

# DYSTOPIA RISING LARP

## Community Guidelines 3.0

Dated: February 2019

These guidelines have and will continue to evolve as our knowledge and experience base grows.  
Thank you for joining us.

The Dystopia Rising LARP Network is a neighborhood of communities that focus on a core of inclusivity in a welcoming environment. This means that we strive to create guidelines and policies to serve that goal as best as possible.

DR spaces are places and groups that strive to shape a culture that is accepting of all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, or any other difference. We believe in spaces that 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.

As a privately-owned network 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 will be made in compliance with local, 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 branch owner.



## Tips for Creating welcoming spaces at Dystopia Rising events

### 1. 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 addressed by others if you make a mistake. Make efforts to step back, listen and learn from those with different experiences from your own.

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

- Always ask for explicit verbal consent before touching someone. Never assume consent, always ask.
- 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. When possible, find out what pronouns people use or use neutral pronouns such as 'they.' Each attendant has the right to be referred to as they wish. Use of someone's stated pronouns are not optional. With that, be forgiving if a person makes a mistake and corrects themselves.
- Respect the choices of others. Dystopia Rising hosts many people. 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. 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.
- 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.

Creating welcoming spaces requires active community feedback. Gathering feedback and putting it into action allows us to continue to improve as providers. Please talk with your event organizers about anything concerning this topic.

## Anti-Harassment Policy

Dystopia Rising is dedicated to providing a harassment-free experience for everyone. We do not tolerate harassment of participants in any form.

This code of conduct applies to all Dystopia Rising spaces, including game events, social gatherings and DR-dedicated online spaces such as FB groups, both online and off. Anyone who violates this code of conduct may be sanctioned or expelled from these spaces at the discretion of their local game runner.

Some Dystopia Rising spaces may have additional rules in place, which will be made clearly available to participants. Participants are responsible for knowing and abiding by these rules.

Harassment includes:

- Offensive comments related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, mental illness, neuro(a)typicality, physical appearance, body size, age, race, or religion.
- Unwelcome comments regarding a person's lifestyle choices and practices, including those related to food, health, parenting, drugs, and employment.
- Deliberate misgendering or use of 'dead' or rejected names.
- Gratuitous or off-topic sexual images or behavior in spaces where they're not appropriate.
- Physical contact and simulated physical contact (eg, textual descriptions like *"\*hug\*"* or *"\*backrub\*"*) without consent or after a request to stop.
- Threats of violence.
- Incitement of violence towards any individual, including encouraging a person to commit suicide or to engage in self-harm.
- Deliberate intimidation.
- Stalking or following.
- Harassing photography or recording, including logging online activity for harassment purposes.
- Sustained disruption of discussion.
- Unwelcome sexual attention.
- Pattern of inappropriate social contact, such as requesting/assuming inappropriate levels of intimacy with others
- Continued one-on-one communication after requests to cease.
- Deliberate "outing" of any aspect of a person's identity without their consent except as necessary to protect vulnerable people from intentional abuse.
- Online instances of "trolling", "naming & shaming" and/or publication of non-harassing private communication.

Dystopia Rising prioritizes marginalized people's safety over privileged people's comfort. Branch runners reserves the right not to act on complaints regarding:

- 'Reverse' -isms, including 'reverse racism,' 'reverse sexism,' and 'cisphobia'
- Someone setting reasonable communication of boundaries, such as "leave me alone," "go away," or "I'm not discussing this with you."
- Communicating in a 'tone' you don't find congenial
- Criticizing racist, sexist, cissexist, or otherwise oppressive behavior or assumptions

## **Sexual Harassment/Assault**

The topic and realm of sexual assault and harassment are specifically banned from all Dystopia Rising and 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 events, and notice may be sent to other DR branches.

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

## **Consent**

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 an enthusiastic "yes."

## **Conduct**

When attending a Dystopia Rising event, attendants are expected to conduct themselves in a way that best represents the network and themselves.

It is the responsibility of the runners of each individual branch to uphold conduct standards within their local gaming community. In the instance that a local runner 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 Runner.

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. Community guidelines apply to all interactions and being "in character" is never an excuse to go against the network expectations.

### **Every member is treated the same and with respect**

All members will be treated equally, free from harassment, and not discriminated against. Membership, attendance, participation and treatment at any Dystopia Rising LARP Network event will not be restricted by race, color, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexuality, gender identity, religion or experience level in the hobby.

Everyone is to be treated with kindness and respect. Communications within the 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. All member should operate on a baseline of "Assume best intent". This not only includes interacting with one another in friendly and civil tones, but also that when we disagree with one another we do so as adults would: with courtesy and respect.

