote and always exemplify them during their participation.

These Standards apply regardless of the form or way a user participates in Play! Pokémon. For example, wherever an online platform is utilized, these Standards also apply to all virtual interactions with fellow participants.

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## 2 The Spirit of the Game

While one objective of a Pokémon tournament is to determine the skill level of each player involved, another is to ensure that every participant has fun. It is this attitude that Pokémon Organized Play wishes to promote at Play! Pokémon tournaments.

Adherence to the Spirit of the Game helps to ensure that all participants, including players, spectators, and event staff, can enjoy and participate in each Play! Pokémon tournament to the fullest.

The Spirit of the Game should guide the conduct of players, as well as Pokémon Professors as they interpret and enforce the rules.

### 2.1 Tenets of the Spirit of the Game

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#### 2.1.1 Fun

As a game, Pokémon is meant to be fun for all parties involved. When a game ceases to be fun, players find other things to do. By contributing to a safe, friendly atmosphere, participants can be instrumental in helping those around them enjoy their experience.

- Players should refrain from causing unnecessary delays to games or engaging in behavior that may negatively impact the experience of those around them.

#### 2.1.2 Fairness

Players should act with fairness and honesty during every game. Above all, a player should prefer to lose a game than to win by cheating.

- Should players realize that a mistake has been made during gameplay, they should make their opponent or a judge aware immediately.
- Players should not attempt to use tournament rules or policy to gain an advantage rather than to ensure fair gameplay.

### 2.1.3 **Respect**

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Players should act with empathy and grace and remember to treat those around them as they would expect to be treated themselves.

- Players should shake hands both before and after each match.
- Players should take care that their personal feelings about gameplay actions or game results do not influence the way they treat their opponent.
- Players are to avoid deadnaming or misgendering their opponents, other competitors, or spectators.

### 2.1.4 **Community**

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Players should recognize that by attending a Play! Pokémon tournament, they are participating in an inclusive environment comprising players of all levels of skill and experience. Their actions should contribute to the perpetuation of this environment, and therefore to the growth of the community.

- Newer, less experienced players should be welcomed and supported.
- Discussing strategies, offering tips, or constructively critiquing gameplay decisions after the match has been completed is encouraged.
- Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated at Play! Pokémon events.

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## **3 Community Conduct**

This section applies to behavior at all Play! Pokémon events, as well as to external issues that may come to light which cast doubt on the suitability of an individual to remain a member of Play! Pokémon programs.

Pokémon Organized Play does not and will not actively monitor any program member's activity on or in any platform or environment outside any Play! Pokémon event setting.

However, any complaint put forward concerning a program member's conduct outside these boundaries may be assessed for disciplinary action if it poses a threat to Play! Pokémon's values, or if it could impair the ability of a reasonable individual to enjoy and participate fully in the program.

For example, it is fair to believe that a reasonable individual would feel uncomfortable participating in a tournament alongside someone who is associated with any of the below behaviors.

## 3.1 Illegal Activity

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Program members should not promote or engage in any illegal activity, or otherwise make available content that would encourage or provide instructions for any illegal activity to others.

Examples include:

- Engaging in or glorifying drug use, sexual assault, solicitation of a minor, or information theft.
- Impersonating a TPCi (The Pokémon Company International) employee or representative.
- Counterfeiting or distributing counterfeit product.

Program members witnessing such activity in progress at a Play! Pokémon event should contact the relevant local authorities in addition to reporting the activity to Pokémon Organized Play.

## 3.2 Harassment & Bullying

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Program members should not harass, bully, threaten, abuse, or cause distress for another, including (but not limited to) fellow members of Play! Pokémon.

Examples include:

- Use of language, messages, symbols, images, illustrations, or links that discriminate based on attributes such as race, religion, ethnic origin, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or economic means.
- Use of any language, symbols, or images that would otherwise violate the [Play! Pokémon Inclusion Policy](#).
- Harassment of a specific person, such as through personal attacks, repeated and unwanted contact, threats of “doxing,” or actual disclosure of any personal or private information of another without their explicit consent.
- Threats or images of violence, harm, or retaliation.
- “Trolling” or baiting the community with inflammatory statements, especially when designed to incite hatred or unrest.

In addition to the above, participants should exercise good judgment when choosing when and where to discuss controversial topics and should be aware that jokes between friends are quickly decontextualized within a diverse, multicultural environment.

