

Membership Handbook Update Change Log Q3 – 2017

MISC

- Confirmed all links live as of time of publishing, any updated links are outlined below
- Updated all kinds of formatting that had gotten increasingly ugly/broken/outdated
- Updated various grammatical errors (singular vs plural corrections, tense mismatches, commas missing, etc.).

Chapter 1

- Addition – requesting expiration of membership (alternative to full resignation)
 - Any individual who previously resigned his/her membership with MES who petitions to return to MES and is granted readmission into MES may receive half of his/her MC at the time of resignation, rounded up. As part of the readmission process, he/she must submit his/her prestige log to the National Coordinator. As a guideline, any prestige in excess of half of the returning individual's MC at the time of resignation will be held for at least one calendar year after submittal of the prestige log and readmission to MES, but the final decision of the exact amount regained, and when, is at the discretion of the National Coordinator. Any decision regarding readmission into MES is solely at the discretion of the MES Board of Directors.

After readmission to MES, individuals may still gain new prestige and receive MC while their prior prestige awards are on hold. After one calendar year, the individual may contact the National Coordinator and request that the held prestige be released and their MC level be reviewed.

In addition to this procedure, an individual may petition the National Coordinator to reinstate his/her full prestige and MC level at the time of resignation immediately upon readmission to the MES. Such petition will be considered, taking into consideration any extenuating circumstances for the resignation. Any decision to reinstate full prestige and MC level upon readmission will be at the sole discretion of the National Coordinator.

In lieu of resignation, any member can request to have their membership expired immediately by sending an email to their Direct Coordinator and the National Coordinator (nc@mindseysociety.org) requesting their immediate expiration. The NC will inform the Board of Directors of the expiration request, and request that the Tech Team update the member's expiration date. Once immediate expiration is requested, the member immediately ceases to be an active member

of the MES, forfeiting the remainder of their currently paid membership dues, but is able to renew at any time and regain their membership benefits as normal. Pg 8

Chapter 2

- No changes

Chapter 3

- Moved Games and Socials to this chapter from chapter 4
- Updated page reference for new domains to 13 from 11
- Removal: word “officers” from above “Chain of Authority” header as it was an artifact of previous edits pg 12
- Removal: “either amongst themselves or as part of the larger Four Winds community”, due to no more Four Winds pg 17
- Updated mailing lists link pg 17 to: <https://www.mindseysociety.org/ mailing-lists/>
- Addition – Pg 13:

If the new Domain being created is started by a majority of players new to the MES (1 year or less), the RC and NC can use this relaxed set of requirements while the group starts their new Domain.

- Instead of requiring the founding members of the Domain to be full members, the founding members can be Trial members, including the interim DC, DST, and VST.
- Instead of the normal requirement of an election for DC, DST, and VST within the first three months (see **Interim Appointed Officers** in Chapter 6), the officers can remain appointed for up to six months, unless any member of the Domain requests an election for the position after three months (this request should be made to the RC for DC, or RST for DST, but should be kept anonymous from the Domain membership upon request). As Interim Officers are not loaned Membership Class, the officers themselves may want to request an election to take on the office officially. Note that members must still be full members to run for elected office.
- If the Domain runs only one VSS, the VSS can be run from the DST office for the first year of the Domain, instead of requiring a separate volunteer for VST.
- Instead of the normal 90-day requirement, Domain Officers will not be required to complete their required educational Standards for 180 days (but are still encouraged to do so as soon as possible).
- Instead of following the formal approval process for starting a VSS, the RST will provide the Domain officers a standard VSS template, which can be filled out and returned by email for RST approval. Once approved, the RST will

create the VSS in the approvals system. The VSS should be submitted formally through the approvals system within 6 months of creation.

Chapter 4

- Moved items to chapter 9 (see entry)
- Moved items to chapter 3 (see entry)
- Changed: This procedure is documented in another chapter of this handbook.
 - The procedure to appeal is documented in chapter 8 of this handbook. Pg 23
- Change: Updated “an event must meeting the” to “an event must meet the” pg 16
- Change: ‘harassment’ changed in multiple locations to unwelcomed conduct
- Changed Zero Tolerance policy to update necessary language changes. P9 19+
 - Was: Zero Tolerance Harassment Policy

Mind’s Eye Society is committed to providing members with a social environment free from harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive atmosphere. Engaging in any kind of harassment is prohibited.

