

# Flesh and Blood - Procedure and Penalty Guide

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# 1. General

The Flesh and Blood - Procedure and Penalty Guide provides a structure of procedures and penalties for judges to apply to official tournaments for all rules enforcement levels. The purpose of this document is to ensure there is a consistent application of procedures and penalties for infractions that occur during a tournament so that the integrity of the tournament is upheld.

## 1.1. Philosophy

“Our mission is to bring people together in the flesh and blood through the common language of playing great games.”

The game of Flesh and Blood is designed for in-person play, and with that comes the challenge of handling inevitable human error where the rules or policies of the game or tournament are broken. These errors (infractions) can be roughly categorized into gameplay, tournament, or conduct. Gameplay errors are infractions of the game rules as defined by the Comprehensive Rules. Tournament errors are infractions of the tournament rules as defined by Tournament Rules and Policy. Conduct errors are infractions of the player’s conduct in relation to both the game and tournament rules and cover the general behavior expected of a player. This document provides a guideline for handling these infractions. It categorizes the most common infractions and provides insight into how to address them with procedures and penalties.

When an infraction occurs during an event, the role of a judge is to act as an impartial arbiter to address the infraction by applying procedures and issuing penalties, educating the players, and equalizing any advantage gained. Judges should not intervene in an ongoing game unless an infraction has occurred. In addition, there is no need for a judge to intervene if an infraction with a Caution penalty has occurred or if an infraction with a Warning penalty is mutually resolved between the players in a timely manner. It should be recognised that no document could ever capture the context of every infraction that could occur and provide the exact procedures and penalties nuance it deserves. As such, the Judges for an event are empowered to deviate from this guide to provide the most appropriate ruling for given infractions.

There are three principles behind ruling an infraction: education, equity, and mission.

- **Education** means ensuring that the player(s) understand the infraction and its consequences. A player should be made aware of the infraction they have committed; what has occurred, why it is an infraction, and what the process is to address it. Players are discouraged from committing an infraction if there is a penalty associated with it and are less likely to commit the same infraction in the future if they are aware of what they have done wrong - even more so when there is an increasing penalty.
- **Equity** means ensuring that the player(s) lose any advantage from committing the infraction. A procedure should be used to remedy the game state and remove any advantage gained if possible, and a penalty may be applied to introduce an additional disadvantage to equalize the situation. Players are less likely to commit infractions if they will always end up in the same or a more disadvantageous situation.
  - **Information** advantage is when a player gains additional information about the private state of the game that they should not have.
  - **State** advantage is when the game state changes to become more favorable to one player.
  - **Strategic** advantage is when a player gains strategic information that may influence their future gameplay decisions.
  - **Tournament** advantage is when a player artificially gains a more favorable standing, or forces a less favorable standing for another player, in the current tournament.

- **Mission** means to balance the education and equity of procedures and penalties with the mission statement of “playing great games”. While it is important that procedures and penalties are applied to educate players and equalize advantages, they should be applied in a context that allows the players to play great games. In casual events, games are focused on socialization and creating experiences, so the fixes are liberal and penalties are gentle to allow for better education of players rather than minor advantages gained by any player. In competitive events, games are focused on skill and competition, so the procedures are strict and penalties are harsh to allow for fairness of the game rather than focusing on educating players.

This document presents a guide for the three rules enforcement levels of official tournament play: Casual, Competitive, and Professional.

- **Casual** rules enforcement is designed for local in-store play, where there is a low barrier to entry, low stakes, and the tournament environment is social and informative. Emphasis is placed on the education and enjoyment of players rather than the strict equity and integrity of each game.
- **Competitive** rules enforcement is designed for competition, where the barrier to entry may still be low, but there are higher stakes and the environment is focused on winning. Infractions are categorized and enforced more rigidly, and fixes and penalties are based on a balance of education and equity.
- **Professional** rules enforcement is designed for the highest levels of competitive tournaments, where the barrier to entry is high, and the environment is very competitive. Players are expected to play at a level where they are knowledgeable enough about the game that education is less relevant in playing great games than the equity/fairness of each game. As such the suggested penalty for many infractions is increased.

## 1.2. Handling an infraction

Infractions are addressed by first identifying what infraction has occurred, then following the corresponding instructions relevant to the situation.

If a penalty is issued for an infraction, the judge must explain the infraction, the procedure for addressing the situation, and the penalty to all players involved. Any penalty of an IP2 or higher should first be confirmed with the Head Judge, with the exception of Tardiness and Decklist Error (see [Section 4.1 - Tardiness](#) and [Section 4.4 - Decklist Error](#)). If a player commits more than one related infraction, procedures for each infraction are applied separately, but only the highest penalty of all infractions is issued (instead of issuing compounding penalties). A time extension for the round should be issued to the players involved if the ruling has taken more than one minute, rounded up to the minute.

Judges are not immune to making mistakes. When a judge makes a mistake, the first step is to acknowledge the mistake, apologize to the players, and work towards fixing it if possible. If a judge’s mistake leads to a player committing a violation, the Head Judge may take the mistake into consideration as a reason for the deviation.

### Deviations

In some cases, an exceptional situation can not be cleanly categorized into one of the sections listed in this document, or the recommended procedure/penalty for an infraction does not accurately address the situation in line with the three guiding principles of education, equity, and mission.

In these cases, the Head Judge has the authority to deviate from the recommendations and apply/issue a modified procedure and/or penalty. If they do, the Head Judge is expected to explain the standard policy and the reason for the deviation to all players involved. Judges can and should confer with the Head Judge and recommend a deviation when they think it is necessary, but the decision to deviate should ultimately be left to the Head Judge to ensure that deviations are made with some consistency for the duration of the tournament. Reasons for deviating from policy include but are not limited to:

- A player who has technically committed a gameplay infraction is given a Warning, but a deviation from the recommended procedure would produce a more equitable game state.
- A player has committed an infraction and the procedure or penalty does not address the exceptional circumstances in a way that is fair.
- A player has committed many related infractions at once, and only an increased penalty would equalize the advantage gained.

Infractions in this guide are presented in their most common form; if an infraction occurs that diverges from this form, it is up to the judges to decide on the fix and/or penalty that should apply and up to the Head Judge to approve. When deciding on a fix and/or penalty for an infraction, one should start with the most relevant infraction and diverge with these three questions in mind:

- Will this help players learn? (education)
- Will this make the situation fair? (equity)
- Will this ensure that players will play great games? (mission)

The procedures and penalties in this guide both educate judges on the recommended way to rule the most common infractions and protect them from being liable in the application of rulings. If a judge makes a ruling that is in line with the procedures and penalties presented in this guide, any complaints become directed at the policy itself rather than the judge. In addition, this guide lays out the expectations for players, which helps them to play better games because they can expect consistency in the procedures and penalties for committing infractions. This is not the case for deviations and should be considered when applying a procedure or penalty that deviates from this guide.

### 1.3. Types of Procedures

#### **Rewind the game state**

Rewinding the game state means altering the game state in its entirety to a previous legal game state. When performed correctly, this procedure removes any possible state advantage a player may have gained through illegal action. However, it does not address information advantage (a player cannot be made to forget something) and in certain situations, it may introduce a strategic advantage.

#### **Partial fix**

Partially fixing the game state means artificially altering the game state. When performed correctly, this procedure can remove or aid in equalizing a state advantage gained by a player through illegal action. Partial fixes aim to be a way to restore the integrity of the game without having to significantly interfere with the game, such as when you rewind the game state or introduce a harsher penalty like an IP2 in order to equalize a state advantage. In general, partial fixes should not be performed if doing so would have removed relevant player interaction (e.g. applying optional replacement effects, using instants in response,) if a player likely made a decision based on the result of the illegal action, or if the illegal action (and its consequences) is too complex to be partially fixed.

Partial fixes include (but are not limited to) the following:

- If a player is on an incorrect life total, adjust the life total to be correct.
- If a player made an illegal choice for a layer on the stack or an object in the arena, that player makes a choice that would have been legal at the time.

- If cards should have moved to/from a player's hand and the player hasn't drawn up to their intellect since, those cards move to the correct zone.
- If an object should have moved between non-hand zones or was moved into an incorrect zone, the object is still known to all players, and it does not majorly disrupt the game to do so, move the object to the correct zone.
- If a player should have lost the game due to an effect or the life total of their hero being reduced to 0, that player simply loses the game.

Effects are triggered from partial fixes only if they would have otherwise triggered at the correct time. The triggered-layer is then put onto the stack at the closest appropriate place as if it had triggered without the illegal action occurring.

#### **Cards to the top or bottom of the deck**

Putting cards to the top or the bottom of the deck means changing the location of specific cards to a position in the deck as decided by one player. If multiple cards are to be put to the top or the bottom of the deck, the player chooses the order of the cards and whether it goes to the top or bottom for each card. When performed correctly along with other procedures, this can help equalize information and strategic advantages gained by a player through game or tournament errors. Because the position of cards in the deck is a key part of Flesh and Blood's game design, it is impractical for many infractions to ensure that cards can be shuffled into the randomized portion of a deck, so this procedure takes an alternative approach to create a more equitable game state.

