Play! Pokémon Pokémon GO Tournament Rules

ENGLISH VERSION

Contents

1 Eligibility Requirements

1.1 Age of Digital Consent

The eligibility requirements detailed in the Play! Pokémon Tournament Handbook apply to Pokémon GO tournaments. However, players must also satisfy the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) age of digital consent in their home region in order to participate in Pokémon GO Championship Series events.

The GDPR age of digital consent may vary be region but is never below the age of 13.

A player's home region is defined as the region or country in which they live, and their Pokémon Trainer Club account must accurately reflect this information.

1.2 Pokémon GO Account Requirements

Players must ensure their account meets the below requirements to participate in Pokémon GO tournaments:

- Trainers must be at least Level 10 to unlock the Friend List and Battle Request features.
- Where an account is associated with a parent or guardian's Niantic Kids account, the Friend List and Battle Request features must be enabled via the Niantic Kids Parent Portal.

2 Team Construction

2.1 Battle Team Setup

A player's team must consist of up to 6 Pokémon. This team, including all moves and CP, must remain unchanged for the duration of the tournament. Players then choose any 3 of these Pokémon to bring to battle. The player may change this chosen combination at the beginning of each new game.

Players must indicate which Pokémon are in their team by assigning each one a unique label. None of the player's other Pokémon may have the same label.

Pokémon GO tournaments use Great League format battles. Pokémon must therefore meet the CP requirements for the Great League (1,500 CP or less) to be legal for play.

2.1.1 Allowable Pokémon

Most Pokémon available in-game are legal for play with only a few exceptions.

The following Pokémon cannot be included on a player's team:

- Ditto
- Shedinja

The following Pokémon are also not permitted for play in Pokémon GO Championship Series events:

- Galarian Articuno
- Galarian Zapdos
- Galarian Moltres
- Shadow Hisuian Sneasel
- Shadow Sneasler

Changes to the legality of any Pokémon will be communicated through official channels in advance of any tournament. It is a player's responsibility to confirm the legality of their chosen Pokémon ahead of each tournament. The most up-to-date place to find legality updates and changes is the [Banned Pokemon List](#).

New Pokémon and new moves become legal for play 24 continuous hours after their time of release. A player may include newly released Pokémon or moves on their team so long as this 24-hour period ends before team registration closes for any given tournament.

2.1.2 Restrictions

The following additional restrictions apply to a player's team:

- A player's team cannot contain two Pokémon with the same National Pokédex number.
- A player may not use a Pokémon that is currently Mega Evolved or has Primal Reversion activated.
- A player's team may contain no more than one Pokémon benefitting from a Best Buddy CP boost.
  - Which Pokémon on the team benefits from the Best Buddy CP boost must remain unchanged throughout the tournament.
  - There is no limit to the number of Best Buddy ribbons that may appear in a player's team.

2.1.2.1 Nicknames & Customization

When customizing any aspect of their game, players must follow the [Trainer Username and Team Name Policy](#).

Any player found to be in breach of the above policy during an event will be asked to modify the problematic aspect of their game and may be subject to Unsporting Conduct penalties.

2.2 Team Registration

All Play! Pokémon events require that participants complete a team list detailing the exact contents of the team they wish to use during the tournament. These team lists can later be used by Organizers and judges to verify that a team has not been altered since the outset of a tournament, so players should take care to ensure the clarity and accuracy of their team lists. Players are required to register their team for a given tournament by the advertised deadline. It is at the Organizer's discretion whether to allow a player who registers late to play in the tournament.

Team lists should be completed in the language to which the player's Pokémon GO application is set.

Some team registration platforms may provide translation services, especially for Premier Events such as Regional and International Championships. However, this should not be assumed, and players are otherwise responsible for ensuring that they submit a team list in the correct language.

2.2.1 Team List Contents

Beginning November 17, 2023, a team list should include player's name and Player ID, alongside the following information for each Pokémon:

1. Pokémon species, including whether that Pokémon is:
    a. A regional variant (e.g. Galarian Rapidash)
    b. A specific, named form (e.g. Wash Rotom)
    c. A Shadow, Purified, or currently boosted Best Buddy Pokémon
2. CP (for Best Buddy Pokémon, list the CP it will be used at)
3. **All known moves**
4. HP

The team list should be completed in the language to which the player's Pokémon GO application is set. Players may not deliberately obfuscate the contents of this list, such as by refusing to provide clarification when requested by an opponent or staff member.

The team list is considered an essential piece of equipment for tournament play. Failure to present this list to the opponent at the beginning of each round may result in Procedural Error penalties.

2.2.2 Legality Checks

Team checks are required to be performed at all Premier Events. Pokémon Organized Play expects that team checks will be performed on at least 10% of teams, but recommends that tournament staff strive to complete as many as is reasonable.

