**A close up of a sign

Description automatically generated**

Some rules adapted from and thanks to: Ohio Esports and Michigan High School Esports Foundation

# **Mission**

The Indiana High School Esports Network is a non-profit esports organization composed of public, private, and parochial schools in the State of Indiana. It is the mission of the IHSEN to do the following:

1. Provide an organized esports league for participating schools and school districts (“members”) that offers the structure to be able to schedule regular season and playoff matches between members.
2. Offer guidance to member schools regarding the funding and continual improvement of their esports programs.
3. Offer an open and inviting environment, free of judgment and prejudice; being as inclusive as we can be to any person, of any upbringing. Our intention being that all of us in esports are equal, thus bringing us together as a driven, passionate community to help the esports industry thrive.
4. To provide opportunities for ALL students to use esports as a platform to acquire critical communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills needed to thrive in work and in life.

**Vision:**

The vision of IHSEN is to provide a competitive environment while also allowing students to:

* Students are #1- Students are not a paycheck, they are the reason we build our programs
* Positivity in the Community – Be a role model for positivity in the gaming community.
* Inclusivity- Gaming is for everyone. ALL students should feel welcome.
* Play Fair- Provide consistent rules to keep a level playing field

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**Board of Directors/League Administrators**

During the school year the board of directors will meet to vote on league business. Each member of the board will have an equal vote. There will be an odd number of Board of Directors to vote on league business so there are no tie votes. The structure of this governing body is subject to change as the league operates in its first year.

League Adminstrator(s) language will be added and defined later.

**Confidentiality**

The content of private information, emails, support tickets, phone calls or any other correspondence with IHSEN board of directors and/or administration are deemed as strictly confidential materials. The publication of such material is prohibited without the express written permission from the IHSEN board of directors.