#### **Shuffle into a random portion of the deck**

Shuffling into a random portion of the deck means taking the contiguous randomized portion of a deck, adding and removing any cards, and shuffling it before returning it with the non-randomized portions in the correct locations. When performed correctly, this procedure can completely remove the state or information advantage a player may have gained through game or tournament errors. However, due to the fundamental design of Flesh and Blood, the position of cards in the deck is often non-random which makes it difficult to apply this procedure. As such this procedure should only be used as part of a deviation when appropriate for the given game state and infraction.

### **1.4. Types of Penalties**

Penalties are an additional tool for judges to track player infractions, educate players by discouraging them from committing future infractions, and equalize advantages gained by committing infractions. The following penalties here are listed in ascending order of severity. When a penalty would be upgraded or downgraded, the judge issues a penalty that is more or less severe respectively.

Severity	Penalty
0	Caution
1	Warning
2	Intellect Penalty
3	Game Loss
4	Match Loss
5	Disqualification

### **Caution**

A Caution is an informal warning for minor infractions. Cautions should be used when an infraction is not worth recording for the duration of the tournament, such as when an infraction is committed that does not gain the player an advantage, or when both players mutually fix an infraction and no advantage is gained. Typically, judges should not intervene in games where an infraction would be penalized with a Caution, unless there is an equity issue (cases where a deviation may be considered), or the Judge needs to determine if the player intentionally broke the rules to gain an advantage.

### **Warning**

A Warning is a formal warning for a minor infraction that has occurred and is recorded in the system. Warnings are recorded in the system for the current tournament to keep track of which errors each player has incurred. Multiple instances of the warning for the same or similar reasons may result in an upgrade to a harsher penalty.

### **Intellect Penalty**

An Intellect Penalty (IP) is a penalty that reduces the intellect of the player's hero for a set duration of the game. Because the game of Flesh and Blood is fundamentally based on the hero's intellect, penalizing this aspect of the game allows a finer resolution of a penalty than a Game Loss, while also being more severe than a Warning. This is particularly relevant when the match structure is best of 1.

An Intellect Penalty is considered a game macro with the following text:

Your hero has  $-1\{i\}$ .

If you would create an Intellect Penalty with X counters on it, instead add X turn counters onto this.

If you would draw up to your hero's intellect as an end-of-turn procedure, instead draw that many cards, remove a turn counter from this, and remove it from the game if it has no turn counters on it.

While a player currently has an Intellect Penalty, they draw 1 less card at the end of the turn from the game system. After a player draws up to their hero's intellect at the end of a turn (including drawing up at the end of the first turn), they remove a turn counter from the Intellect Penalty and if it has no turn counters it gets removed from the game (the penalty is now complete). If a player receives another Intellect Penalty while currently subject to one, the turn counters of the new Intellect Penalty will be added to the existing Intellect Penalty instead. It does not stack and cause the player to draw 2 fewer cards, it only extends the time the current Intellect Penalty is applied. Players are recommended to put a die on top of their deck to keep track of how many turns of the Intellect Penalty remain.

An Intellect Penalty is typically issued for 2 turns (IP2). When a penalty is upgraded or downgraded to an Intellect Penalty, an IP2 is issued.

If an Intellect Penalty is issued to a player before a game begins, the number of cards in their hand that player starts the game with will be affected by the Intellect Penalty. If Intellect Penalties (with equal value) are simultaneously issued to all players in a game, the infraction is recorded, but the game resumes as though neither player received an Intellect Penalty.

### **Game Loss**

A Game Loss is a penalty that ends the current game and the player issued the penalty is considered to have lost the game. A Game Loss is used when the integrity of the game is irreversibly compromised by an infraction, or as a harsh punishment to educate the player on their actions.

If the player is between games, the Game Loss applies to the next game they would play. If the player is issued a Game Loss in a best of 1 format, they effectively lose the match. If Game Losses are simultaneously issued to all players in a game, the infraction is recorded, but the game is played as though neither player lost.

### **Match Loss**

A Match Loss is a penalty that ends the current match and the player issued the penalty is considered to have lost the match, regardless of the game score. A Match Loss is used when the integrity of the match is irreversibly compromised, or as a harsher punishment than Game Loss.

If the player is between matches, the Match Loss applies to the next match they would play. If Match Losses are simultaneously issued to all players in a game, the match is recorded as a double match loss.

### **Disqualification**

A Disqualification is a penalty that results in the player being removed entirely from the tournament. A disqualification is the harshest penalty a player can receive at a tournament and is reserved for actions that compromise the integrity of a tournament as a whole or for severe conduct errors.

A player who is issued a Disqualification loses their current match (if they are currently playing a match), and is dropped from the tournament. A disqualified player does not receive any additional prizes they are due but may keep any prizes they have received up until that point. When a player is dropped due to Disqualification, they do not have a place in the standings meaning that all players below them will advance in the standings by one. If the Disqualification takes place after a cut is made, no additional players will advance into the cut, even if they move up the standings by one.

The Head Judge and the disqualified player are responsible for completing the disqualification form, which allows them to share their side of the story. The [player disqualification](#) form and the [head judge disqualification form](#) are available in the Rules and Policy Center. Players who have been disqualified from a Legend Story Studios (LSS) event will have their player status reviewed by the Player Conduct Committee.

## 2. Casual - Infractions

### 2.1. Casual - Philosophy

For casual players at local events, the term “great games” often means friendly competition in a welcoming, lighthearted, and social environment. The casual rules enforcement level aims to provide this with emphasis on facilitating games through education, but also keeping games relatively fair. Both players and judges are encouraged to help one another at appropriate times, and players are encouraged to solve any infractions through mutual agreement before calling for a Judge. If no Judge is not available, the role falls to the Tournament Organizer.

There are no Warnings or Intellect Penalties at the Casual REL. Minor infractions are handled by fixing the game state and educating/cautioning the player on the infraction to help prevent repeat interactions. Major infractions are handled with Game/Match Losses, or Disqualification as a last resort, to preserve the safety and the integrity of the tournament. If the event requires deck lists, provides high stakes, or the players are looking for a more competitive environment, upgrading the REL to Competitive is recommended.

Judges should continue to uphold the Judge Code of Conduct, but rule to meet the expectations of the event and the players in line with the three guiding principles. What follows are some common errors that can occur and the procedures and penalties recommended for a Casual REL tournament. The level of intervention and how a judge deviates from these recommendations depends on the environment that the Tournament Organizer wants to achieve.

### 2.2. Casual - Gameplay Errors

#### **A player makes a game rules error**

Most gameplay errors can be addressed by partially fixing what was illegal and letting play continue. If the error involved the player forgetting a simple action (drawing, discarding, paying a cost, putting a counter on an card), have them take that action now. Otherwise, if the error was caught immediately, rewind the game state by undoing actions taken by the players until you’re at the point in the game before the error was made. If too many actions have been taken (by both players) that rewinding would be too disruptive, partially fix anything that is currently illegal within the game and let play proceed.

#### **A player forgets a triggered effect**

A triggered effect is an effect that starts with or contains “when”, “whenever”, “at the”, and “the X time”. A triggered effect is considered missed if the controlling player did not acknowledge the effect before it has had an effect on the game (see [Section 3.3 - Missed Trigger](#) for a more in-depth explanation of when a trigger is missed).

If the effect was optional (contains the word “may”), assume that the player chose not to resolve it. If neither player has made critical decisions based on the trigger not happening and the effect would not be disruptive at this point in the game, put the trigger on the stack. Otherwise, the trigger is considered completely missed, and let play proceed without it.

#### **A player sees a card they shouldn’t have seen**

If the card was in the player’s deck, shuffle it into a random portion of the player’s deck. It is acceptable to shuffle it into only part of the deck, but you must avoid shuffling cards with known locations within the deck. If the majority of the deck is ordered (especially from pitching over several turns), or if the card wasn’t in the player’s deck, just reveal the card to the opponent and leave the card in the zone it was originally.



**A player draws more cards than they were supposed to**

If the extra cards were already known to all players, return those cards to the top of the deck. Otherwise, randomly select a card for each extra card drawn this way by the player and put them on the top of the deck.

### 2.3. Casual - Tournament Errors

**A player turns up late for a round**

If a player is seated less than 10 minutes late, give the players that much extra time to complete their match. If a player is seated 10 or more minutes late for a round, issue them a match loss. If the player can't be found for the entire round, drop them from the tournament so the situation doesn't repeat in the next round.

**A player talks with another person during a match or draft**

In a more social environment communication with spectators or other players, during a match or drafting, can often be excused. Strategic communication during these times should be considered outside assistance and treated as unsportsman-like conduct as described below.