For more information regarding the commitment of Pokémon Organized Play toward a diverse and non-discriminatory community program, please refer to the [Play! Pokémon Inclusion Policy](#).

## 3.3 Gross Infringement of Community Standards

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Program members should not engage in other activities that may reasonably detract from another’s ability to enjoy their experience within a Play! Pokémon program to the fullest.

Examples include:

- Distribution or use of obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit, or graphically or gratuitously violent content.
- Predatory trading—that is, targeting and/or pressuring younger or inexperienced program members for trades in your favor.
- Distribution of, promotion of, or engagement in the modification of video game software, or “hacking.”
- Deception, defrauding, or engagement of a fellow program member under false pretenses.

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## 4 Pokémon Professor Conduct

Pokémon Professors are held to higher standards of conduct than other program members.

It is important that the Professor Core Values are respected throughout the duration of the Professor’s association with Play! Pokémon.

### 4.1 The Professor Core Values

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#### 4.1.1 Honesty

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It is critical to the integrity of the Professor Program that its members have a reputation of honesty and trustworthiness. If players cannot trust a Professor to be honest, they cannot trust that Professor’s rulings to be accurate or their events to be fair.

In addition, The Pokémon Company International (TPCi) may occasionally contact Professors to assist in player or venue investigations. If a Professor has been known to be dishonest, the integrity of the investigation may be jeopardized.

#### 4.1.2 Integrity

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A Professor should be fair and unbiased, whether judging a tournament or resolving a dispute. Personal feelings can potentially cloud a judgment call—a Professor must not take these feelings into consideration when resolving an issue between players, parents, venue staff, or spectators.

#### 4.1.3 Responsibility

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Professors are trusted with a great deal of responsibility. For example, as a judge, a Professor is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of rulings to the best of their ability. They must take all possible measures to ensure they are up to date with the latest developments regarding Play! Pokémon rules.

As an Organizer, a Professor must ensure that all event reporting is done in an accurate and timely manner, and that all event prizes and participation rewards are handed out according to the event guidelines.

Posts and comments that discuss non-hypothetical rulings and penalties must be made responsibly and must avoid conclusory statements.

#### 4.1.4 Professionalism

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Professors should act professionally while actively engaging in Pokémon activities. For example, foul language, horseplay, smoking, drinking alcohol, and similar activities are unacceptable, and all event attendees should be addressed courteously, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or physical or mental capacity.

Professors should also take care to avoid public discussion of sensitive rulings or exchanges at events that could cause embarrassment or emotional distress to the parties involved. When discussing rulings in general, care should be taken to ensure that those involved remain anonymous.

Finally, posts and comments that publicly criticize a ruling made by a fellow Professor very rarely help matters and are often made in ignorance of the context in which the ruling was made. Disagreements between Professors should be resolved privately and professionally.

#### 4.1.5 Professor Appreciation events

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We expect Professors to continue to embody the behavioral tenets laid out in our Professor Core Values and The Spirit of the Game even at appreciation events such as the Professor Cups or staff parties.

After all, Professors work hard all year long. Each of them deserves to enjoy appreciation events. Losing gracefully, enjoying for-fun formats in the spirit they are intended, and continuing to treat fellow Professors with respect at the after party are simply not optional.

## 4.2 Confidentiality

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While assisting at a Play! Pokémon event, Professors may be trusted with information that is not public knowledge. Posts or comments that reveal this information before Pokémon Organized Play has decided to make it public constitute a breach of confidentiality and may warrant disciplinary action.

Such examples include:

- Leaking dates of Regional Championships events before they are made public.
- Posting pictures of the interior of an International Championships venue before doors are open to the public.
- Disclosing any information or document shared by TPCi in confidence.

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## 5 Disciplinary Action

Eligibility to participate in Play! Pokémon programs is a privilege, not a right. Continued access to this privilege is dependent on a member's ability to act within the best interests of the friendly, welcoming, and inclusive environment that Play! Pokémon strives to promote. Pokémon Organized Play may decide to pursue disciplinary action against any individual whose behavior conflicts with these values.

Where disciplinary action is taken, the program member affected will be informed of the following by email:

- Case number
- The length of time for which the disciplinary action will be in effect
- The date on which the disciplinary action will come into effect
- A copy of the Guidelines for Appealing Disciplinary Action (if eligible for appeal)

The Pokémon Organized Play Rules Compliance Team is the final judge of whether any member should be refused eligibility to participate in Play! Pokémon programs.