# **Definitions**

1. **Participants** 
   1. **Captain** - any player designated by their school, school district, or team to represent a team in making pre-game or in-game decisions regarding such things as match creation, in-game pauses, or other activities that can occur during a game or match. They are also the main contact to organize and schedule scrimmages with other teams.
   2. **Coach** - an adult staff member that oversees the esports program/team at a member school or school district. This person may also be able to help improve their player(s) game performance outside of officially scheduled games or matches. This person may also be the Program Administrator or Program Advisor for their team.
   3. **Player** - a high school student (see “Player Eligibility”) that plays competitively against others in a game on a computer, console, or other device.
   4. **Program Administrator/Program Advisor** - an adult staff member that oversees the esports program/team at a member school or school district. This person is the point of contact for any IHSEN matters.
   5. **Staff Member** - any paid or volunteer adult that has been fingerprinted and/or background checked by the State of Indiana who is legally eligible to be around minors according to state law.
2. **Official Match** - any game or “best of” series-of-games that occur during a IHSEN scheduled event for official scoring purposes.
3. **Leagues, Opens, Tournaments**
   1. **League** - A League or League tournament is a tournament run by the IHSEN, the participants of which are only players belonging to a school or school district on a team with other players from the same school or school district.
   2. **Invitational Tournament** - An Invitational tournament (“Invite”) is a tournament run by the IHSEN which is made up of participating teams that have been invited to participate, with rules set by IHSEN, or hosting school.
   3. **Open Tournament** - An Open tournament (“Opens”) is a tournament run by the IHSEN, the participants of which may be players that satisfy eligibility requirements. Teams for an Open tournament may contain players that are not currently enrolled in a member school or school district. *At this time, Open Tournaments are not run under the IHSEN umbrella (Subject to Change).*
4. **Penalties** - Penalties are punishments given to any participant(s) that violate IHSEN rules and regulations. Penalties are given on a case-by-case basis at the full discretion of the IHSEN member(s) assigned to the case. Penalties include but are not limited to: match overturns, player/team/school/school district suspension, player/team/school/school district disqualification, or partial/full deduction of prizes. Penalties are not mutually exclusive, and may be given in combination at the full discretion of the IHSEN.
5. **Roster** - Eligible rosters consist of players from the same school or school district that meet or exceed their school’s player eligibility requirements.
6. **Series Lengths** - All matches consist of a series of “games”. The series length is the number of games in that match and the amount of games that teams have to play or win for the match to conclude.
   1. **Best of 1** - A best of 1 series consists of one game, the sole winner of that game will determine the winner of the match. Possible scores are 1-0 and 0-1.
   2. **Best of 3** - A best of 3 series consists of a maximum of three games, in which a player/team must win two of those games to win the match. Possible match scores are 2-0, 2-1, 1-2, and 0-2.
   3. **Best of 5** - A best of 5 series consists of a maximum of five games, in which a player/team must win three of those games to win the match. Possible match scores are 3-0, 3-1, 3-2, 2-3, 1-3, and 0-3.
   4. **Best of 7** - A best of 7 series consists of a maximum of seven games, in which a player/team must win four of those games to win the match. Possible match scores are 4-0, 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 3-4, 2-4, 1-4, and 0-4.
   5. **Home/Away** - A home/away series will always consist of two games, in which there is a possibility for players/teams to tie the series with no winner. Possible match scores are 2-0, 1-1, and 0-2. No current game in regular or post season play meets this criteria. Home teams are listed as the second or bottom team and the away team will be the top team or first listed team.
7. **Team** - a group of players playing the same video game title on one roster participating in an IHSEN tournament on behalf of the same school or school district.
8. **Time Zone** - The official time zones of IHSEN are the Eastern Standard Time Zone and Central Standard Time Zone. All IHSEN broadcasts, announcements, and web pages regarding IHSEN competitions will always display time in the Eastern Standard Time Zone with the Central Standard Time Zone listed as well, unless otherwise stated. Tournaments based off of regional time zone will take place in that region’s time zone. Any outside play with those of another time zone, must be governed under consent of those playing.
9. **Titles** - Games currently offered by the IHSEN include League of Legends, Overwatch, Rocket League, Forza 7, Super Smash Bros Ultimate, and Hearthstone. This is not to be considered a complete list of all games played, as there may be more in trial stages or at individual schools or school districts.
10. **Tournament Stages** - Tournament stages are the designated rounds in which differing rules such as match length, new player/team registration, and match scheduling take place.
    1. **Preseason** - The preseason stage of a tournament, which may also be referred to as the “Qualifiers” stage, is the stage before a tournament starts where players/teams may join at any time until the stage ends. During this stage, players/teams compete for a better starting seed in the regular season.
    2. **Regular Season** - The regular season, is the main stage of a tournament. New teams will not be permitted to enter during this stage (teams may still be changed to add new players during this stage). During this stage, players/teams compete for the highest placements to move on to the postseason.
    3. **Postseason** - The postseason stage of a tournament, which may also be referred to as the “Playoffs” stage, is the single-elimination bracket made up of the highest placing teams from the regular season and seeded accordingly. The initial size of the postseason will depend on the tournament size and number of players/teams actively participating in the regular stage up to 16 teams. Rounds of the postseason may consist of pre-quarterfinals (sixteen teams), quarterfinals (eight teams), and semifinals (four teams). The postseason stage also includes the 3rd place decider match.
    4. **Finals** - The finals stage of a tournament is the final match in the previous single-elimination bracket that consists of two teams. Invitational matches may have longer match lengths than postseason matches. Open tournament finals should follow standard postseason match length and rules unless otherwise specified.