Sexual harassment includes all unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Other derogatory or offensive comments or conduct, including those focused on race, gender or gender expression, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, color, or disability status, which create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive social environment, are also prohibited. Unwelcome conduct is conduct which the member did not solicit or invite; which the member regards as undesirable or offensive; and which the member expresses to be offensive or undesirable to the individual acting in an offensive or undesirable manner.

This policy governs conduct among members of Mind’s Eye Society when in attendance at announced Mind’s Eye Society functions. In the context of harassment, or potential for damaging the reputation of the hotel, the entire of the location of the convention is considered an MES event.

Mind’s Eye Society games involve role playing situations where members portray characters in a dark, fictional world. Players may often encounter game situations in which characters are verbally abusive to other characters. It is acceptable for characters to verbally abuse other characters, but not for players to abuse other players. MES harassment policies always remain in force.

Additionally, physical contact between players is specifically limited to consensual touch, meaning that both parties must be willing participants in the contact. Players must be sure other participants are willing before engaging in physical contact. Players shall not use their characters’ words or actions as a pretext to justify harassment. Such behavior is unacceptable and constitutes grounds for disciplinary action. Be mature, look after your fellow members, have fun, and do not harass

others. Members must immediately tell harassers when their conduct is unwelcome or tell an officer to inform the harasser on their behalf. Members must immediately stop when they are told their conduct is unwelcome. Members who tell harassers their conduct is unwelcome are protected both by law and Mind's Eye Society policy from retaliation.

If other action is necessary, complaints of harassment must be reported to either the lead coordinator on scene or to the nearest available officer. All such complaints will be promptly investigated. Investigation will be handled confidentially with limited information disseminated. All reasonable efforts will be made to respect the confidentiality of both the complaining party and the accused. If it is determined that harassment occurred, the club will take immediate and appropriate action designed to end the harassment and prevent the misconduct from recurrence. Appropriate disciplinary action against the offender may range up to, and include, termination of membership, depending on the severity of the conduct and the action required to prevent the harassment from recurrence.

- Now is:

Mind's Eye Society is committed to providing members with a social environment free from behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive atmosphere. Engaging in any kind of unwelcome conduct is prohibited and all allegations will be taken seriously.

This includes all unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Other derogatory or offensive comments or conduct, including those involving race, gender or gender expression, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, color, or disability status, that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive social environment, are also prohibited. Unwelcome conduct is conduct that the member did not solicit or invite; which the member regards as undesirable or offensive; and that the member expresses to be offensive or undesirable to the individual acting in an offensive or undesirable manner.

This policy governs conduct among members of Mind's Eye Society when in attendance at announced Mind's Eye Society functions. In the context of a Mind's Eye Society convention, the entirety of the location (e.g. the entire hotel) of the convention is considered to be covered under this policy

Mind's Eye Society games involve role playing situations where members portray characters in a dark, fictional world. Players may encounter game situations in which characters are verbally abusive to other characters. It is acceptable for characters to verbally abuse other characters, but not for players to abuse other

players. MES policies regarding appropriate behavior and conduct always remain in force.

Additionally, physical contact between Mind's Eye Society members is specifically limited to consensual touch, meaning that both parties must be willing participants in the contact and provide knowing consent. Players must be sure other participants are willing and provide knowing consent before engaging in physical contact. Players shall not use their characters' words or actions as a pretext to justify unwelcome attention, physical or otherwise. Such behavior is unacceptable and constitutes grounds for disciplinary action. Be mature, look after your fellow members, have fun, and do not harass others.

Members must immediately tell the individual(s) when their conduct is unwelcome or tell an officer to inform the individual on their behalf. Members must immediately stop when they are told their conduct is unwelcome. Any retaliation against members who tell individuals their conduct is unwelcome is prohibited and will be grounds for disciplinary action.

