

# DYSTOPIA RISING LARP

## Community Guidelines 2.0

Dated: December 28, 2017

Our team at [Dystopia Rising](#) would like to thank you for being a part of our continuously growing neighborhood of larp communities. In our efforts to provide a positive and engaging community of games and gamers, we have put together this set of Community Guidelines to give all members the tools needed to make our games the best they can be. These guidelines have and will continue to evolve as our knowledge and experience base grows.

## Table of Contents

<b>Community and Safer Space.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Sexual Harassment/Assault.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Consent.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Conduct .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Abide by the law .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Draw a line between the game world and the real world.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Every member is treated the same.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Every member is treated with respect.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Responsibility of the player .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Individual Responsibility.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Keep In and Out of character seperate.....</b>	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<b>OK Check-In System .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>In the event of an issue: .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Tips for Creating Safe(r) Space at Dystopia Rising events.....</b>	<b>8</b>

## Community and Safer Space

The Dystopia Rising LARP Network is a neighborhood of communities that are based on a core of inclusivity and a welcoming environment. This means that we have created guidelines and policies to serve each local community as best as possible, without sacrificing the enjoyment of the individual. It is our responsibility as communities in Dystopia Rising-related places to uphold a policy of a safer space.

Safe(r) spaces are places and groups that can help to shape a culture that is accepting of all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, or any other difference.

We choose to say “Safer” Space rather than “safe space” because we acknowledge that no space is entirely “safe” for everyone. We believe that Safe(r) Spaces are inviting, engaging, and supportive environments in which all people feel comfortable behaving genuinely. It is important that Dystopia Rising organizers, volunteers, and participants listen carefully to raised experiences and act on what they hear.

Participants have different communication styles, personalities and opinions, and come from diverse gender, racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. In order to foster this kind of temporary community space, people must respect others and actively look out for the well-being of all those attending this space. Supporting the most vulnerable members of our community is one of our goals. This is why we define safe(r) space as a space that is encouraging for people who have been made uncomfortable at other events due to racism, sexism, physical and sexual assault, etc.

As a privately-owned series of companies, we reserve the right to refuse entry to any participant who shows themselves to be unsafe, abusive or otherwise detrimental to the event(s) being run or the community as a whole. This may include removal from events, removal from online social groups or removal from non-game social events. These choices are at the discretion of the local business owner and should be made in compliance with state and federal law. All participants are held to the same standards and guidelines, regardless of status or role in the staffing of an event, from brand new player to Director.

Dystopia Rising and its partners have a ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY for harassment of any kind. Harassment is defined, for the purposes of these guidelines as follows: Stalking, physical or verbal intimidation, verbal comments that denigrate individuals, based upon any of the aspects listed below, physical assault and/or battery, harassing or non-consensual photography or recording, bathroom policing, inappropriate physical contact or proximity, unwelcome physical attention, body policing, including gender policing in all bathrooms, non-consensual sexual acts or attention, verbal or physical, either in or out of character in relation to, but not limited to: race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, gender presentation, sexual orientation, age, body size, physical ability or restrictions, appearance, religion, citizenship, pregnancy, socioeconomic status.

## Sexual Harassment/Assault

The topic and realm of sexual assault and harassment are specifically banned from all Dystopia Rising and any other affiliated events both in and out of character. There is no instance in which a plot or module will touch on this topic and any use of it is strictly forbidden within the game running rules and guidelines.

Likewise, during any and all player interactions, either in character or out, at no time should sexual assault be used, mentioned, alluded to, suggested, paraphrased or highlighted. Violations of this rule will be dealt with harshly and the offender likely removed from the event. Repeat offenders will not be welcome at any event, within the specific game in which the violation occurs, as well as any and all affiliated company events.

While the above harassment list is treated with equal weight, the decision was made along ago to add an extra layer for this topic specifically and we thank all players for abiding by this ruling.

## Consent

Consent is essential to Safe(r) Space. Consent is two (or more) people deciding together to do the same thing, at the same time, in the same way with each other- whether it's physical, verbal, or sexual. It is the presence of a "yes", not the absence of a "no." For the duration of an event, consent is defined as a clearly asked question followed by a clearly stated "yes."