This also applies to community members who are employees, owners or other "staffed" members. Aggressive, antagonistic or attacking interactions are not acceptable in any format. We acknowledge that creating larp events is an often stressful and difficult job and expect those who do so to be granted the same courtesy we would give any other member of the DR world.

### **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 Runners or national Network Representatives.

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

Characters that are portrayed by players or staff members are fictitious entities. Characters should never take priority over real people. Character actions should be defined by a combination of what the character would do AND the 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 participate in something they do not want to for the sake of a character. 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.

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.



## **OK Check-In System**

Dystopia Rising uses 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 available on Youtube: <https://youtu.be/W3EMLaJSfaE>

The “Ok Check-In” system was adapted from Johanna Koljonens blog, [Participation Safety](#). Maury Brown, Sarah Bowman and Harrison Greene created its current evolution.

## **Responsibility to other players**

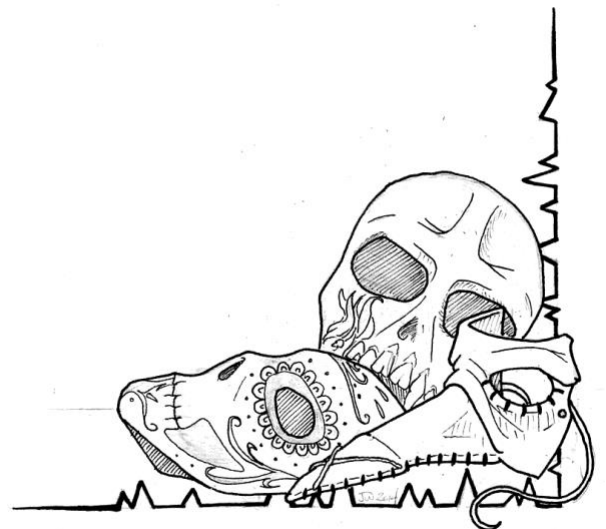
We must be courteous and respectful of others, both in and out of game. When we interact with other people, we must understand that certain topics and words are triggers for sensitive subjects. In the instance that a topic of sensitive nature is being discussed or is the focus of an in-character interaction, the people involved should make sure that the one that is least comfortable with the scenario is at ease. A scene or interaction is never more important than the players involved. Be respectful to borders and limitations of other people.

## **Personal responsibility**

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 we ask that that individual express this to those involved.

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.



## **Reporting**

If you are being harassed by a member of Dystopia Rising, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please contact your local game runner or DR LLC's customer service [customerservice@dystopiarising.com](mailto:customerservice@dystopiarising.com). DR customer service will assist you in contacting the correct game runner. DR LLC requires that all game runners respond to reports within 72 hours.

This code of conduct applies to Dystopia Rising spaces, but if you are being harassed by a member of Dystopia Rising outside our spaces, we still want to know about it. We will take all good-faith reports of harassment by Dystopia Rising members seriously. This includes harassment outside our spaces and harassment that took place at any point in time. Your local game runners reserve the right to exclude people from Dystopia Rising based on behavior outside Dystopia Rising spaces and behavior towards people who are not in Dystopia Rising.

In order to protect employees from abuse and burnout, we reserve the right to reject any report we believe to have been made in bad faith. Reports intended to silence legitimate criticism may be deleted without response.

We will respect confidentiality requests for the purpose of protecting victims of abuse. We will not name harassment victims without their affirmative consent.

Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.

If a participant engages in harassing behavior, the local game runners may take any action they deem appropriate, up to and including expulsion from all local Dystopia Rising spaces and identification of the participant as a harasser to other Dystopia Rising branch runners.

## **In the event of an issue**

In the instance that you witness actions that go against the spirit of our community, we encourage you to take the following steps:

- If you feel comfortable doing so, approach the individual in a non-combative manner 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. In the instance that an incident is an obvious and grievous breach of our community goals, immediately involve a staff member.
- If you do not feel comfortable approaching the individual, please approach a staff member in authority of the event you are attending.
- It is our wish to address these incidents at the time they occur, so as to best address those involved. With that, we ask that issues be brought to the local Runners attention as soon as possible. Whenever possible, anonymity will be maintained.
- If someone involved in the incident is also one of the people you would approach as a Guide, please contact either your local branch owners or [customerservice@dystopiarising.com](mailto:customerservice@dystopiarising.com) and we will get you in touch with the correct person.

If you are approached in regard to your actions being against the spirit of our community, we ask that you follow some 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.
- 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.



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 and in.