If additional is necessary, complaints of unwelcome conduct must be reported to either the lead coordinator on scene or to the nearest available officer. All such complaints will be promptly investigated. Investigation will be handled confidentially with limited information disseminated. Reasonable efforts will be made to respect the confidentiality of both the complaining party and the accused. If it is determined that unwelcome conduct occurred, the club will take immediate and appropriate action designed to end the unwelcome conduct and prevent a recurrence. Appropriate disciplinary action against the offender may range up to, and include, termination of membership, depending on the severity of the conduct and the action required to prevent recurrence.

- Changed In Character Sexual Assault ban – Updated to reflect that we are in a new chronicle and so references to grandfathering, etc. needed to be removed. Pg. 23
 - Was:
 - New characters being created cannot have/be a rapist or be a victim of this heinous act.
 - If you are currently playing a character that has this as part of their background, the character is 'grandfathered' and may remain in play.
 - Moving forward, no new rape/sexual assault scenes will be permitted or run, even for those characters who are "grandfathered".
 - Sexual assault includes any scene in which a character would be required to participate in a sexual act against their own will -- whether through force, coercion, or use of a power or ability. A character cannot be caused to participate in a sexual act they would not choose of their own volition.

- Sexual assault scenes include sexual assault (unwanted contact of a sexual nature), and any discussion or description of sexual assault. Both are banned from play.
 - If your current concept becomes unplayable due to this rule, please work with your ST to re-work this aspect of your character, or make a new one.
 - ST's cannot use rape/sexual assault as a plot device.
 - This rule applies to both PCs and NPCs.
 - Breaches of this policy are cheating, and may be considered a breach of the MES harassment policy.
- Now is:
 - No characters may have been/be a rapist or be a victim of rape as part of their background or history
 - No rape/sexual assault scenes will be permitted or run.
 - Sexual assault includes any scene in which a character would be required to participate in a sexual act against their own will -- whether through force, coercion, or use of a power or ability. A character cannot be caused to participate in a sexual act they would not choose of their own volition.
 - Sexual assault scenes include sexual assault (unwelcome contact of a sexual nature), and any discussion or description of sexual assault. Both are banned from play.
 - ST's may not use rape/sexual assault as a plot device.
 - This rule applies to both PCs and NPCs.
 - Breaches of this policy are cheating, and may be considered to be a breach of MES policies governing unacceptable and unwelcome conduct.

Chapter 5

- Changed: Updated link for Trustee Nomination Process to reflect current site of <https://www.mindseysociety.org/member-awards/trustee-nomination-process/> pg 32

Chapter 6

- No changes

Chapter 7

- Change: Updated election information to reflect that RST and RC officers are now directly elected by their region rather than DST/DCs per referendum (missed updated from last quarter).
 - Changed “All DSTs in the Region” to “All Paid Members in the Region” pg 45
 - Changed “All DCs in the Region” to “All Paid Members in the Region” pg 45
 - Changed “All DSTs in the Region” to “All Members in the Region” pg 53

- Changed “All DCs in the Region” to “All Members in the Region” pg 53
- Removal: Removed Regional Voting section entirely as it is no longer separate from general voting for purposes of electing regional officers. Pg 50
- Changed: made link for assistants to the BOD an actual hyperlink instead of plaintext so it could be clicked. Pg 39 <http://www.mindseysociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/MES-JDF.pdf>
- Removal: National Philanthropic Administrator entry removed, duties have been moved to other offices (charities to NCs office, etc.). pg 40
- Removal: International Development Liaison pg 40
- Update: Updated example on write in votes being counted as none of the above for clarity purposes. Pg 48

