

# IFGS Society Stoplight Policy

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Guidelines on how to deal with harassment in an IFGS event.

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## Change Log

Version	Date	Description of Change
v1.0	24-MAR-2016	Initial approved version.

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### ***Appropriate Behavior***

The IFGS **requires** that all participants behave in an appropriate and suitable manner at all times, especially towards each other. We take this VERY seriously, but we cannot take action if YOU do not report these types of incidents when they occur.

We've got a great group of people. But even great people can pull stupid stunts that leave others feeling uncomfortable or harassed.

There have been reported instances during games where one or more people have behaved in a manner that made someone else feel **VERY** uncomfortable. The Board is not aware if the behavior in those instances was intentional or accidental, but the salient point is that **NO ONE SPOKE UP WHEN IT OCCURRED!**

### ***Reporting Harassment***

There are people for whom confrontation is not an issue. If such a person notices someone acting in a manner they deem inappropriate or unacceptable, they will call those people on it right then and there.

However, many people have a hard time with speaking up in an uncomfortable situation. For those people, the Board suggests the following method of dealing with those who have behaved in such a way as to cause you discomfort. This applies to all of our participants equally.

*Someone says or does something you consider inappropriate, or that makes you uncomfortable.*



If you are unable or unwilling to flat out tell that person "HEY! That's not cool. Back off and ease up because you are making me uncomfortable", then the Board requests that you say "**YELLOW LIGHT**" to that person/those people if they've only made you *somewhat* uncomfortable.

However, if they've made you feel really bad, have verbally, physically, or sexually harassed you, or if their behavior has become worse after a Yellow Light warning, then say "**RED LIGHT**" to them.



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### ***You MUST Speak Up!***

Whether for a Yellow or Red light infraction, if you are not willing to speak directly to the person/people causing your discomfort, then you can ALWAYS speak to the GM or to the Game Staff member of your choice.

**The important thing is to LET SOMEONE KNOW, even if you have to leave the encounter to find someone with whom you are comfortable enough to report the incident.**

### ***Yellow Light Warnings***

Any Game Staff member that receives notice of a Yellow light notification is **required** to report the incident to either the GM, the Game Producer, the Game Safety Officer, or to a member of the Chapter Board, whichever is appropriate.

In addition, a Staff member is required to inform the offending player that a Yellow Light incident has been reported, to ensure that the behavior that caused the report is identified, and to inform the offending player that said behavior is NOT to be repeated.

Yellow Light incidents require no further action. Note that a repeat offense **may** cause the offending player to be expelled from the game at the discretion of the GM or the GP.

### ***Red Light Warnings***

Any Game Staff member that receives notice of a Red light notification is **required** to report the incident to either the GM, the Game Producer, the Game Safety Officer, or to a member of the Chapter Board **immediately**.

In addition, a Staff member is required to inform the offending player that a Red Light incident has been reported, to ensure that the behavior that caused the report is identified, and to inform the offending player that said behavior is NOT to be repeated. Any repeat of the offending behavior **WILL** result in the immediate expulsion of the offending player from the game.

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All Red Light warnings will be reported to the Chapter Registry Chair, and will be kept on file in a secure and private manner for a period of no less than five years.

Repeat offenders will be given a chance to reform, but if inappropriate behavior recurs then the offending player can be expelled and banned from IFGS at the Chapter level. This is entirely at the discretion of the Chapter Board and depends on the severity of the offense(s) committed.

All Red Light warnings will be copied to the Society Clerk by the Chapter Registry Chair. This information will be available to any Chapter Board or Chapter Safety Officer who requests information on a specific individual.

Please note that a Red Light warning is a SERIOUS offense, so we STRONGLY recommend that such warnings be genuinely warranted. While we do NOT want to disparage the word of the accuser, we DO want to ensure that a simple misunderstanding does not result in an unwarranted Red Light warning.

### ***Exceptions***

In some cases, offensive behavior may be scripted into a game. In the event that a player calls a yellow or red light on a role-playing event scripted in the game, the GM will explain that the stated behavior is scripted role-playing and will invite the player to withdraw from the situation.

Please understand that IFGS has neither the authority, the obligation, nor the right to police inappropriate actions taken outside of IFGS events.

### ***Witnessing Harassment***

If as a participant in an IFGS event you witness behavior **you** consider to be inappropriate, but the target of that behavior has not made a protest, we **STRONGLY** suggest that you ask the individual if they are OK or if they would like you to lodge a complaint on their behalf.

You cannot judge what is acceptable to someone else, but you **CAN** check with them to determine whether the target is genuinely comfortable with what happened, or if they are simply not

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comfortable about initiating a warning or a complaint.