**A player has an illegal deck**

First, the Judge removes any cards that shouldn't be in the deck and any insert cards that should, then if the deck is below the minimum required size, insert Cracked Baubles until it reaches that size. If the error is discovered during the start of a game, any inserted cards should be shuffled into a random portion of the deck. It is acceptable to shuffle it into only part of the deck, but you must avoid shuffling cards with known locations within the deck. If the majority of the deck is ordered do not insert any cards until after the game has been completed.

### 2.4. Casual - Conduct Errors

**A player is being unsportsman-like**

If a player is showing unsporting behavior, they may be affecting both the integrity or the enjoyment of the tournament as a whole. Unsporting behavior means the player's conduct violates the game or tournament rules of the event; this includes:

- Taking an unreasonable amount of time to make decisions within the match.
- Requesting or providing strategic assistance during a match or draft.
- Bribing or otherwise convincing an opponent to determine the match result by anything other than playing the game or Wagering on the results of a match.
- Arguing with the Judge or Tournament Organizer about a decision or the tournament in general.

Many players will commit these errors unintentionally, so the priority is to educate players and give them an opportunity to correct their actions and behavior. If it continues, reinforcing the education can be done using a Game Loss. A player who intentionally breaks these rules is considered serious misconduct.

**A player commits serious misconduct**

If a player irreversibly compromises the integrity of the tournament or behaves in a way that affects other people negatively, this is a serious error that should be stopped and addressed immediately; this includes:

- Behaviour (physical or verbal) that makes another person feel abused, threatened, harassed, scared, belittled, or unsafe; especially aggressive or violent behavior.
- Intentionally breaking the game or tournament rules and/or lying about these rules to gain an advantage.
- Stealing from the tournament materials or another person at the venue.

- Ignoring the direct instruction of a Judge or Tournament Organizer, related to the tournament.

Efforts should be made to educate players on why these actions or behaviors are unacceptable and to deescalate situations before serious misconduct occurs. Players who commit serious misconduct should be disqualified and may be removed from the venue at the Tournament Organizer's discretion.

### 3. Competitive and Professional - Gameplay Infractions

Gameplay infractions are caused by play that violates the rules of the game as defined by the Flesh and Blood Comprehensive Rules. Gameplay infractions are assumed to be committed unintentionally, but if a judge suspects that the infraction was intentional then it could be considered Cheating (see [Section 5.2 - Cheating](#)).

If a player commits 3 or more gameplay infractions of the same type (except for Failure to Maintain Game State) on a given tournament day, the penalty that would be given for that infraction should be upgraded by 1 severity level. This penalty count does not accumulate over multiple days and is reset at the end of each day for a multi-day tournament.

#### 3.1. Game Rules Violation Warning

The player, in some capacity, fails to apply the rules correctly to elements of the game they are responsible for in a way that is not specified by another Gameplay Infraction.

Players are responsible for ensuring that their actions, or inaction, follow the rules of the game. Players have a shared responsibility for the rules of the game when they introduce effects that interact with their opponent, or when they instruct their opponent to perform certain actions.

If an opponent allows the player to commit a Game Rules Violation (that the opponent is not responsible for), the opponent has committed Failure to Maintain Game State (see [Section 3.2 - Failure to Maintain Game State](#)), except in cases where there is a shared responsibility so both players have committed a Game Rules Violation.

#### Philosophy

In the most typical case, when the player commits a Game Rule Violation, they potentially gain a state advantage and/or information advantage. While it is the responsibility of each player to ensure that the rules of the game are correctly applied to their actions/inaction, all players are responsible for maintaining the shared game state.

If an infraction is caught immediately, rewinding can remove any state advantage gained by the player and prevents additional information or strategic advantage from being gained by the opponent responding to an incorrect game state. As soon as additional actions have been made by either player, fixing the issue becomes more nuanced. The Judge must assess the game state and decide if rewinding the game to the point of the mistake or partially fixing the game state is better suited to achieve a more equitable situation.

If the procedures can not be applied without significantly disrupting the game, mostly due to too many plays made after the infraction has been made, issuing an IP2 can help balance the game state and reduce the advantage gained from the infraction.

#### ***Examples:***

- *A player plays a card or activates an ability without paying the full cost to do so.*
- *A player defends with a card from their arsenal.*
- *A player plays an action card on their opponent's turn without playing it as an instant.*
- *A player forgets to draw up to their hero's intellect at the end of their turn.*
- *A player plays a card when an opponent's card prevents them from doing so (shared responsibility).*

### Procedure and Penalty

If the Game Rule Violation was caught immediately, issue the player a Warning for Game Rule Violation and rewind the game state to the time it was last legal.

If additional actions to the Game Rule Violation have been made by either player, issue the player a Warning for Game Rule Violation. Evaluate the game state and apply either rewind the game state to the point of the error or apply a partial fix to remove the advantage gained by the player. If the game state can not be rewound or partially fixed to remove a significant advantage gained by the player, upgrade to an IP2.

In addition to the penalty for the player, if the opponent had a reasonable opportunity to acknowledge the Game Rule Violation but did not, issue the opponent a Warning for Failure to Maintain Game State. If there is shared responsibility for the error, instead issue the opponent a Warning for Game Rule Violation.

### 3.2. Failure to Maintain Game State Warning

The player(s), through their own inaction, has not acknowledged an opponent's gameplay infraction other than Missed Trigger.

#### Philosophy

In situations where an opponent commits a gameplay infraction, a player may consequently gain a state advantage by allowing the game to proceed. If a gameplay infraction is caught earlier, the potential state advantage gained by either player is minimized and can possibly be rewound without issue. However, if the game continues then the fault lies with both players. For a player who intentionally fails to acknowledge an opponent's gameplay infraction in order to gain a state (other than Missed Trigger), information, and/or strategic advantage, see [Section 5.2 - Cheating](#).

#### *Examples:*

- *The opponent defends with a card without the defense property, and the player does not notice until after the turn is over.*
- *The opponent plays and resolves a card and starts searching through their deck, and then the player notices that they don't have enough resources to play the card.*

### Procedure and Penalty

Follow the recommended procedure and penalties for the opponent's gameplay infraction, then issue the player a Warning for Failure to Maintain Game State.

### 3.3. Missed Trigger Caution

The player, by their own inaction, has not acknowledged the resolution of a triggered effect they control by the time its effects become relevant.

Acknowledging a triggered effect requires either a visible change to the game state from its effect or communication between the players confirming that it has been triggered. Visible changes include changes to the existence and location of physical objects such as cards, tokens, macros, and counters; and changes to life totals for heroes. Any player can acknowledge a triggered effect, not just its controller. The point when a triggered layer becomes relevant is different for different triggers, and if the following criteria are met for the trigger is it not considered missed:

- A triggered effect that requires its controller to make decisions (such as choose targets or modes) must be acknowledged before the controller next passes priority.
- A triggered effect that affects the rules of the game must be acknowledged before an action is taken, or acknowledged by stopping an action taken by a player, that otherwise would be made illegal by the triggered effect.
- A triggered effect that affects the game state in a visible way upon resolution, or requires any player to make decisions upon resolution, must be acknowledged before any player takes an in-game action that could only be taken after the triggered effect has resolved.
- A triggered effect that affects the game state in a non-visible way must be acknowledged before it first visibly effects the game state.

If the resolution of a triggered effect would have no impact on the game, failing to acknowledge it is not considered an infraction. If the only part of a triggered effect that would have an impact on the game is optional and it is not acknowledged, it is assumed that the controlling player decided to not generate that effect and it is not considered an infraction. If part of a triggered effect can be considered resolved and had a visible impact on the game, the trigger is considered acknowledged and any other part of the trigger being missed is considered a Game Rules Violation (see [Section 3.1 - Game Rules Violation](#)).

Players are responsible for the resolution of any triggered effects they control. Players are not required to acknowledge triggered effects they don't control even if they are involved in the resolution of the effect, though they may still do so. The controlling player is responsible for ensuring that any decisions or actions taken by the opponent for the resolution of the effect are legal and appropriate; they may not assume their opponent chooses not to take any optional action.

While it may benefit a player not to acknowledge the triggered effects of their opponents, they may not intentionally cause them to be missed. As such the trigger is only considered missed if the controlling player acknowledges or allows the progression of the game state passed the point of trigger relevancy without first acknowledging the triggered effect. Intentionally progressing the game state to cause another player to miss a triggered effect is considered Rules Sharking (see [Section 5.10 - Rules Sharking](#)).

### Philosophy

Similar to Game Rules Violations, missing the resolution of a trigger compromises the integrity of the game state and may create a state advantage for the player. Unlike playing a card or activating an ability, triggered-effects (and the resolution of triggered-layers) are only relevant as the consequence of other actions and events within the game, as opposed to direct actions taken by the player. Because they are so common and often invisible to the game state, players should not be harshly penalized when one is missed. However, intentionally ignoring a triggered effect that the player controls is considered Cheating.