# **Player Eligibility**

1. All players must currently be enrolled as a student in high school in Indiana (grades 9-12), exceptions to be made at the discretion of IHSEN member vote.
2. All players must know and adhere to the athletic or esports eligibility guidelines of the school or school district in which they are enrolled.
3. All players must meet or exceed all attendance and academic requirements as practiced by the player’s school district.
4. All schools and school districts must be able to provide proof of student enrollment of all players on a team’s roster. IHSEN can request the following information about any student:
   1. Full Name
   2. Contact Details
   3. Date of Birth
   4. Proof of Enrollment and/or School Records
   5. Other information as requested

# **Liability**

All participants are expected to know and uphold the rules before and while participating in IHSEN events. Participants will not receive any refunds or compensation for inability to play.

# **Game Titles**

IHSEN currently offers the following game titles in seasons for members:

1. League of Legends by Riot Games (PC)
2. Overwatch by Blizzard Entertainment (PC)
3. Rocket League by Psyonix (PC/PS4/XBox One, Cross-Platform Enabled)
4. Super Smash Bros. Ultimate by Nintendo (Nintendo Switch)
5. Forza 7 by Turn 10 Studios (PC/XBOX)
6. Hearthstone by Blizzard Entertainment (Cross-Platform)

Schools will assume that all game titles that IHSEN offers will only work on the Windows PC operating system platform unless specifically mentioned in parenthesis next to the game title.

Additional game titles will be reviewed every season by all members during a meeting to be held at a location and time to be determined during each school year.

Additional game titles may be offered in “one off” tournaments at the discretion of IHSEN>

Additional game titles may be added at the discretion of IHSEN.

Game titles may be removed at the discretion of IHSEN.

# **Game Rules**

Please see the specific IHSEN rules document for each individual game title. Rules documents are available on the IHSEN website at <https://www.ihsen.info>

# **Rule Changes**

IHSEN reserves the right to add, remove, or otherwise alter all rule sets without further notice for leagues, in order to discern the proper way to conduct new games within the league.

Already sanctioned league rules can and will be changed by a majority of member consent, if necessary, during the season, if the rule changes were not previously addressed during a pre-season rules meeting.

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# **Supervision of Games/Matches**

* Any IHSEN official match will be supervised by at least 1 Program Administrator, Program Advisor, or Coach per team.
* Program Administrators, Program Advisors, and/or Coaches will ensure that no cheating or invalid roster changes are taking place.
* Program Administrators, Program Advisors, and/or Coaches will ensure that players who use vulgar language and/or become toxic during an official match will be dealt with accordingly.

# **Withdrawals and Forfeits**

* Teams that choose to withdraw from a tournament during the season will not be allowed to rejoin once the final decision has been made.
* All previous victories from a withdrawn team will results in their opponents receiving wins by forfeit.
* Any team that forfeits more than 3 times during a season will be automatically withdrawn for that season.
* Any forfeits made during the season will count as a loss for that particular match and will result in an automatic win for their opponent.
* Forfeits include:
  + No shows
  + Miscommunication
  + Insufficient number of players
* Forfeits can be disputed to IHSEN for consideration if necessary.
* Official matches can be rescheduled due to Acts of God, such as a power outage, snow day, etc.
* Official matches can be rescheduled through an agreement with both teams and IHSEN administrators.

# **Team Roster Requirements**

* Team rosters are required to be submitted to IHSEN at least 1 week prior to the start of a season.
* Team rosters will be shared with participating member schools as soon as they are ready and available.
* Team rosters can be changed during a season. If, for any reason, the number of players on a roster drops below the minimum number of players needed for a team, the school or school district will be required to withdraw their team for that season unless approval to play with less than the required number has been submitted to IHSEN administration.
* Teams may only have the allowed number of participants on a roster as stated in the rules of the game they are playing.
* Players are prohibited from being on more than one team for each game title in a season.
* Schools must submit starting rosters to each other 24 hours before their match. If a match is played in person, rosters must also be shared as “hard copies” before the start of the match.

# **Controllers**

Any controllers used in official matches must be the officially manufactured STANDARD STOCK controllers for the console in question (including accessibility controllers) and cannot be modified in any way. For fighting games, all standard fight sticks and controllers are permitted. Any controllers with macro functions are strictly prohibited.