Chapter 8

- Addition: “If Immediate corrective action is used a Letter of Counseling or, if warranted, an investigation must follow.” Pg 58
- Change: May to Will pg 64
- Addition: “A Letter of Counseling can be issued to a member by any level of that member’s Coordinator or Storyteller Chain. Additionally, the presiding Coordinator or Storyteller of any event can issue a Letter of Counseling to an attending member for disruptive behavior in or related to that event.” Pg 64
- Addition: If the appeal is the second appeal of the decision, a summary of the grounds for appeal must be included, after the descriptive paragraph and before the complete statement. The decision description, situation description, and grounds for appeal summary can be no more than one page in length total (in a reasonable font -- using Arial 12 pt as a baseline), with further supporting information included after. The Appellant officer on the second appeal is only required to read the one page opening of the appeal before deciding whether the appeal should be dismissed. Pg68
- Change: updated section “Procedure: Investigation and Action by Board” pg 73
 - WAS: In an effort to ensure that all MES members are able to access the appeals process for any disciplinary action, the Board has determined that investigations that would normally require the Board to directly investigate will be conducted by a temporary small panel. The temporary panel is appointed by the Board from volunteers (Trustees in particular may be chosen due to their experience and integrity).
The panel is empowered to investigate and issue a disciplinary action if they reach a consensus that such an action is appropriate. The decision by the panel can be appealed to the Board. Investigations that would normally require the Board to directly investigate include investigations dealing directly with National Officers, investigations in which the National Officers find themselves with a conflict of interest, and others.

- IS NOW: In an effort to ensure that all MES members are able to access the appeals process for any disciplinary action, the Board has determined that investigations that would normally require the Board to directly investigate will be conducted through three members of an Investigative Panel. The Board Investigative Panel is composed of six volunteers -- two trustees and four general members. Applications for the Panel are sent to the Board of Directors, and Panel members are selected to serve a term of one year and will require a Non-Disclosure agreement to be signed. Strong preference will be given towards members with established experience in handling investigations, and candidates must have at least one year of experience in a primary or assistant role conducting investigations in order to qualify. As tasks for the Board Investigative Panel are project based, and those projects are infrequent, being a member of the Investigative Panel does not count as holding a position for the purposes of limits on the number of positions a member can hold.

The purpose of the Board Investigative Panel is to provide a permanent investigative body which the MES Board of Directors can draw from while handling issues. The Board of Directors is not an investigative body, and therefore hires an Investigative Panel to perform that portion of MES Processes, as well as advise on issues for which Board members have bias or conflict. Examples of situations where the Investigative Panel may be called to assist include:

- Investigations which require National level resolution, but for which the National Officer (NC, NST) has a Conflict of Interest
- Appeals to the Board for which the resolution requires opening or reopening an investigation.
- Appeals, Expulsions or other requests which either require a great deal of investigation or review, or for which multiple members of the Board have a Conflict of Interest.

In most situations, the Panel will be asked to perform the investigative portion of the action, and provide recommendations to the Board for final action. In cases of multiple Conflicts of Interest among Board members, the Panel may be assigned two board members to form a committee. A committee has the final decision on Disciplinary Actions or Appeals, and is empowered to make binding decisions.

When an issue requires Investigative Panel assistance, the Board will contact the panel regarding the work needed, and its scope. Three Panel members (one Trustee and two general members) will be selected for the assignment, given all

currently available information on the issue, and the task at hand. This task may range from performing an investigation and potentially issuing a Disciplinary Action, performing all or part of an investigation and providing recommendations to the Board, or reviewing Appeals, Expulsions, or other requests which require further investigation or an impartial opinion.

The subteam will choose a member to act as Point of Contact for both the Board and anyone queried regarding the assignment. When provided the assignment, the team will be given expected milestones for delivery. A normal investigation is supposed to take a maximum of 30 days from notification to request for a defense, and the same rigor would be expected of most assignments to an investigative team. Once milestones and expectations are established, the Board will monitor progress of the assignment towards a resolution, and may alter the team or provide additional guidance if milestones are unable to be met.

- Added: Local Game Exclusion Policy pg 75

A Domain-level officer has a series of rights and responsibilities which are unique to that level of authority; they are able to exclude character concepts from play which would otherwise be allowed under the character approval guidelines, they have the ability to define aberrant and unusual rules for VSSs under their control, and they are able to remove characters from play on an as needed basis for the health of their local game. As well, Coordinators are able to remove players from an event who are causing an incident, using Immediate Corrective Action.