In some cases, players may be responsible for detrimental triggered effects imposed by the opponent. Because the triggered effect was introduced by the opponent, it's more likely that the player will miss it triggering, which can lead to unfair compounding penalties for players who aren't familiar with effects from their opponent's card-pool. These infractions are punished less harshly for this reason.

#### **Examples:**

- *A player attacks with Crane Dance and then Heron's Flight and forgets to declare the mode of the triggered effect. They only realize after they've acknowledged the opponent's defending cards.*
- *A player hits their opponent with Red in the Ledger, forgets to declare the triggered effect, and does not stop the opponent from playing and resolving a second action during their turn.*
- *A player controls a Soul Shackle, forgets to banish a card at the start of their turn, and plays an action card.*

- *A player hits their opponent with Brandish, then attacks them again with a weapon. When applying the life total from the weapon attack, the player forgets to add +1{p} into the calculation.*

### Procedure and Penalty

If the Missed Trigger was caught immediately, issue the player a Caution for Missed Trigger and rewind the game state to the time it was last legal.

If additional actions after the Missed Trigger have been made by either player, issue the player a Caution for Missed Trigger. Evaluate the game state and apply either rewind the game state to the point of the error or apply a partial fix to restore the game state.

If the player would have gained a significant advantage from missing the trigger, and the triggered effect was ultimately created by the player (and not the opponent), upgrade to a Warning.

### 3.4. Looking at Extra Cards Warning

The player, by their own action, has unintentionally seen cards that were not allowed to see but the cards have not changed zone.

#### Philosophy

When the player sees cards that were initially hidden from them, they gain information about the private state of the game and therefore gain an information advantage. When the card is owned by the player, they only gain an advantage of knowing the relative position of the card, but if the card is owned by the opponent, then they also gain information about the opponent's card-pool and the current locations of those cards (especially if they're in the deck).

In rare cases, if the cards were from the player's randomized deck, shuffling them back into the deck removes the information advantage entirely, as they already knew what cards were in their deck. The issue with this approach is that non-randomized decks are rare, especially with the pitching mechanic of Flesh and Blood. The alternative method of putting the extra card to the top or bottom (directed by the opponent) does not remove the information advantage, but it does balance the advantage by giving an equivalent advantage to the opponent; knowing the card and choosing its position in the zone.

If the number of extra cards seen is large, rather than allow the opponent to stack an entire portion of the player's deck, shuffling the deck removes the significant information advantage gained by the player and avoids issues with the typical procedure where the opponent would gain an unfair advantage.

#### *Examples:*

- *A player sees extra cards when drawing.*
- *A player sees extra cards when revealing/looking at cards from their, or their opponent's, deck.*
- *A player sees cards from their opponent's deck while shuffling it.*
- *A player accidentally knocks some cards off the top of their deck face-up.*

### Procedure and Penalty

If the extra card is part of the player's fully randomized deck, issue the player a Caution and shuffle the extra card into the deck.

If the extra card is part of the player's non-randomized deck, issue the player a Warning. If the extra card was previously known to the player (through effects like opt or reveal), leave the card in the correct position, otherwise, reveal the card to the opponent who chooses for that card to go to the top or bottom of the deck.

If the extra card is seen as part of the player drawing cards as an end-of-turn procedure, but the opponent has not acknowledged the change of phase (the opponent wants to play/activate cards/abilities), issue the player a Warning but leave the cards as they were on the top of the deck. This does not apply if the cards are added to other cards in the player's hand (see [Section 3.5 - Hidden Card Error](#)).

If the extra cards include 5 or more cards in the player's non-randomized deck, shuffle the deck and issue recommended penalties for the infraction of Shuffling Error (see [Section 3.6 - Shuffling Error](#)).

If the extra card was part of the player's non-deck zones or is owned by the opponent, issue the player a Warning, reveal the card to the opponent and leave the extra card where it was.

### 3.5. Hidden Card Error Warning

A player, by their own action, has illegally combined hidden cards from two or more zones into a single collection of cards; therefore, it is not possible to distinguish which cards in the collection were previously in each zone.

#### Philosophy

When the player combines sets of cards that are hidden from the opponent, the integrity of the game state becomes compromised and the player gains a possible state advantage - specifically, they are the only one who knows what the correct state is and that state can not be verified by the opponent. If the player were to fix this themselves, they could gain a state advantage by separating the hidden cards incorrectly to create a favorable state. If the hidden cards were not known to the player, they have also gained an information advantage by being aware of the position of a card.

Allowing the opponent to choose how they split the collection of cards does not strictly remove the information advantage, but provides equity by giving an equivalent information advantage to the opponent; knowing the card, its zone, and its position in that zone.

#### *Examples:*

- *A player draws to their intellect of 4 at the end-of-turn but accidentally draws up to 5 cards.*
- *A player hits with Snatch and draws 2 cards as the card sleeves were stuck together. The cards touch the player's hand.*
- *A player plays Whispers of the Oracle, and the cards they "opt" are mixed in with their hand.*

#### Procedure and Penalty

Issue the player a Warning, then reveal the combined collection of hidden cards to the opponent. The opponent decides which cards should be returned to each zone, ensuring that the number of cards in each zone is the same as before the infraction was committed. The cards are then returned to the zones as designated by the opponent. If one of the zones is the deck, the opponent chooses for the card(s) to go to the top and/or bottom of the deck in any order.

### 3.6. Shuffling Error IP2

The player, by their own action, illegally randomizes an ordered set of cards, such as a deck.

### **Philosophy**

When the player shuffles a non-randomized set of cards, the integrity of the game state has been irreversibly compromised and either player may gain a state advantage from a redistribution of cards throughout the randomized set.

Because there is no procedure to repair the game state or remove the potential advantage gained, and shuffling the deck is a deliberate action, issuing an Intellect Penalty is a fair way to educate the player and help equalize the advantage they may have gained over the opponent.

#### ***Examples:***

- *A player shuffles their pitched cards into their deck.*
- *A player absent-mindedly shuffles their deck mid-game.*
- *A player starts searching through their deck when they were ineligible to do so and must shuffle to prevent gaining a considerable information advantage.*

### **Procedure and Penalty**

In all cases, issue the player an IP2 and ensure the deck is sufficiently randomized.

At professional REL upgrade to an IP3. If the player has gained a significant advantage by shuffling, upgrade to a Game Loss is recommended.



## 4. Competitive and Professional - Tournament Infractions

Tournament infractions are caused by play or behavior that violates the rules of the tournament as defined by the Flesh and Blood Tournament Rules and Policy. Tournament infractions are assumed to be committed unintentionally, but if a judge suspects that the infraction was intentional then it could be considered Cheating (see [Section 5.2 - Cheating](#)).

If a player violates the rules of the tournament and it is not listed in this section as an infraction, the judge should educate and correct the player on the rules of the tournament, but not issue a penalty. Failure to ignore the infractions of the judge is considered Unsporting Conduct ([Section 5.1 - Unsporting Conduct](#)).

If a player commits 2 or more tournament infractions of the same type (except for Tardiness) on a given tournament day, the penalty that would be given for that infraction should be upgraded by 1 severity level. This penalty count does not accumulate over multiple days and is reset at the end of each day for a multi-day tournament.

### 4.1. Tardiness IP2 / Match Loss

The player, by their own inaction, is not at their assigned table when the round timer begins.

If the round timer begins before the previous round would have ended (such as when all the matches have been completed early), tardiness is timed from the scheduled end of the previous round. Judges can issue round start extensions for players that need additional time between rounds.

The thresholds for tardiness are 0 (professional) and 3 (competitive) minutes for Minor (see [Section 4.1.1 - Tardiness - Minor](#)), and 10 (both) minutes for Major (see [Section 4.1.2 - Tardiness - Major](#)). This can be changed at the Tournament Organizers discretion provided it is announced at the start of the tournament. The player present at the table should alert a Judge if their opponent is late or arrives late in order to apply the appropriate penalty.

#### Philosophy

The integrity of a tournament with timed rounds relies on players completing their match in a timely manner. If the winner of a match can not be determined by the end of a round, the match is a draw. Being late to the table delays the start of the game making it more likely the game will end in a draw.

In some cases, a player may be late to their match (especially from forces outside their control) but still wants to continue playing in the tournament despite the match losses. As long as the player indicates they wish to continue competing in the tournament and it does not interrupt the logistics, they should not be dropped.

#### 4.1.1. Tardiness - Minor IP2

The player arrives 3-10 minutes after the round timer begins at a competitive REL.

The player arrives 0-10 minutes after the round timer begins at a professional REL.

##### *Examples:*

- *A player arrives at their seat 5 minutes after the round starts.*

- *A player sits down at the wrong table and does not realize until after they start playing with the incorrect opponent.*

#### **Procedure and Penalty**

Issue the player an IP2 and extend the table's round time by the total time delayed.