Controllers may be used for PC games if and only if they meet the requirements above and the game has native support for the controller in question, i.e. the player should not need to install additional software/drivers for the controller other than those from the manufacturer or included with the game.

Keyboarding on console (the usage of a keyboard and mouse on a console) is strictly prohibited in official matches, regardless of whether the game has native support for it.

# **Rule Violations**

Violating any of the listed rules in this document, or specific game document(s) will be considered unsportsmanlike. Violations will be handled accordingly, and any step may be skipped depending on the severity of the infraction:

* 1st Unofficial warning. Given to captain/sponsor of team
* 1st Official warning: Team or individual will lose all bans for next match
* 2nd Official warning: Team or individual will forfeit next match
* 3rd Official warning: Team or individual will be banned from IHSEN and its affiliates for 1 Year at the discretion of IHSEN

# **Contacting Opponents**

In order to attempt to contact opponents for an official match, it is the responsibility of the captain or another assigned participant to exhaust all possible methods of contact before giving up. These methods include but are not limited to email messaging, **IHSEN Discord server messaging (preferred)**, and in-game (game lobby) messaging. Teams must provide evidence that they made attempts through all possible methods to contact opponents to discuss an official match before they will be able to claim a forfeit win.

**In-Game Chatting**

No chatting will be done in game unless it is to request a pause or a restart. In-game chatting is not allowed unless there is an emergency situation, such as a fire alarm, tornado warning, or other Act of God.

# **Match Results**

Matches must be reported by the winning team as soon as possible following the completion of their game. Players/teams are encouraged to document proof of match results in the event that they are needed to verify the legitimacy of a match score report. Match reports must include the match score(s) and all results must be reported no later than 11:59 PM of the default match day. Losses will be awarded for both teams for matches whose scores are not submitted before 11:59 PM on the default match day. If matches are rescheduled results must be reported as soon as the match has been played.

# **Incorrect Match Results**

Reporting incorrect match results will not be tolerated and will be considered cheating. If you report the incorrect results of a match by accident contact a IHSEN administrator or the Head Tournament Organizer immediately so they can be fixed.

# **Match Disputes**

Match disputes may be made at any time before the next week of play. Teams may not dispute matches outside of the current round. Sufficient and undoctored evidence, including but not limited to screenshots, match recordings, or VODs must be submitted per the request of the IHSEN official(s) handling the match dispute before any decision regarding the dispute will be made. All match disputes must be submitted to **indianahsen@gmail.com** (Subject to Change)

# **Communication - Outside Communication**

Players/teams may not have any communication with any outside sources while their official match is in progress.

# **In-Game Spectators and Streaming**

Spectators are only permitted in an official match if they meet the following criteria:

1. They are livestreaming the game to the official school Twitch page, or recording the game for release to the school’s official YouTube channel
2. They are a student or faculty of the school for which they are streaming/recording the match
3. They have absolutely no contact of any kind (direct or indirect) with either team other than to ready up prior to a game

IHSEN reserves the right to prohibit spectators of any kind in an official match. (Subject to Change)

Each individual game has its own streaming set-up that takes precedence over the general rules.

# **Match Fixing**

Match fixing is defined as the act of arranging the outcome of a match prior to it being played. Match fixing is strictly prohibited and all individuals involved will face, at a minimum, a 1 season suspension.

# **Additional Rules - Equipment**

IHSEN will not provide any equipment during an online tournament or during playoff matches.

# **Additional Rules - Fair Connection Rule**

IHSEN is not responsible for any internet issues affecting players/teams. It is the responsibility of players/teams to come to an agreement on the server region on which a match will take place. Loss and Choke are not considered valid reasons to change server locations. If the difference in ping is too high, either team may request a server location change or match restart within the first 5 minutes of the match. If teams fail to find a server that falls into the Fair Connection Rule, players should play on the closest option.

