

Refuge LARP

Code of Conduct

Fostering Positive Play

Statement of Purpose

It is the intent of Refuge LARP to host events where both players and staff work together to foster a culture of respect, safety, and positive play. Everyone participating in an event hosted by Refuge LARP is expected to join us in our quest towards this goal. This Code of Conduct (CoC) sets expectations of appropriate behavior, and empowers both players and staff to proactively address concerns, issues, and incidents as they occur.

To best facilitate positive play, Refuge LARP reserves the right to address violations of this CoC in accordance with Refuge LARP's Violations Policy, up to and including being banned from attending events.

Positive Play

All players and staff at Refuge LARP events are expected to foster a Positive Play environment. Our standards for positive play as follows:

- We respect each other's space.
- We respect each other's emotions.
- We respect each other's consent.

Positive Play is achieved through words and actions that embody respect. All participants shall respect the space, emotions, and consent of everyone involved in any Refuge LARP event. This includes the players, staff, bystanders, and those who might be hosting or maintaining the event space. All participants shall also extend this respect to the spaces we use.

Positive players treat others as they would like to be treated, and work towards creating an environment for others to do the same. Individuals have differing limits and tolerances and what one person may find upsetting and offensive, another person might not take exception to. Letting others know when their topics, words, and behaviors are causing distress allows them to be aware of the issue and remedy the situation.

Promoting Positive Play

To promote Positive Play and ensure that everyone can best respect the comfort level of all participants we encourage and support any participant that is feeling uncomfortable, distressed, or harassed to express this feeling to others.

If a participant is uncomfortable expressing their discomfort directly, we ask that they approach a staff member with their concern so that the staff can address the situation. If informed by another participant or a staff member that something is making others uncomfortable, please be respectful of that member of our community and correct the discomforting behavior.

Similarly if any participant feels that another participant poses a danger to their safety (either physical or emotional safety), or the safety of the community, we ask that they approach a staff member, in person or via email, with their concern in as specific terms as possible.

We appreciate firsthand accounts in any situation to get the best information possible, as well as to avoid hearsay. However, we understand that some participants will be uncomfortable with, or even fearful, of bringing things to our



attention and in such cases, we encourage others to bring these concerns to us.

In all cases information in circumstances such as these that is brought to a staff member will be kept as confidential as much as it is possible.

If you feel that a member of Refuge LARP staff has violated our own code of conduct and do not feel comfortable letting another member of staff know, you may contact **rac@refugelarp.org** to reach out to the Refuge LARP Accountability Committee.

Anti-Harassment

Harassment in any form will not be tolerated. We hold that everyone has the right to have experiences free from harassment or the fear of harassment, regardless of factors including but not limited to race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, body size, physical appearance, neurotype, age, and/or disability.

Harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Continued one-on-one communication after requests to cease.
- The manipulation of photographs or recordings in a manner that may offend, intimidate, embarrass, or demean.
- Verbal, written, or social media comments that may offend, intimidate, embarrass, or demean, including those that reinforce social structures of prejudice or domination.
- Deliberate misgendering or use of 'dead', former, or rejected names.
- Threats of violence.
- Physical or verbal intimidation and any other behaviors that could reasonably be viewed as abusive.
- Incitement of violence towards any individual, including encouraging a person to commit suicide or to engage in self-harm.
- Patterns of inappropriate social contact, such as requesting/assuming inappropriate levels of intimacy with others.
- Gratuitous or off-topic sexual images or behavior in spaces where they're not appropriate.
- Unwelcome attention, either in person or through an online medium.
- Unwelcome physical contact, sexual attention or simulated physical contact (eg, textual descriptions like "hug" or "backrub") without consent or after a request to stop.
- Any other behavior that is disruptive to events or attendees' enjoyment of events.