#### **4.1.2. Tardiness - Major** **Match Loss**

The player arrives 10+ minutes after the round timer begins.

##### ***Examples:***

- *A player plays a whole match with the incorrect opponent.*
- *A player loses cards in their card-pool and cannot find replacement cards within 10 minutes.*

#### **Procedure and Penalty**

Issue the player a Match Loss. If neither player is present after 10 minutes, issue a double Match Loss. The player(s) should be dropped before the pairing of the next round unless they contact or report to the scorekeeper before then.

#### **4.2. Outside Assistance** **Game Loss**

The player, by their own actions, gains strategic assistance from a person or resource that is not part of the game; or gives strategic assistance to another player in a game they are not a part of.

#### **Philosophy**

A competitive game of Flesh and Blood relies on the understanding that the game is played between the players pitting their strategic minds against one another. Introducing outside assistance corrupts the integrity of the game for all players involved. There is no game state that can be reversed, and any strategic advantage can not be un-gained.

If the player is in a game and has sought and received outside assistance that gives them a strategic advantage that corrupts the integrity of the game, a game loss ensures that this advantage removes and reverses that advantage entirely, awarding the win to the opponent. If the player is a spectator, they have taken it upon themselves to corrupt the integrity of another player's game, and as such this serves as a strong reminder to uphold the integrity of competitive events both as a player and a spectator.

##### ***Examples:***

- *A player references sidebar notes in the middle of a game (after the start-of-game procedure has concluded).*
- *A player communicates with a spectator using hand gestures, facial expressions, electronic devices, or other means of communication.*
- *A spectator walks past a table with a game in progress and reacts to cards in a player's hand in a way that conveys private information to their opponent.*

#### **Procedure and Penalty**

Issue the player a Game Loss.

If the player is a spectator for the game, issue them a Game Loss for their next game and remove them from the play area.

In cases when the strategic assistance is harmless and out of ignorance, consider downgrading to a Warning.

### 4.3. Slow Play Caution

The player, by their own action, takes a longer than an acceptable period of time to make a decision that progresses the game state without the intention to gain an advantage.

#### Philosophy

Players are expected to play at a pace that is sufficient to complete their match within the given round time limit. Slow play makes it more likely the game will end in a draw, giving the opponent a possible tournament disadvantage. A player that intentionally plays slowly is considered Stalling (see [Section 5.8 - Stalling](#)).

Slow play is subjective because it depends on the context of the game, making it very difficult to moderate. As a general rule of thumb, if a Judge can understand the game state and come up with a line of plays from the player's position in the game in the time it takes the player to make a single decision, the player is most likely playing too slowly. However, there are many exceptions, especially with decks that have many cards that can be played, or abilities that can be activated, at an instant speed which requires very specific sequencing.

Opponents are expected to call a Judge early in the game if they think a player is taking too long to make decisions, to ensure the behavior is corrected before it significantly delays the game. Slow play always occurs without the player's noticing (as opposed to Stalling), so an educational reminder is enough to ensure that the majority of players increase their rate of play to complete the game before the time limit. The penalizing of a Slow Play infraction should only ever be done when a Judge confirms it by observing the progression of the game, not by spectators or player testimony. Judges should not award extra time to the table where there are only reports or accusations of slow play.

#### *Examples:*

- *A player checks either player's graveyard multiple times before taking an action.*
- *A player takes an excessive time to shuffle after searching through their deck.*
- *A player has one card in their hand and takes an unreasonable amount of time to decide what to do.*

#### Procedure and Penalty

If a player is unintentionally playing slowly, issue them a Caution and educate them to increase the speed of their play. Observe the game at least until the player has made one or two decisions.

For repeat infractions, issue a Warning and observe the rate of play. If slow play continues to be observed, upgrade to a Game Loss.

### 4.4. Decklist Error IP2

The player, by their own action, has submitted a card-pool registration sheet (decklist) that does not contain the cards they intend to play with or is illegal.

## Philosophy

Decklists are an essential part of a competitive tournament. A decklist ensures that the cards that a player is using (their card-pool) can not be changed over the course of the tournament, removing potential strategic advantages that would otherwise be possible.

Decklist entries with ambiguous or unclear card names and/or pitch values may allow the player to change the contents of their card-pool up until they are confronted about their decklist. Card monikers (short names for cards with personal names) are permissible if it is obvious and unambiguous what card it refers to, based on the context such as the tournament format or other cards in the card-pool. Cards, tokens, and macros created by other cards in their decklist do not need to be listed themselves, but must still be supplied by the player for any game they play.

Decklists with illegal cards, such as banned/suspended cards, compromise the integrity of the tournament, more so if it is only caught in later rounds. There are cases where off-the-shelf products contain illegal cards and/or heroes, or players are not aware of recent changes of legality to cards in “meta decks”. Unless the player shows the intent of Cheating, it should be assumed that it was unintentional and they should be given an opportunity to correct their decklist.

If the decklist is legal and reflects what the player intended to play with, but there is an issue with the card-pool itself it is considered a Card-Pool Contents Error ([Section 4.5 - Card-Pool Contents Error](#)).

### **Examples:**

- *A player has forgotten to list an equipment on their decklist.*
- *A player has not included 0 pitch cards on their decklist because they didn't know what section to put them under.*
- *A player has listed the name of a card, but not its pitch value, so it is ambiguous exactly what card it is.*
- *A player has listed the moniker (short name) of a hero, but there are 2 or more heroes with that moniker.*
- *A player has one (1H) card listed but is playing with two of those cards.*
- *A player lists Snapdragon Scalers as one of their equipment, but they have Ironrot Legs in their card-pool instead.*
- *A player has 3 Potion of Strength on their decklist, but in their card-pool, they have 3 Timesnap Potion and 0 Potion of Strength.*
- *A player has listed a recently banned card as their hero and intends to play them.*

## Procedure and Penalty

In all cases where the decklist does not contain the cards they intend to play with, update the player's decklist to match the intent and issue the player an IP2.

If the decklist contains illegal cards that they intend to play with, issue the player a Match Loss and remove the illegal cards from the decklist or replace them with Cracked Baubles to ensure the player has enough legally playable cards in their deck. If the hero is illegal, but the infraction is caught in the first round, the player may not play any games until they submit a new legal decklist. At professional REL, or if the player has gained a significant advantage over the course of the tournament with the illegal cards, upgrade to a Disqualification.

If the decklist error is minor and is caught before the first round has begun, or if the player reports the error themselves between rounds, downgrade to a Warning.

If there is a significant difference between the decklist and the player's deck, or the player has gained a significant strategic advantage from ambiguous or unclear entries on the decklist, upgrade to a Match Loss. At professional REL, upgrade to a Disqualification.

## 4.5. Card-Pool Contents Error IP2

The player, by their own action, has presented cards that do not match their decklist and the decklist represents what the player intended to play.

This infraction applies both when a player presents cards during a game and when they present their card-pool to a judge to be checked. If there are cards stored with the player's card-pool that could conceivably be in the Player's registered card-pool due to proximity, they are considered part of the Player's registered card-pool unless they are:

- Cards not on the decklist that are promotional cards given out at event.
- Cards on the decklist that have been proxied for the duration of the tournament.
- Double-faced cards represented by official substitute cards in the deck.
- Double-faced cards that are being used represent the back-face of cards in the deck.

These cards must not be sleeved in a way that they could be confused with actual cards in the registered card-pool. Tokens are not considered part of a player's card-pool and may be stored with the card-pool even if there are no registered cards that could ultimately create them. Created cards may be sleeved like registered cards, and may be stored with the Player's registered card-pool without being considered a part of it.

### Philosophy

Players are expected to store their hero and registered card-pool contents separately from any other contents that could possibly be considered to be part of the card-pool. This may involve having a separate deck-box or container that contains only the cards for the card-pool for the tournament.

When a player stores extra cards with their registered card-pool, or otherwise has access to extra cards during the the start-of-game procedure, and those extra cards are not part of their decklist, it creates a potential for abuse where a player can gain a state advantage by playing with those extra cards. Players are expected to call attention to Card-Pool Content Errors immediately, and not gain any potential advantage from having the extra cards available to use in their card-pool for any given game.

#### **Examples:**

- *A player has stored 4 of the same card (and pitch) in a Classic Constructed tournament.*
- *A player has stored an equipment card, that is not on the decklist, with their other equipment cards.*
- *A player has stored a number of different card-pool that are sleeved alike in the same deck-box as their registered card-pool for this tournament.*
- *A player accidentally adds a promotional card received at the tournament into their card-pool.*
- *A player accidentally presents their draft card-pool from a previous day of drafting during day 2 of an event.*

### Procedure and Penalty

If a card is missing, downgrade to a Caution and make a note of it. The player should be made aware that their card-pool does not match their decklist and that they may find a replacement in their own time. There is no further penalty needed unless the player can not present a legal deck for a game due to the missing cards.