## Conduct

When attending a Dystopia Rising event, attendants are expected to conduct themselves in a way that best represents the network as a whole. To ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of what is the minimum of acceptable behavior, we have provided a list of Member Guidelines that should be followed at all events.

It is the responsibility of the Directors of each individual branch to enforce and uphold conduct standards within their local gaming community. In the instance that a local director has not addressed issues that have occurred, members may contact the Dystopia Rising LARP Network home office via the Dystopia Rising LARP Network home page. Any issues that have occurred at a local level must first be brought to the attention of the local Director.

In the instance that issues brought to the parent office of the Dystopia Rising LARP Network potentially involve situations that involve illegal activity, the Dystopia Rising LARP Network will immediately contact the local authorities and put the authorities in contact with the individual issuing the complaint as well as the local branch Directors whose event this directly relates to.

Our Membership Guidelines apply at any event that is being officially hosted or advertised as a Branch or Dystopia Rising LARP Network event. We have no intent to give you direction in regard to how you live your personal life. While we would hope that you would live your life in an open, friendly way with a mind towards the equality-based community standards the Dystopia Rising LARP Network embodies, it is not our intent to direct you on how to live your day-to-day life.

We want a membership base that treats one another well. We want a membership base that treats everyone equally. We want a membership base that treats everyone fairly. We want a membership base that, truthfully, encourages the growth of not only the network but the players within it.

It is important to note that these guidelines are in relation to person-to-person interaction and not character-to-character interaction. We all understand that by attending a Dystopia Rising RP event we accept a wide range of role-play and while out of character actions should always be conducted with utmost care and respect for each other, conflict between characters is a part of the game and the world. Safe space policies should always be kept in mind during IC interactions but should not be used as an opportunity to avoid negative repercussions or interactions.

## Abide by the law

When at a Dystopia Rising LARP Network event, much like in life, illegal activity is illegal. If members engage in illegal activity while at a Dystopia Rising LARP Network event, those members will be turned over to the local authorities in addition to having corrective actions handled by local Branch Directors or national Network Representatives.

## Draw a line between the game world and the real world.

Dystopia Rising is a game. The Dystopia Rising LARP Network is a community. The game is a vehicle to provide a community of supportive, friendly, and outgoing people. Our community is focused on ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and equally, that we provide the tools for great communities to grow, and that we take advantage of our organized hobby to try and do some good in the world. Dystopia Rising LARP supports charities both at home and abroad all year round. Each individual game-business in the Dystopia Rising LARP network supports both local, community-focused charities and international charities.

Remember, we are allowed the privilege of being able to come together as a community to enjoy our hobby. There are other people in this world who, through a small effort of our community, can have their lives improved forever. Let's play together and let's work together to make things better. Characters that are portrayed by players or staff members are fictitious entities. There is a very clear line between the activities and relations of imaginary characters and the real people who portray them. Characters should never take priority over real people. Character actions should be defined by a combination of what the character would do AND the ideas and concepts of fair play and sportsmanlike conduct.

Sometimes characters need to do, or say, things that they normally wouldn't to ensure the emotional, mental, and physical safety of the players. Players, however, should never change their real-world lives with the interests of their characters' emotional, mental, and simulated safety in mind.

Game is game. Life is life. If these simple lines are difficult to understand or see, then please take some time off to correct your own life. Game will be there when you get back.

## Every member is treated the same

We are all gamers. We come from a myriad of backgrounds, cultures, and origins. We all work different sorts of jobs, have different non-game interests, and have different philosophies.

Dystopia Rising LARP has no such thing as seniority. Every game in the entire network is filled with players who all have the same worth. With this in mind, players that are brand new to gaming are just as important as players who have gamed since the first dice were carved out of woolly mammoth bone. There is no pulling rank, there is no treating anyone else as second-class players, and there is no preference given between players. Regardless of a person's history inside and outside the gaming world of Dystopia Rising LARP, everyone is the same. Everyone should be treated with kindness and respect.

Membership, attendance, and participation at any Dystopia Rising LARP Network event will not be restricted by race, color, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexuality, gender identity, or religion. All members will be treated equally, will be free from harassment, and will not be discriminated against. Branches and their respective Directors are awarded the ability to be a part of the Dystopia Rising LARP Network based

firstly on this core concept of equality and fair play.