Team checks may happen at any time during a tournament, from registration through the final round.

During a team check, tournament staff will check the following:

- The list is complete and legible;
- The team described is legal for tournament play;

- If available, the contents of the team list accurately reflect what has been used for game play according to screen recordings from the previous match(es).

3 Equipment Rules

3.1 Devices

Pokémon GO tournaments are played using mobile devices.

At a judge's discretion, a match may be moved to a new station. Players must not move their match without receiving permission from a judge. A match may only be moved between games and never while a game is in progress.

3.1.1 Where Devices Are Provided

Some tournaments require players to use devices provided onsite. This includes most Premier Events, such as Regional and International Championships.

Players are not permitted to use their own personal device at such tournaments.

The following rules apply at events where devices are provided:

- Provided devices are to be used for tournament play only. Personal use of provided devices is not permitted.
- Players should be prepared to log in to the provided device with their personal account. Players may refer to their personal device for authentication or security reasons while logging in. The personal device must be removed from the play area when this is complete.
- Players should log out from the provided device once each match is complete, taking care to remove any saved account information at that time.
- Players may not attempt to disconnect or remove any security element from a provided device at any time.

3.1.2 Where Devices Are Not Provided

Some tournaments require players to provide their own devices. Where this occurs, it should be clearly communicated to all players in advance.

The following rules apply at events where devices are not provided:

- Players are responsible for ensuring their device is fully functional.
- Players are responsible for keeping their device charged for the duration of the tournament.
- Players should ensure that devices and application clients with which they enter Play! Pokémon tournaments are unmodified—that is, free from both custom software and firmware.

- Players should ensure they have the latest game update downloaded prior to the start of the tournament, and that the latest software update has been performed on their device.
- Airplane mode must be enabled while the device is connected to a tournament WiFi network.

It is recommended that players bring a compatible power bank to tournaments where devices are not provided, as outlets may not be available onsite.

3.1.3 Screen Recording

Screen recording is defined as the process of capturing what appears on your device screen. This captured footage will be saved as a file on the device and can be reviewed in case a player has a technical malfunction or other concern during gameplay.

Where devices are provided, players are required to record each match using the device's screen record functionality. Screen recordings should be played back only in the presence of a staff member. Players should not otherwise access, share, or modify recordings taken on a provided device.

Where devices are not provided, it is highly recommended that players have the ability to record the screen of their device. Without a screen recording, it is difficult for a player to provide evidence of a technical issue, which may lead to a judge review being denied.

All screen recordings are retained until the end of the tournament. They are then erased by staff from each provided device.

3.2 Objects in Play Area

Players are permitted to have good luck charms or objects in the play space but must keep the play space neat. There must be no food or drink on the table. Players may not bring informational aids, such as type charts, into matches.

At events where devices are provided, a player's personal mobile devices must be removed from the play area once a that player has successfully logged in to the provided device.

3.3 Headphone Use

Headphones may be worn by players only if they are wired and plugged directly into the device. The headphone wire must be clearly visible. In the case where devices are provided, please contact a staff member to request the ability to use headphones with said device. A player should not unplug a provided device from the charging mechanism in order to connect headphones without express permission from judge staff.

3.4 Note Taking

Players may take written notes during a match and may refer to those notes at any time during that match, including Team Preview. Players may choose not to share these notes with other players, but a judge may ask to see a player's notes and request an explanation if needed.

A player's note sheet must be completely free of text, handwritten or otherwise, at the start of each match.

Players must be timely with their note taking and may not use a device that can send or receive messages as a note-taking device. A player may not refer to notes taken during previous rounds while the tournament is still in progress. Written notes taken during a match may not be given to other players during the tournament.

Because a judge may ask to see a player's notes while a match is in progress, the use of codes, ciphers, abbreviations, or any other method of obscuring the meaning of the information is not permitted. Additionally, notes taken by a player may not contain misinformation intended to deceive tournament staff. Should a judge request clarification or a translation for notes written in a language not spoken by tournament staff, the player must oblige.

4 Pokémon GO Tournament Styles

4.1 Double Elimination (Premier Event)

Pokémon GO Premier Events, such as Regional and International Championships, use the Double Elimination format.

This format features two brackets, one each for undefeated players (Winners Bracket) and players who have lost one match (Losers Bracket). Players are eliminated from the tournament once they have lost two matches. Both brackets are played to completion. The champion of each bracket is then paired together in a Grand Final.

A player must receive their second loss of the tournament in the Grand Final in order to be eliminated from the tournament. Should the Winners Bracket champion defeat the Losers Bracket champion in the Grand Final, the Winners Bracket champion wins the tournament immediately.

However, should the Losers Bracket champion defeat the Winners Bracket champion, a "bracket reset" occurs, and play must continue until either player receives their second loss of the tournament. In this case, the player with a single loss wins the tournament.