If the player making the error called for a judge as soon as they saw the erroneous card, and no other copies of that card (at the same pitch value) have had an impact on the game, issue the player a Warning and remove the extra card. If this was noticed while the player was drawing or revealing cards from the top of their deck, replace the draw/reveal with the next card instead.

If the illegal cards could not have provided any strategic advantage, such as if they are illegal in the format or for the player's chosen hero, downgrade to a Warning.

#### 4.6. Presenting Cards Error Warning

The player, by their own action, has a legal decklist and legal card-pool but has presented an illegal set of cards during the start-of-game procedure.

##### Philosophy

Players are responsible for ensuring that the cards that they intend to play the game with follow the rules of the format and the start-of-game procedure. When the player presents an illegal set of cards in the start-of-game procedure they may gain a state and/or strategic advantage.

Presenting more or fewer cards than the rules of the format specify creates a state advantage because they can create a state of the game that would otherwise not exist, this is especially relevant for strategies that want to thin out a deck, or fatigue an opponent. Presenting a card that can not legally start the game in play creates a state advantage that couldn't otherwise be gained by following the rules of the game. Presenting legal cards that can't start the game in play together creates an ambiguous situation where the player may gain a strategic advantage by selecting the best legal option after they've gained additional information about the opponent's starting cards. Presenting a starting deck with illegal cards creates an incorrect game state and is a common occurrence, especially when non-deck cards (equipment/weapons) use the same sleeves and deck cards.

Any advantage gained by presenting more or fewer cards, or presenting an illegal or ambiguous set of cards, should be addressed by negating that advantage and educating the player on the proper procedure.

##### **Examples:**

- *A player presents a 55-card starting deck in a game of Classic Constructed.*
- *A player presents a 25-card starting deck in a game of Limited.*
- *A player presents their starting deck which accidentally contains equipment.*
- *A player presents a starting card that can not legally start the game in the arena.*
- *A player presents both a 1H and 2H as their starting equipment/weapons.*

##### Procedure and Penalty

In all cases, issue the player a Warning. During any procedure listed here the player can not request the public information (e.g. the number of cards in the opponent's deck) and they cannot remove or exchange any legal cards they've presented. This is to prevent them from gaining a strategic advantage based on the current game state and public information they should not have at this point in the game.

If the deck presented (before the game starts) has less than the minimum number of cards required for that format, the player chooses a number of cards from their inventory that would increase their deck up to the minimum number of cards required and they are added to the presented deck. If the player does not have enough legal inventory cards that can be added to their presented deck, Cracked Baubles are used instead. If the game is in progress upgrade to a Game Loss.

If the deck presented (before the game starts) contains illegal cards, such as cards that can not be included in the starting deck, remove the illegal cards from the presented deck, then if the deck presented has less than the minimum number of cards required for that format, follow the above procedure. If the game is in progress and the illegal card was immediately discovered after it has been moved from the deck, remove the illegal card from the game, and rewind the game state to just before the illegal card was moved from the deck. If the deck then has less than the minimum number of cards required for that format upgrade to a Game Loss.

If the deck presented (before the game starts) has more than the maximum number of cards specified for that format (after removing any illegal cards), the player must remove cards from their deck until their deck is equal to the maximum number of cards specified. If the game is in progress, upgrade to a Game Loss.

If the player has presented an illegal card to start the game with and that card is on the player's decklist; if that card is a legal deck card, it is put back into the player's presented deck, otherwise, it is removed from the game. If the illegal card is not on the player's decklist, upgrade to an IP2.

If the player has presented an ambiguous set of cards to start the game with, issue the player a Warning. The judge presents the ambiguous set of cards as several legal options the player would have started the game with, then the opponent decides on the option for the starting cards for the player; for any remaining cards, if the cards are legal deck cards, they are put back into the deck, otherwise, they are removed from the game.

At a professional REL, upgrade to an IP2.

#### 4.7. Draft Procedure Violation Warning / Match Loss

The player, by their own action, commits a procedural infringement during a draft.

##### Philosophy

Drafting involves an additional procedure outside of playing the game which involves strategic elements that can shape and determine the state of the games subsequently played. As such, it should be moderated with at least the same rigor as a game between the players involved in the drafting procedure. Players can gain information, state, and strategic advantage by failing to abide by the drafting rules. Infractions here are considered as if the player committing the infraction is ignorant of the rules of the draft procedure. Intentionally violating the draft procedure to gain an advantage is considered Cheating (see [Section 5.2 - Cheating](#)).

In some cases, it's important that the Judge does not interrupt the player's train of thought as it would slow down and disrupt the draft. The Judge should wait until the current pack, or in some cases, the entire draft is finished before implementing a penalty. This is especially the case if a player would be disqualified, so as to not interfere with the drafting process.

##### 4.7.1. Draft Procedure Violation - Minor Warning

The player commits a violation of the draft procedure that can be easily reversed or does not provide a significant advantage or compromise the integrity of the draft.

###### *Examples:*

- *A player passes a pack the wrong way.*
- *A player picks a card after the draft pick time has expired.*
- *A player starts looking around the table or at other players at the table.*
- *A player picks a card, puts it on top of their draft pile, then puts it back into the pack.*
- *A player picks up and looks at their draft pile while not in an official review period.*

##### Procedure and Penalty

When appropriate, pause the draft and issue the player a Warning. Ensure that pausing the draft at the correct time will not disrupt the players or the draft process; this could be done during a pick, or at the end of a pick, a pack, or the draft as a whole.

### 4.7.2. Draft Procedure Violation - Major Match Loss

The player commits a violation of the draft procedure that seriously and irreversibly compromises the integrity of the draft.

**Examples:**

- A player mixes up the draft pack and their draft pile.
- A player states out loud what they're currently drafting or planning to draft.
- A player looks at another person's pack during the draft in order to try and gain information.
- A player rotates a card in the pack upside down to signal the next player what they are drafting.
- A player actively seeks to know what double-faced cards other players have in their pack or have drafted.

#### Procedure and Penalty

If the infraction requires immediate attention, pause the draft at the appropriate time and correct any behavior. Then at the end of the draft, issue the player a Match Loss. This ensures that the player does not influence the draft further knowing that they may not personally be affected by their own draft decisions.

### 4.8. Marked Cards Warning

The player, by their own action, presents a deck of cards where one or more cards are distinguishable from the others while they are in the deck or are face-down.

Players must ensure that all cards and card sleeves in their deck are in good condition and do not have markings or any other features that make them identifiable while in a deck or while face-down. This includes (but is not limited to) scuff marks, nail indents, bent corners, and the curvature of the card itself.

#### Philosophy

One of the most important aspects of the game is that no player knows the location of a card once it has been shuffled into the deck, or can not be differentiated while it is face-down. This is important for ensuring the integrity of the hidden information elements of the game. If a player has a marked card, they may be aware of it which gains them a significant information advantage regardless of what the card is. Markings on a sleeved card can only be fixed by re-sleeving it to match the rest of the cards in the deck. A damaged, altered, or warped card can only be fixed by sleeving the deck in a way that makes it indistinguishable or by replacing the card with another version or a proxy (note that proxies are only issued in exceptional circumstances).

Sleeves and cards are subject to wear and tear, especially over the course of a tournament. Sleeves can also have manufacturing errors that range from immediately visible to barely visible, and can even differ significantly between different packets of sleeves. Cards (especially foiled cards) can warp over time in variable ways outside of the player's control. As long as the player is not taking advantage of these marked cards and has not intentionally marked the cards themselves, the penalty should not be harsh, as long as the marking of the cards can be fixed.

Players should check their cards and sleeves after every round and replace any that are considered worn or marked. If a player is unsure if their cards are in acceptable condition, it's recommended they check with the Head Judge. If a player has intentionally marked the cards or has intentionally taken advantage of certain cards being marked, it is considered Cheating (see [Section 5.2 - Cheating](#)).



**Examples:**

- A player has an un-sleeved deck where the color of the backs of the cards is inconsistent. There is no pattern to what cards have what colored backs.
- A player has a sleeved deck where some of the sleeves have bent corners from flicking the cards. There is no pattern to what cards are in what sleeves.
- A player has a sleeved deck where the image of the back of the sleeves has an inconsistent border width on each card. There is no pattern to what cards are in what sleeves.
- A player has a deck with an even mix of foil and non-foil cards, where the foil cards are slightly warped. There is no significant pattern to what cards warped.
- A player has a sleeved deck where a few of the sleeves have a visible bubble on the back. The mark is clearly a manufacturing error, there is no pattern to what cards are in what sleeves, and no significant cards are in any of the marked sleeves.
- A player has a fable rarity card that is only available in foil, which has warped and is easily distinguishable in the deck.
- A player has 3 of the same promotional cards which are warped and are easily distinguishable in the deck.
- A player has a sleeved deck where one of the sleeves has a visible mark on the back. The mark is clearly a manufacturing error, but the sleeved card is significant to the strategy of the deck.
- A player has 3 cards of the same name and pitch in sleeves that are a slightly different shade to other sleeved cards in the deck.