### 5.1 Types of Disciplinary Action

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Except for warnings, which have no duration, the minimum length of each action is 30 days. There is no maximum duration.

#### 5.1.1 Written Warning

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Pokémon Organized Play issues a written warning to the member that the behavior identified is not acceptable within the program. This may be preceded by an email investigating why the behavior took place.

#### 5.1.2 Professor Program Suspension

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Those who are suspended from the Professor Program lose all associated roles, including the ability to sanction and run tournaments.

A list of members suspended from the Professor Program can be accessed on the official Pokémon website via a user's Play! Pokémon dashboard.

##### 5.1.2.1 Rescindment of Event Invitations

Pokémon Organized Play may withdraw a solicited Professor's invitation to an event in situations where it is determined that the Professor's continued eligibility to participate as volunteer staff at such an event could send the wrong message to other program members. An invitation may be withdrawn because of, or in place of, disciplinary action.



### 5.1.3 Play! Pokémon Program Suspension

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Those suspended from Play! Pokémon in its entirety are not permitted to participate in or attend any Play! Pokémon events as a spectator, player, judge, or in any other capacity. A list of members suspended from Play! Pokémon can be accessed on the official Pokémon website via a user's Play! Pokémon dashboard.

If a suspended player disrupts an event by trying to participate and refusing to leave, the incident should be reported to Pokémon Organized Play. An extension to the existing suspension may then be applied.

Occasionally, a program member may be issued a lifetime suspension without possibility of [appeal](#). This sanction is received when a member irreparably damages Pokémon Organized Play's perception of that member's ability to return to a status of good standing.

#### 5.1.3.1 Rescindment of Awards for Travel

In exceptional circumstances, a player affected by disciplinary action may become ineligible to participate in Play! Pokémon events for which they hold invitations or awards for travel—for example, if a player's suspension extends through the date on which the event will take place.

The player forfeits all invitations and/or awards for travel to events that fall within the period for which they are suspended, although Pokémon Organized Play may not attempt to reverse any fulfillment of the above that has occurred prior to the disciplinary action.

## 5.2 Appeals Process

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Unless they have received a lifetime suspension from participation in Play! Pokémon programs, a program member has the right to appeal their disciplinary action through the [Play! Pokémon Customer Service](#) team. The appeal will be forwarded to Pokémon Organized Play for consideration.

After submitting an appeal, a suspended program member must continue to adhere to the conditions of that suspension until they receive notification that their appeal has been successful.

### 5.2.1 Required Elements for Appeal

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The following information must be included in the appeal:

- Player ID number
- Case number (can be found in the Notice of Disciplinary Action email subject line)
- If the individual has been suspended from the Professor Program, they must include the Player ID number of a Professor who may be contacted to provide a second opinion of their fitness to return to the program.

The main body of an individual's appeal may not exceed 500 words. Supporting documentation (e.g., screenshots, statements from others) may be added as attachments and do not contribute toward this limit.

## 5.2.2 In Case of Denial

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The individual will be informed if their appeal is denied.

They will be provided with the date on which they will be allowed to submit a new appeal or reminded that they are not permitted to submit any further appeals—whichever is relevant given the length of the individual’s active suspension.

## 5.3 Reporting Incidents

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Program members are encouraged to report incidents of behavior that violates the Play! Pokémon Standards of Conduct by contacting the [Play! Pokémon Customer Service](#) team.

The identity of the reporter will never be disclosed in any subsequent communication with third parties.

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## 6 Summary of Changes

**Date of previous issue:** October 6, 2023

**Date of current issue:** February 13, 2024

| 1 Introduction |        |        |
|----------------|--------|--------|
| Section        | Page # | Change |

| 2 Spirit of the Game |        |        |
|----------------------|--------|--------|
| Section              | Page # | Change |

| 3 Community Conduct |        |  |
|---------------------|--------|--|
| Section             | Page # | Change   |
| 3.2                 | 4      | Changed “Play! Pokémon Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity Policy” to “Play! Pokémon Inclusion Policy.” Updated the link. |
| 3.3                 | 5      | Distribution <i>or use</i> of obscene, pornographic....  |

| 4 Pokémon Professor Conduct |        |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|
| Section                     | Page # | Change |

| 5 Disciplinary Action |        |  |
|-----------------------|--------|--|
| Section               | Page # | Change   |
| 5.2                   | 9      | Removed “can appeal within 14 days of Notice of Disciplinary Action” to align with appeal guidelines |