Activities of characters that blend reality into game or using character actions as a loop-hole for treating other players poorly will not be allowed. Any plot materials or character interaction in relation to topics of race, color, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexuality, gender identity, or religion that are considered unacceptable by anyone involved must immediately be curtailed at their request.

When role-play and game interactions touch on sensitive issues, we always will fall on the side of caution and respect for those involved. This is the most basic way to show respect and consideration.

### Every member is treated with respect.

Members have the right to be treated with respect. Communications via Dystopia Rising LARP Network-provided mediums as well as person interactions at Dystopia Rising LARP Network events must occur with courtesy and respect for those involved.

This not only includes speaking to one another in friendly and civil tones, but also means that when we disagree with one another we do so as adults would: with courtesy and respect. In the modern day of internet culture many people have adopted a concept of zero accountability for the words that they say and write. This is not acceptable in regards to the Dystopia Rising LARP Network. We will communicate with each other respectfully, especially when we do not agree, and we will conduct ourselves within the guideline, restrictions, and terms of service presented.

### Responsibility of a player

We must be courteous and respectful of the boundaries of others, both in and out of game. When we interact with other people, we must understand that certain topics and words are triggers for sensitive subjects. In the instance that a topic of sensitive nature is being discussed, or is the focus of an in-character interaction, the individuals involved should always make sure that the one that is least comfortable with the scenario is at ease. The comfort level of a scenario is set by the person who is least comfortable so that safety and security is ensured for everyone involved.

Be sensitive to respect the borders and limitations of other people.

### Individual responsibility

As much as we require individuals to respect the limits of other people, it is also the responsibility of those who feel that their limits are being pushed to express their discomfort. Be it during game or during an out of character event, if a topic, word, or subject matter causes distress to an individual then that individual needs to express this discomfort to others.

At times, people are unaware of how their actions might be affecting others. As much as we want people to be aware of what they are doing, we also need others to point out when boundaries or limits are being approached. Additionally, what is offensive or upsetting to one person might not be to another. Unless they are made aware of the issue, they cannot change or stop it.

This is not a means for individuals to remove their characters from the negative repercussions of their own actions (such as zombies chewing on you if you ran out into the woods alone). However, it is a means to ensure that reasonable limitations and triggers are respected.

## Keep In and Out of character separate

Dystopia Rising LARP is a gaming community that networks between thousands of players. With this in mind, there is no doubt that at any time one of the players is having a bad day. That bad day may happen while a game weekend is going on, that bad day may happen between events, or that bad day may be only a few moments in an otherwise good day. Regardless of when a bad day happens, bad day events and negativity related to the real world are left at the door before coming into a Dystopia Rising LARP event. Dystopia Rising LARP is a drama free location, where we want to provide a gaming environment for players that everyone can enjoy.

If you find yourself wrapped up in some negativity, or unable to release issues that are happening, we here at Dystopia Rising LARP recommend that you take some time to address the real-world issues and real-world problems instead of dragging them into game. Dystopia Rising LARP is a drama free zone, which is an environment actively cultivated by the staff of each game. If you need time away from game to take care of your real-world issues, by all means take that time. We will be here when you get back.

## OK Check-In System

Dystopia Rising and its affiliates use the "OK Check-In" system. The OK Check-in is a tool allowing for players to communicate with each other out of character about their well-being without pausing the flow of play around them.

Description of this concept can be found here: <http://www.imaginationcollective.com/okcheckin>

We also encourage you to watch the video we have available on Youtube:

<https://youtu.be/W3EMLaJSfaE>

## In the event of an issue:

In the instance that you witness someone acting in a way that goes against the spirit of our community, we encourage that you take the following steps:

- Approach the individual in a non-combative nature and calmly discuss the issue. Try not to use accusatory language. Do not have the conversation in front of others or in such a way as to potentially embarrass the individual.
- If you do not feel comfortable approaching the individual, please approach a staff member in authority of the event you are attending.
- In the instance that an incident is an obvious and grievous breach of our community goals, immediately involve a staff member.
- It is our wish to address these incidents at the time they occur, so as to best address those involved. If for some reason that is not possible, we ask that the issue be brought to the local Directors attention as soon as possible. Whenever possible, anonymity will be maintained.