**Procedure and Penalty**

In all cases, issue the player a Warning and have them re-sleeve or replace the marked cards and/or the rest of the cards in their deck to ensure that no cards are considered marked. In exceptional circumstances the Head Judge may issue a proxy for the marked cards. The player may not play another match until they've addressed the marked cards in the deck.

If the marked cards are identified during a game and the marked cards can be quickly addressed without disrupting the game, the player must do so. Otherwise, wait until the player has completed their match before informing them of the marked cards and having the player address them.

If a player is unable to find replacement cards, and can not present a legal deck if they do not, they may replace any marked deck cards with a Cracked Bauble. If they do, issue them an IP2 and update their decklist in to match.

If the Head Judge believes that the player would have gained a significant advantage from noticing the marked cards, upgrade to a Match Loss.

**4.9. Insufficient Shuffling** **Warning**

The player, by their own inaction, fails to shuffle a deck of cards to sufficiently randomize the order of the cards.

There are multiple ways to randomize a deck, and it is encouraged that more than one method is used, such as riffle, overhand, or wash shuffle, followed by a cut. Pile counting, and deterministic forms of shuffling are not acceptable alone as a method of randomization. Players are expected to shuffle their deck sufficiently and in an efficient manner.

### Philosophy

To ensure fairness, both players' decks must be sufficiently randomized prior to beginning the game and after anytime a player looks through the contents of a deck. Insufficient shuffling is when a player fails to sufficiently randomize their deck through shuffling, before presenting it to their opponent.

When a player shuffles and presents a deck to an opponent the player implies that the deck is thoroughly randomized. A player who intentionally does not shuffle their deck sufficiently in order to gain an advantage by manipulating the location or distribution of cards in their deck is considered Cheating (see [Section 5.2 - Cheating](#)).

#### **Examples:**

- *A player finishes their start-of-game procedure and riffle shuffles their deck a single time and presents it to the opponent.*
- *A player overhand shuffles with the deck facing toward them, and presents it to the opponent*
- *A player counts their cards out in 6 piles, stacks them together, and presents it to the opponent.*
- *A player divides their deck by pitch values while side-boarding then does a couple of overhand shuffles and presents it to the opponent.*
- *A player forgets to shuffle after searching through their deck during the game.*

### Procedure and Penalty

In all cases issue the player a Warning and supervise the player while they shuffle their deck. While supervising the shuffling, educate them if they make a mistake in their technique so that they are aware of what is, and isn't, an acceptable way to achieve a sufficiently shuffled deck.

## 4.10. Miscommunication Warning

A player, by their own action or inaction, has incorrectly communicated non-private information or did not completely answer a question about visible and public information, and the opponent takes an action that is affected by the incorrect or missing information.

### Philosophy

Clear and correct communication is an essential part of playing a game of Flesh and Blood. Players are expected to maintain a clear and correct game state through communication and seek resolution when there is ambiguity or uncertainty. However, Players often make genuine mistakes regarding communication, especially across cultural and language barriers, and should not be punished harshly for it.

Players may still commit this infraction if they have not verbally communicated, especially when they do not put cards in the appropriate zones, or do not update markers that represent visible or public information.

A physically ambiguous play-space is not automatically considered a Miscommunication. Judges are encouraged to instruct Players to fix items in the play-space before they might lead to an infraction.

#### **Examples:**

- *The player plays an attack action card and says "Attack for four." The opponent declares two defending cards to block exactly 4 damage. The player then says "Sorry, I mean attack for three."*
- *The player has a permanent with Ward 1 below their hero, partially obstructed by their hand, and their opponent attacks thinking they do not control any permanents with damage prevention effects.*

- *A player has one resource and they represent it with dice above their pitch zone. The player plays a card that costs 1 resource but does not update the dice. The opponent decides to defend with more cards than necessary anticipating the player to play an attack reaction that costs 1.*

**Procedure and Penalty**

Issue the player a Warning. If the game has not progressed too far to be rewound, rewind the game state to the point before the affected action (not to the point of miscommunication).

## 5. Competitive and Professional - Conduct Infractions

Conduct infractions are infractions of the player's conduct in relation to both the game and tournament rules and cover the general behavior expected of a player. Conduct infractions cover both intentional and unintentional behaviour.

### 5.1. Unsporting Conduct Warning / Disqualification

The player, by their own action, displays negative, offensive, or disruptive behavior that affects the safety or enjoyment of others, and/or negatively affects the integrity or organization of the event.

Unsporting Conduct is subjective and relative to the context of the event and expectations set out by the Tournament Organizer; it is not the same as a lack of sportsmanship. Ultimately, the Head Judge determines what constitutes Unsporting Conduct during an event.

#### Philosophy

Participants of the tournament expect a safe and enjoyable environment, and that the integrity and operation of the tournament are upheld to a high standard. By acting in a way that infringes on that expectation, the player has infringed on the mission statement of Flesh and Blood. For physical abuse or threatening behavior, see [Section 5.3 - Aggressive behavior](#).

#### 5.1.1. Unsporting Conduct - Minor Warning

The player acts in a way that negatively impacts one or more people, or disrupts the organization of the tournament, but does not require investigation or further penalties to correct their behaviour.

##### *Examples:*

- A player uses mild-moderate offensive language.
- A player throws their deck in frustration after they have lost a game or match.
- A player does not pick up litter they have created.
- A player shoves other players while moving through crowds.
- A player demands the Head Judge before being given a ruling from the Judge that first arrived at the table.
- A player demands that their opponent be given a Warning before a Judge can resolve the issue.
- A player ignores the instruction of a Judge (a player may appeal a ruling before following the instruction).

#### Procedure and Penalty

First and foremost, deescalate the situation to ensure that the infringing behavior stops and the safety of other participants is ensured. Educate the player on their actions and issue them a Warning.

For repeated Unsporting Conduct - Minor infractions, even for different reasons, an upgrade to IP2 then a Game Loss is recommended.

### 5.1.2. Unsporting Conduct - Major Disqualification

The player acts in a way that negatively impacts one or more people by making them feel harassed, scared, belittled, unsafe, or commits acts that disrupt the organization of the tournament.

**Examples:**

- *A player makes a racial remark towards another person.*
- *A player harasses another person on social media during the event.*
- *A player takes photos of another person with malicious intent.*
- *A player wipes a card on their backside or crotch before playing it.*
- *A player makes another person feel unwelcome at an event because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.*
- *A player refuses to follow the instruction of the Tournament Organizer or Head Judge.*

#### **Procedure and Penalty**

First and foremost, deescalate the situation to ensure that the infringing behavior stops and the safety of other participants are ensured. This typically involves ending the current match they are involved in, separating them from other players by taking them to another area, and educating them on why their behavior is inexcusable and why they are being Disqualified.

### 5.2. Cheating Disqualification

The player, by their own intentional action or inaction, lies to a tournament official, breaks rules of the game or tournament, or intentionally ignores an infraction to their or a teammate's benefit.

Specifically, the player must be intentionally trying to gain an advantage from their actions and they must be aware that their actions are prohibited. Both of these conditions must be met for the infraction to be considered Cheating. If either of these conditions is not met, then their actions are not considered cheating and the infraction would fall under a different category.

#### **Philosophy**

Cheating is one of the most serious infractions a player can commit as it can completely compromise the integrity of the tournament.

**Examples:**

- *A player lies to a Judge during an investigation, hoping to gain an advantage by the judges ruling.*
- *A player purposely swaps cards between the arsenal and their hand to gain an advantageous game state.*
- *A player swaps out cards in their limited card pool with cards they had brought with them to gain an advantageous deck.*
- *A player who has been rule-sharking their opponent intentionally stays silent when their opponent makes a mistake to the player's advantage.*

#### **Procedure and Penalty**

Disqualify the player.

### 5.3. Aggressive behavior Disqualification

The player, by their own verbal or physical actions, makes others around them feel threatened.

#### Philosophy

Aggressive behavior is distinct from Unsporting Conduct in that it involves physical harm or the threat of physical harm that compromises the safety of the tournament. There is no tolerance for physical abuse or intimidation at any kind of event.

#### *Examples:*

- *A player threatens physical abuse to another player during a match.*
- *A player violently throws their own or another person's belongings.*
- *A player yells at and tries to intimidate a Judge when they are not happy with a ruling outcome.*
- *A player destroys or attempts to damage tournament materials, such as table or chairs.*
- *A player swears aggressively at their opponent during or after a match.*
- *A player tells their opponent that they're planning to ambush them after the event.*

#### Procedure and Penalty

In all cases, the safety of every person is paramount. Deescalate the situation, disqualify the player, and have them leave the venue by the Tournament Organizer.