In view of these unique authorities and responsibilities, domain level officers are further granted the right to disallow players who are in good standing from taking part in their local games under the following conditions:

- The player in question is a non-local player (not attached to the domain in which that officer holds position) who has attended the Domain's games, has been the recipient of a minimum of two (2) disciplinary actions or letters of counseling for disruptive or detrimental behavior (within the past 3 years), and the officer feels that their presence is disruptive or otherwise detrimental to the local game. Notification of exclusion is handled over email, not on the spot at an event (though Immediate Corrective Action can still be used at an event if necessary).
- The player is a local member who has been the recipient of a minimum of three (3) disciplinary actions or letters of counseling for disruptive or detrimental behavior (within the past 3 years), and has continued to engage in the behavior for which they have been disciplined.
- The player has engaged in one or more instances of severely disruptive or detrimental behavior, and is in the process of investigation for such behavior.

A VST can exclude a player based on the above criteria, and their decision must be approved by their Domain Coordinator, with a notification to the Regional Coordinator. A Domain Coordinator can exclude a player from any or all Domain activities, and their decision must be approved by the Regional Coordinator. If the exclusion is for 3 months or longer, the exclusion request must be reviewed by the Regional Coordinator.

Should an officer choose to make use of any of these causes for excluding a player, they must provide the reviewing officer with a written summary of the reasons for the request, a summary of issues the player has caused for the local group, and when and under what conditions the player in question will be prevented from taking part in the local game, and the requested length of the exclusion.

The reviewing officer's duty is to review:

- Is the player in question truly a problem for this group?
- Has sufficient Counseling already been attempted? If not, could they potentially solve the issues at hand?
- Has the player in question caused actual issues in the Domain/game in question, or is the officer just attempting to exclude them based on their reputation?

The reviewing officer should then determine whether to approve the exclusion, or attempt counseling to try to find another resolution to the issue first.

Notification of exclusion is sent to the excluded member, the coordinator chain of the excluded member, the Domain Coordinator, and the Regional Coordinator. If the player is a member of a different Domain, both Domain Coordinators should be notified; if the player is a member of a different Region, both the DCs and RCs should be notified, as well as the National Coordinator. As with all official decisions, the player has the right to appeal an exclusion ruling after the fact, and any officer seen to be misusing or abusing this ability will be punished in line with the offense of abusing an office to damage a member.

After being excluded from a local game or Domain for 3 months, the player may ask to be invited back to events. This request is sent to the Domain Coordinator, including the Regional Coordinator as a notification. If the request is considered, most likely Conflict Resolution or a Mediation will be used to define ways to resolve potential issues and set guidelines. If the request is denied, further requests can be made every 3 months.

If a Regional Coordinator sees that a member has been excluded from multiple Domains for similar issues, they should strongly consider discussing the issue with the National Coordinator, to determine whether the player in question is a good fit for the organization as a whole.

- Change to accuser language pg 69 & 70

- Was:
The accusers, unless the investigating officer determines that the wrongdoing is harassment and must instead state that as the reason to not include the names of the accuser(s).
- Now is:
The accusers, unless the investigating officer determines that the wrongdoing is unwelcome conduct and must instead state that as the reason to not include the names of the accuser(s).

Chapter 9 – Created for organizational purposes.

- Moved these items to Chapter 9
 - Tradeshows and Conventions
 - Addition: Added the recommended pre-con statement pg 78
 - “For opening ceremonies at conventions, or before sanctioned games held at non-Mind’s Eye Society conventions, this statement should be read aloud:
 - The MES is a safe space for all individuals regardless of sex, age, religion, creed, sexual orientation, identity, nationality, or beliefs. I will endeavor to ask consent with all aspects of my interaction with my fellow members to ensure all involved feel comfortable.
By doing so, I hope to enrich our culture, create an inclusive environment, and make the club a better place for every individual every day.
We do not play to win; together we win by playing.
- Name and Artwork Use
- Banners
 - Changed: Updated banners link to reflect current link on Mindseysociety.org to <https://www.mindseysociety.org/marketing/marketing-banners/>