Criminal History and Play Eligibility

1. Anyone with a criminal history that includes stalking/criminal harassment, violent crimes, or crimes of a sexual nature, (hereafter referred to as relevant criminal history) is not permitted to play in any Refuge event without self-reporting this history to the chapter in which they wish to participate and receiving clearance to attend.
 - a. Failure to report relevant criminal history before their first event (or their first event after a conviction that would make them subject to this requirement) should be seen as intent to conceal and considered a violation of our Code of Conduct.
 - i. Current players should not be penalized for failing to disclose relevant criminal history before that requirement was in effect. However, they must report to game staff before attending their next event after the rollout of this policy.
 - b. Knowingly bringing another player who is ineligible to participate in a Refuge LARP event under this policy, will also be considered a violation of our Code of Conduct.
2. Chapters may, at their discretion, allow individuals with certain kinds of relevant criminal history to play in their chapter.
 - a. The reason for this discretion is to make allowances for the places where the criminal justice system does not align with our values as an organization, not to allow people who have a history of genuinely harmful and dangerous criminal acts. Any messaging on this policy, as well as organization-wide and local policy write ups should reflect this. Examples can help make this distinction clear, but should not be considered an exhaustive list. See [Appendix](#) below.

- b. Chapters must perform appropriate due diligence before clearing a player with relevant criminal history to play. At minimum, this due diligence must include a review of the publicly available court records and a conversation with the player about their willingness and ability to abide by the local and organization-wide Refuge rules and codes of conduct.
 - c. Chapters must maintain a record of these clearances, which must be submitted to the Refuge LARP organization before the player can attend an event.
 - d. Chapters may individually choose whether to accept clearances from other chapters, or to require all players to self-report their criminal history and make their own decision.
 - e. In the case of National games, clearances will be a joint decision between the hosting chapter and the Chairperson in their capacity as the head of the National chapter.
3. The Refuge LARP organization and its chapters are expected to hold their volunteer staff members to a higher standard of behavior, and must seriously consider a player's relevant criminal history when deciding to elevate a player to a staff role.
 - a. Anyone applying for an organization-wide position must report their relevant criminal history to the Refuge Chairperson.
4. Each chapter is required to develop, publish, and maintain a written, player-facing policy regarding how they handle conduct concerns, investigations, bans, and methods of recourse and escalation including at minimum the above items.
 - a. While the right of businesses to refuse service is the basis for the Refuge LARP organization and its individual chapters to ban players from attending, a statement of the right to refuse service is not sufficient policy for this requirement.
5. Chapters may make their local policies more restrictive than this, but not less so.
6. Chapters who do not abide by this policy, including failing to do due diligence when granting exceptions to players with relevant criminal histories or failing to take action when made aware of possible relevant criminal histories, may be sanctioned by the Board of Directors.
 - a. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - i. Being subject to an investigation by the Refuge Accountability Committee
 - ii. Being compelled to take a particular action (such as removing a player from a staff role or from the game entirely) by vote of the Refuge Board of Directors
 - iii. Being removed from the Refuge LARP Board of Directors for a period of time
 - iv. As a last resort, removal from the Refuge LARP organization
 - b. Situations involving players with relevant criminal history who have been appointed to staff-level roles will be dealt with more severely.

Appendix: Illustrative examples of relevant player circumstances

These examples are intended to provide guidelines for the types of situations where a chapter might choose or not choose to make an exception to this policy, and is not intended as a comprehensive list. Our intention here is to allow chapters to use their best judgment in making allowances for the places where the criminal justice system does not align with our values as an organization.

Players whose criminal history makes them subject to this policy are encouraged to reach out to the chapter in which they intend to play to discuss their individual circumstances.

1. Examples of the kinds of circumstances for which chapters might choose to make an exception:
 - a. Public urination
 - b. Sex work
 - c. Consensual relationships between peers who are close in age, for instance involving a 17 and an 18 year old
 - d. Having dressed in drag in states that criminalize it

- e. Criminal offenses where a significant amount of time has passed and the player has demonstrably changed their behavior
 - f. A conviction that has been expunged or overturned
 - g. When individuals have been on probation or parole for a sufficient period of time to demonstrate a change in behavior, and continue to maintain good standing with regards to their probation/parole.
2. Examples of the kinds of circumstances for which chapters should not make an exception:
- a. Extremely serious crimes such as murder or violent sexual crimes
 - b. Premeditated violent or sexual crimes
 - c. Repeated or serial crimes, or crimes with other indications (like reports of repeated similar behavior, whether or not it results in criminal charges) that indicate a continued pattern of bad actions
 - d. Crimes where the relationship cannot be considered consensual, such as with a large age gap, a power imbalance, or other elements of coercion