### 5.4. Improperly Determining a Winner Match Loss

The player, by their own action, uses or offers to use a method other than playing the game to its conclusion to determine the winning player. This includes manipulating an opponent into conceding a match based on the outcome of such a method.

#### Philosophy

If the player offers or accepts an incentive to determine the outcome of a match, it is considered Bribery (see [Section 5.5 - Bribery](#)). If the player knows that Improperly Determining a Winner is an infraction, it is considered Cheating (see [Section 5.2 - Cheating](#)).

#### *Examples:*

- *A player convinces the opponent they can determine the winner based on a coin flip after time is called in the round and the opponent reluctantly agrees.*
- *Both players agree that the one with the highest life total at the end of the match is the winner of the game in order to avoid a draw.*
- *A player remarks on how terrible a draw is and that they should just declare a winner because losing is better than a draw anyway (losses are not better than draws for an individual).*

#### Procedure and Penalty

If there is time in the round and the match has not concluded, issue the player a Match Loss. If both players commit an Improperly Determining a Winner infraction, issue a double Match Loss.

If the time in the round has expired or the match has concluded with an official result, issue the player(s) a Match Loss for their next round.

## 5.5. Bribery Disqualification

The player, by their own action, offers or accepts an incentive to concede or otherwise change the outcome of a game or match.

### Philosophy

Bribery in the game of Flesh and Blood is strictly prohibited as it disrupts the integrity of the tournament. Players are free to discuss and negotiate prize splits and the handling of prizes after the tournament has concluded, as long as does not influence the match result.

At professional REL, Judges should remind players about the Bribery policy to ensure nobody is ignorant of this rule, especially before the last round of Swiss.

#### *Examples:*

- *A player offers their opponent cash to concede.*
- *A player offers their opponent a split of their eventual prizes to concede.*
- *A player offers to concede at a later date for a concession now.*
- *A player offers to concede if they get a cut of the cash prize.*
- *A group of players negotiates who should concede to get players in certain positions in the tournament standings.*

### Procedure and Penalty

Issue the player a Disqualification.

If the player commits this infraction out of ignorance, downgrade to a Match Loss.

## 5.6. Wagering Disqualification

The player, by their own action, places or offers bets on an aspect of the tournament outcome, match outcome, or any part of a tournament or match.

Bets do not need to be of monetary value to be considered wagering.

### Philosophy

Wagering in the game of Flesh and Blood is strictly prohibited as it disrupts the integrity of the tournament.

#### *Examples:*

- *Two or more spectators wager \$10 that a specific player will win the current match.*

### Procedure and Penalty

Issue the player a Disqualification.

If the player commits this infraction out of ignorance, downgrade to a Match Loss.

## 5.7. Theft Disqualification

The player, by their own action, steals tournament materials or steals another person's belongings.

### Philosophy

Players are responsible for their own possessions, but players enter a tournament with the expectation that the material they bring will be safe within reason. Theft of a person's belongings or tournament materials compromises the expectation of safety of the tournament and is strictly prohibited. Judges are encouraged to aid in the investigation of stolen materials.

#### **Examples:**

- *A player secretly drops cards from the opponent's deck on the floor and hides them with the intent of theft.*
- *A player steals tablecloths or table numbers off a table.*
- *A player is given prizes, then says to tournament officials that they did not receive prizes with the intent of trying to get more.*

### Procedure and Penalty

Issue the player a Disqualification.

In cases where there is miscommunication or ignorance involved and the player returns the item, the penalty may be downgraded at the discretion of the Head Judge.

## 5.8. Stalling Disqualification

The player, by their own action, intentionally slows down the pace of the game to take advantage of a round time limit.

### Philosophy

Stalling is differentiated from Slow Play by the intent of the player. Stalling assumes the player is intentionally playing slow to gain a tournament advantage. If it's deemed the player is not intentionally playing slow, see [Section 4.3 - Slow Play](#)

#### **Examples:**

- *A player has a weapon that cost  $rr$  to activate and 1 card in hand with pitch value  $r$ . They spend an excessive amount of time running down the clock 'thinking' about what to do.*
- *A player is ahead in the game and starts to play significantly slower as it gets closer to the end of the round, making it very hard for the opponent to have a chance of winning.*
- *A player who repetitively checks either player's graveyard in a single turn without progressing the game with the intention of running down the clock.*

### Procedure and Penalty

Educate the player that taking advantage of time limits is strictly prohibited and disqualify them from the tournament.

## 5.9. Improper Concession Match Loss

A player, by their action, asks for a concession during a match (after presenting their deck) or concedes a match after time is called (after taking an action).

Suggesting or pressuring an opponent to concede or to end the game/match, in any form, is considered to be asking for a concession.



### Philosophy

Players have the right to play the game of Flesh and Blood without being pressured to concede in consideration of their opponent. Asking for a concession, or pressuring a player to concede or end the game, leads to a poor play experience. Players may concede of their own volition up to when time in the round expires, but may not concede after they have taken an action thereafter. Conceding based on the outcome of a method other than playing the game is considered Improperly Determining a Winner ([Section 5.4 - Improperly Determining a Winner](#)). Offering or accepting an incentive to concede is considered Bribery ([Section 5.5 - Bribery](#)).

#### **Examples:**

- *A player who is worried about the game becoming a draw due to time asks the opponent to concede so at least one of them wins.*
- *After the game is a draw due to time, a player reveals the cards in their hand and tells the opponent that they would have one with another turn, in order to coerce them into conceding.*
- *A player tells the opponent “Come on, man, don’t defend my attack here and let’s finish the game” in an effort to get the opponent to end the game by losing.*

### Procedure and Penalty

If there is time in the round and the match has not concluded, issue the player a Match Loss.

If the time in the round has expired or the match has concluded with an official result, issue the player a Match Loss for the next round.

If the player commits this infraction out of ignorance, downgrade to a Warning.

For repeat infractions of asking a player to concede, upgrade to a Disqualification.

### 5.10. Rules Sharking Warning

A player, by their own actions, shows intentional behavior to prevent an opponent from interacting with the game when they can legally do so, or have their opponent commit a Penalty Guidelines.

Methodical or pedantic play is not considered Rules Sharking unless the intention is discerned to be malicious. The Head Judge determines what constitutes Rules Sharking during their event.

### Philosophy

Players are expected to communicate their actions clearly and to give each other a reasonable opportunity to follow the game rules. When a player intentionally influences the opponent to miss an opportunity to interact with the game, or to commit an infraction, they may gain an advantage as a result of the game state, or the procedures and penalties recommended for that infraction.

When a judge rules for a player to receive the penalty for Rules Sharking they should inform the player that if they do not play in a less suspicious manner they may be receiving an upgrade. When upgrading they should have clear evidence of the Rules Sharking infraction on hand, through interviewing the involved players and/or spectators.

When making a ruling involving Rules Sharking, if it is a case where the player attempts to pass priority for both players and the opponent makes an automated response to this attempt, thereby missing a trigger, the window and/or trigger are considered to not be missed.

**Examples:**

- *A player tells their opponent to “Hurry up and finish your turn.”, then when the opponent declares the end of their turn, the player immediately calls a judge for an opponent’s missed trigger.*
- *A player immediately declares blocking cards, after an opponent plays an attack, then the player tells the opponent they’ve missed their attack trigger and calls a judge.*

**Procedure and Penalty**

If the accusation of Rules Sharking is purely speculative, downgrade to a Caution and educate the players on the expectation of play.

If the player has blatantly and intentionally led the opponent to miss a window of opportunity or to break the rules, upgrade to a Match Loss.

## A. Quick Reference Table

<b>Infraction Name</b>	<b>Recommended Penalty</b>
<b>Gameplay Infractions</b>	
Game Rules Violation	Warning
Failure to Maintain Game State	Warning
Missed Trigger	Caution
Looking at Extra Cards	Warning
Hidden Card Error	Warning
Shuffling Error	IP2
<b>Tournament Infractions</b>	
Tardiness (Minor)	IP2
Tardiness (Major)	Match Loss
Outside Assistance	Game Loss
Slow Play	Caution
Decklist Error	IP2
Card-Pool Contents Error	IP2
Presenting Cards Error	Warning
Draft Procedure Violation (Minor)	Warning
Draft Procedure Violation (Major)	Match Loss
Marked Cards	Warning
Insufficient Shuffling	Warning
<b>Conduct Infractions</b>	
Unsporting Conduct (Minor)	Warning
Unsporting Conduct (Major)	Disqualification
Cheating	Disqualification
Aggressive Behavior	Disqualification
Improperly Determining a Winner	Match Loss
Bribery	Disqualification
Wagering	Disqualification
Theft	Disqualification
Stalling	Disqualification
Improper Concession	Match Loss
Rules Sharking	Warning