# **Graphics Drivers, Overlays, or Similar**

Any modification or change to the game done using outside graphics solutions are not permitted and may be considered cheating. Any 3rd party overlays (as in those that are not included with the game/platform) are prohibited from use in official matches. Usage of 3rd party services to assist in actions such as picks/bans, build guides, or strategies during an official match is strictly prohibited.

# **Custom Data**

Only official skins may be used in-game. Any skin, sprite, GUI, crosshairs, sounds, and models downloaded by a third party are not allowed. Some skins may be banned, and will be listed in the individual game rules. Crosshairs may only be edited with the settings in the game. Monitors with built-in crosshair technology are not allowed to be utilized during official matches.

# **Sportsmanship**

All participants are expected to uphold a universal level of sportsmanship while participating in IHSEN sanctioned events. Those who fail to behave in a sportsmanlike manner may face penalties at the discretion of IHSEN administrators.

# **Tainted Accounts**

At any point during an official match, should a player’s game account receive any form of game ban or restriction due to a violation of the game’s or the platform that it is played on in terms of service, the match will immediately conclude and a win will be awarded to the team that did not have the offending player. (Subject to Change)

**IHSEN Player Code of Conduct**

Through the support and promotion of competitive sports to students, Indiana High School Esports Network (IHSEN) seeks to develop and promote in its students and graduates the values that it supports as an institution: caring, respect, inclusivity, excellence, teamwork, positivity and accountability

Members of an esports team are expected to observe and honor the esports code of conduct.

# **Code of Conduct for Esports Team Members**

Esports team members are expected to conduct themselves before, during and after competition, during practices, and in their interactions with competitors, teammates, spectators and fans, other students, coaching staff, and IHSEN officials, staff, and employees in a manner that is consistent with and supportive of the values promoted and supported by ISHEN, associated with fair play and honest competition, and promoted by the Indiana High School Esports Network.

# **The Code of Conduct**

Each esports player will:

1. act in an honest and ethical manner;
2. respect the physical and emotional well-being and the dignity of teammates, competitors, coaches and staff, and IHSEN colleagues;
3. deal honestly in all competitive, academic and personal activities with all members of the team, competitors and the IHSEN community;
4. respect IHSEN and personal property;
5. respect the policies and rules of the IHSEN, team and competition organizations, and the legitimate exercise of the authority of a coach, other team official, a referee, or other competition official;
6. compete in a manner that is consistent with the principles of fair play and honest competition;
7. compete in a manner consistent with the rules of competition, and the expectations of fair play and sportsmanship;
8. demonstrate through behavior the values espoused by their school and promoted by the esports team;
9. promote, through attitude and behavior, a positive image of the esports

**Misconduct**

Inappropriate behavior or misconduct by a player requires the team, and potentially IHSEN, to take appropriate disciplinary actions. The following behaviors and actions are contrary to the Code of Conduct and will result in sanctions against the offending team member.

The following list of inappropriate behaviors is not exhaustive or delimiting.

The Code of Conduct is breached by any student who:

1. assaults, causes physical injury, attempts to cause physical injury or threatens to cause physical harm to any teammate, competitor or member of the IHSEN community during any competition, team activity or IHSEN activity;
2. threatens, intimidates, verbally abuses or harasses on any grounds whatsoever - whether by words, gestures or other acts - any teammate, competitor or member of the IHSEN community;
3. uses language that is obscene, vulgar, threatening, abusive, defamatory or otherwise objectionable during practice, competition or pre-or post-competition setting;
4. commits an act of theft of, or recklessly damages, the property of the IHSEN or any member of the IHSEN community;
5. accesses or uses IHSEN or the supporting institutions computing facilities for purposes other than those for which the facilities have been provided, including the transmission of offensive or prohibited communications, or who interferes with the operations of such facilities;
6. creates a disturbance anywhere, whether by sounds or actions, or otherwise interferes with the peaceful use of property by others;
7. is intoxicated or impaired by alcohol, cannabis or illegal substances while engaged in practice, competition or associated team activities, or is in possession of alcohol or while on IHSEN or supporting institutions property or engaged in team activities;
8. is deemed by team officials or competition organizers to have broken any team or competition rules;
9. competes or practices inconsistent with the expectations that a player will not:
   1. Always compete or practice at less than the best of their abilities (or perform at a lower level to cause a preconceived match result that may benefit the player or others);
   2. offer, conspire or attempt to collude to influence the outcome of a match or any competition. Collusion is any agreement or cooperative action among two or more opposing competitors intended to disadvantage other participants and opponents. Collusion includes, but is not limited to, acts such as:
      * soft play (any agreement among two or more competitors not to play to a reasonable standard of competition),
      * agreeing to a rule set outside the official rules,
      * pre-arranging to split prize money or any other form of compensation,
      * deliberately losing a game - for compensation or any other reason - or inducing, or attempting to induce, another competitor to do so.
10. hack or cheat, or attempt to do so, by
    1. installing or using software that IHSEN or competition organizers deem illegal or unfair,
    2. using software that provides a ‘Map Hack’ (external software that provides more vision than intended by the game mechanics),
    3. using ‘Aim Bot’ software (software that causes the automatic hitting of opponents when firing a weapon),
    4. ‘Ghosting’ (obtaining additional information about the game, for example the opponent, from third-party sources such as stream viewers or the live audience),
    5. using any external software that directly tampers with the game software or that is deemed inappropriate or illegal relative to industry, tournament or competition standards.
11. practice ‘Ringing’ - playing under another player’s or competitor’s account during the competition.
12. exploit or otherwise intentionally use any in-game bug, glitch, or unintended team feature to gain an unfair advantage.

# **Violations**

The IHSEN coaches and administration have the right and responsibility to enforce and monitor compliance with the Code of Conduct, investigate and determine violations of the Code and impose sanctions where violations have occurred.

Inappropriate behavior may result in violations of the Player Code of Conduct and may be investigated and addressed by the Team or IHSEN or both. In instances in which there may have been illegal behavior, police and criminal or civil legal authorities may be engaged.

# **Sanctions**

Sanction(s) will reflect the severity of the misconduct or violation and any previously levied sanctions. More than one sanction - under the Player Code of Conduct - may be imposed for any single violation.

Disciplinary sanctions normally will be progressive in nature. However, the circumstances of the misbehavior or the nature or severity of the misconduct may result in the immediate imposition of a more significant sanction up to and including expulsion from the Team or IHSEN.

The following sanctions may be imposed upon a player found to have violated the Player Code of Conduct. A record of any and all sanctions imposed on a player will be maintained in the player’s file.

1. Verbal warning - a verbal notice to the player that the player is violating or has violated the Code of Conduct.
2. Admonition and Warning - a written notice to the player that the player is violating or has violated the Code of Conduct.
3. Match Forfeiture – IHSEN staff or administration may declare a scheduled match to be forfeited if it is deemed that a player, group of players or the team as a whole is violating or has violated the Code of Conduct
4. Probation - a written reprimand for violation of the Code of Conduct. Probation, including possible behavioral requirements, is for a designated period of time and includes the possibility of more severe disciplinary sanctions if further violations or inappropriate behaviors occur during the probationary period.
5. Loss of Privileges - denial of specified privileges for a designated period of time.
6. Behavioral Contract – a written agreement between the team and IHSEN that specifies conditions that must be met and followed by the team in return for re-admission to specific team activities and that if contravened may result in further sanctions including suspension or expulsion.
7. Team Suspension - separation of the team for a definite period of time, after which the team may be eligible to return. Conditions for the team return may be specified.
8. Team Expulsion - permanent separation of the team.

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Principal Name Printed Principal Name Signed

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