If you are approached in regards to your actions being against the spirit of our community, we ask that you follow three simple steps for considering your actions:

- Listen and be open minded. Consider what is being said to you without immediately becoming defensive. It is possible that what you are doing appears differently to others than to yourself.
- Immediately stop the activity that is against the spirit of our community. Even if you do not agree that your actions are unacceptable, if your actions are causing distress to others it takes almost no effort to discontinue what you are doing.
- Involve a staff member if the interaction starts causing conflict. Find a staff member who is in authority at the hosting Branch for the event you are attending if you cannot come to a reasonable, calm agreement. If you feel that your interaction may escalate into an argument, immediately get a staff member involved.

If an issue continues or repeats, you will be asked to leave the current event and will be issued a violation or ban compensatory with the offending incident. If an issue is of a grievous enough nature to warrant a violation or ban immediately, any and all build earned that event (including purchased and/or converted) will be lost and it will be at the discretion of the local Director to also include a removal of past build, character playability, or awarded Assistance Points (AP).

## Tips for Creating Safe(r) Space at Dystopia Rising events

### 1. Respect your own physical, mental and emotional boundaries.

- Stay attuned to your own needs.
- Remove yourself from a scene you don't feel comfortable with. Simply place a hand above your head and quietly leave. No one will ever respond negatively IC or OOC if you need to remove yourself.
- If something doesn't feel right to you, please speak up. You may not be the only one who feels that way.
- Be assertive if possible. Speak to the person you have a concern with and be direct. If you need help negotiating a situation, find a staff member to assist you.

### 2. Respect others' physical, mental and emotional boundaries.

- Always ask for explicit verbal consent before touching someone. Never assume consent, always .
- Don't assume the race, sexuality, gender, history with violence, etc. of others. If you don't know, ask. Do not be offended if you are corrected or asked to dial it back.
- All attendees are empowered to choose their own gender. If at all possible, find out what pronouns people prefer or use neutral pronouns such as 'they' or 'zie.' Regardless of your personal opinions, each attendant at one of our events has the right to be referred to as they wish. Requested pronouns are not optional and have nothing to do with the person of whom the request is being made. By that same token, please be understanding if a person makes a mistake and corrects themselves.
- Respect the choices of others. Each Dystopia Rising event hosts many attendants. You are invited to reach out, make new friends, and have a great time. We each come from different histories, backgrounds, and mentalities. It is not our job to decide what is right or wrong for other people and unless you witness someone being injured (physically or mentally) by someone's choices, it is not for you to judge.

### 3. Dystopia Rising events are a cooperative gaming environment.

- We all have something to offer.
- Respect diverse opinions, beliefs, and points of view. Share ideas rather than judgments. Use 'I' statements as much as possible to state your reactions or your experiences.
- There is no such thing as totally Safe Space. In attending Dystopia Rising you are taking a risk in order to have an experience. You may find yourself outside your comfort zone.
- Assume positive intent
- Everyone (including you) will make unintentional mistakes
- Be aware of the effects your behavior has on others and accept responsibility for it.
- Expect to be confronted by others if you make a mistake, make efforts to step back, listen and learn from those with different experiences from your own.

Creating Safe(r) Space requires active community feedback. Gathering feedback and putting it into action allows us to continue to improve as Safe(r) Space providers. Please talk with your event organizers about anything concerning Safe(r) Space.

We would like to thank everyone who has been a part of making Dystopia Rising, and larping as a hobby, a place where everyone is welcome to play pretend. We believe that the hobby of larping is not a competitive one, but instead one where all game runners and players can benefit from a shared experience out of character as much as in. We are happy to be able to work with many game runners and groups to collectively grow and improve the hobby as a whole.

Portions of these guidelines have been adapted, with permission, from the [Living Games Conference Code of Conduct](#). The "Ok Check-In" system was adapted from Johanna Koljonen, which can be found on her blog, [Participation Safety](#). Maury Brown, Sarah Bowman and Harrison Greene created its current evolution for use at [New World Magischola](#).