Please note that no one can file a complaint on behalf of another person unless the target of the harassment gives explicit permission to do so.

### ***This Is Not A Game***

The Society Board requests that people not call Yellow or Red light warnings in a playful or frivolous manner. These calls are to be made ONLY when the situation genuinely requires their use.

If we water down these calls, then the people who need to use them might not do so in the mistaken belief that they are not taken seriously.

### ***Summary***

Why let some jerk ruin your game? If none of the above options appeal to you, find a friend who has no problem with confrontation and tell THEM what happened. Then stand back and watch as that person deals with the problem.

If something inappropriate or unpleasant occurs, or if harassment occurs, **EVERYONE** is expected to step in and to correct the problem.

Remember that we are all here to HAVE FUN! So PLEASE do not let some idiot ruin your day. Warn them, report them, and continue enjoying your game!

Please address any questions to the IFGS Society Board via the Society Clerk at [cleark@ifgs.org](mailto:cleark@ifgs.org)

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## ***Appendix 1: Process Summary***

1. Yellow light warnings are reported but not recorded and require no further action. A repeat offense is grounds for expulsion from the game.
2. Red light warnings **require** a report to a member of the game staff. The Game staff is then **required** to report the incident in writing to the Chapter Board and to the Chapter Registry Chair.
3. In all cases the person to whom a Red Light Warning is reported needs to do the following:
  - a) Discuss the incident with the victim to determine what occurred.
  - b) Establish witnesses if possible, and get their version of what happened.
  - c) Ensure that this is not a misunderstanding, scripted behavior, or any of the potential issues listed in Appendix 3.
  - d) Discuss the incident with the offending party. Clarify why the issue was reported, ensure that they understand that this is a serious matter, and get their buy-in that the offending behavior will not be repeated.
  - e) The GM or NPC Coordinator, whichever is appropriate, must then be informed so that the offending party can be watched for further transgressions or for improvement in their behavior.
  - f) Report the incident verbally to the GP and the Game Safety Officer immediately, relating the cause of the report and the actions taken. After the game, the incident must be reported in writing to the Chapter Registry Chair and to the Chapter Board.
  - g) A copy of the written notification of the Red Light incident can be sent to the offending party if they request a copy.

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- h) A Red Light violator that repeats a violation is subject to immediate expulsion from the game without a refund of their game fee at the discretion of the GM, the GSO, and the GP.
- 3. The Chapter Registry Chair will maintain a written record of all Red Light warnings for a period not less than 5 years.
- 4. A copy of the written incident will be sent to the IFGS Society clerk, where all such records will be maintained a minimum of 5 years.
- 5. Red Light incident records will not be published at either the Chapter nor the Society level, but the information will be available on request to Chapter Boards and Chapter Safety Officers strictly for use at the Chapter level and strictly to enforce the safety and security of our membership.
- 6. The appeals process is described in Appendix 2.

## ***Appendix 2: Appeals***

### **Yellow Light Warnings**

Yellow Light warnings do not have an appeal process. This is because the offending party is not allowed to determine what is or is not disturbing, uncomfortable, or harassment for anyone else. If someone feels harassed, then they are being harassed.

It's the exact same logic as when someone says that you are "hitting too hard". If someone says that you are hitting too hard, you are. Your opinion is not relevant in this case.

The reason there are no appeals for a Yellow Light warning is because there are no permanent punishments for offenders who generate Yellow Light warnings; even though repeat offenses in a single game can get the offending party expelled from the game at the discretion of the GM, the GSO, or the GP.

### **Red Light Warnings**

Red Light warnings are reported and recorded, and the possibility of permanent expulsion from the IFGS Chapter means that when someone is issued a Red Light warning, they have the option to make a statement for the record. Any such statements will accompany the written warning and be maintained with that warning.

A person who is about to be expelled from the Chapter has the option to appeal to the Chapter Board. That person may present their case to the Board for the sole purpose of remaining as an active participant in the chapter.

A Red Light Warning can be removed from the records if and only if the person who issued the warning agrees to the removal without reservations or stipulations.



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### ***Appendix 3: Be Wary Of***

Things to watch for include personal vendettas, inter-personal squabbles, personality conflicts, relationship issues, medical issues, simple misunderstandings, and scripted behavior.

Because a Red Light warning is such a SERIOUS offense, we want to perform due diligence to ensure that a reported incident has actually occurred that would be deemed genuinely offensive by a reasonable, disinterested third party.

While we do NOT want to disparage the word of the accuser, we DO want to prevent Red Light warnings being issued as a result of the list above.