4.1.1 Premier Event Tournament Phases

Pokémon GO Premier Events with a large number of players may begin with a Pools Phase. In this case, the total number of participants are separated into "pools," and players compete against each other within their pool. The top two players from each pool then progress to a Final Phase, where the winner of the tournament is determined.

The number of pools is determined as follows:

Number of Players	Number of Pools	Resulting Number of Final Phase Players
1–32	1	*No Final Phase*
33–64	2	4
65–128	4	8
129–256	8	16
257–512	16	32

4.1.2 Bracket Seeding

Brackets may be seeded at the Organizer's discretion. Seeding must be determined according to quantitative performance data rather than any subjective criteria.

Any seeding must be explicitly approved by TPCi before it may be used in a tournament.

4.1.3 Match Structure

Most matches at Pokémon GO Premier Events are best-of-three. The Winners Final, Losers Final, Grand Final are best-of-five.

Best-of-three matches conclude when one player wins or loses two games. Best-of-five matches conclude when one player wins or loses three games.

4.2 Swiss + Single Elimination (Pokémon GO Challenges and Cups)

Pokémon GO Challenges use the Swiss + Single Elimination format.

This format is not unique to Pokémon GO and is described in detail in the Play! Pokémon Tournament Rules Handbook.

4.3 Round Robin

Round Robin may be used at the discretion of the Organizer only when there are 6 or fewer players in the tournament.

During a Round Robin tournament, every player is paired against every other player until no pairings remain still to play.

5 Game Play

5.1 Team Preview

Players are permitted to view their opponent's team list before a match begins.

The maximum time permitted for Team Preview is 2 minutes.

5.2 Beginning the Game

Once they are ready to begin, players must use one of the following methods to initiate play:

- One player may scan the QR Battle Code of their opponent. This feature is accessible from the Nearby Battle section of the Battle menu.
- Players may add one another to their Friends List so one player may issue a Battle Request to their opponent from their Friends List profile.

Players are permitted to use either method, and they may vary the method used to connect for each new game.

5.3 Game Resolution

A player wins each game by knocking out their opponent's final Pokémon.

The winner should be clearly indicated by an in-game graphic at the end of each game. However, if this graphic is not viewable for any reason, the winner may be confirmed by viewing either player's in-game Journal.

If neither player can agree on the result of a game and the result cannot be verified by viewing a player's Journal, this game will be considered void by a judge, and a new game must be played.

5.3.1 Concessions

A player may decide to concede for any reason. A player who quits a battle before a winner is determined is electing to concede that game.

Players may not:

- Resolve a game or match with an intentional draw.
- Ask their opponent to concede.
- Bribe, coerce, or otherwise pressure their opponent into any match result.
- Refer to tournament standings or wait for other matches in progress to resolve before deciding to concede.

- Decide the result of a match through random means (e.g. by coin flip), or through any other choosing method.

Once a match result has been recorded on a signed match slip or by reporting the results to a judge, that result is considered final and cannot be changed.

5.4 Match Resolution

Most matches at Pokémon GO Premier Events are best-of-three. The Winners Final, Losers Final, Grand Final, and any matches that are part of a Top Cut Phase after Swiss rounds are complete are best-of-five.

Best-of-three matches conclude when one player wins or loses two games. Best-of-five matches conclude when one player wins or loses three games.

5.5 Reviews Due to Technical Issues

In some circumstances, a technical issue may occur during game play that disadvantages one player through no fault of their own. Players encountering such issues may initiate a review by a judge.

When a review is initiated, gameplay footage is examined by a judge. The judge will then identify the issue and determine any impact the issue had on the outcome of the game. Without a screen recording, judges may not be able to make a reasonable determination regarding the impact of the technical issue on the outcome of the game. In this case, the results of the game will stand.

5.5.1 Review Resolution

Judges must use the knowledge and resources available to them to determine whether one player received an advantage or disadvantage as a result of the technical issue. Should there be a significant impact on the outcome of the game, the game will be considered void, and a new game must be played.

Judges must clearly communicate the issue identified, and the advantage or disadvantage that resulted, to both players.

5.5.2 Reporting Reviews

Pokémon Organized Play tracks review history to monitor the state of the game and to determine if long-term action is necessary. It is therefore important that judge reviews are reported whenever they occur.

Review Reports should contain the following information for each dispute that occurred during a tournament:

- Tournament sanctioning ID (if applicable)
- Challonge link (if applicable)
- Player IDs and names of the relevant players

- Player IDs and names of any judges who viewed the review
- A detailed account of the relevant proceedings of the event, the response from the judges and organizer, and the reaction, if any, of the involved players
- Recording of match in question (as file or link if available)
- Outcome of the review

Review Reports must be submitted to playercoordinator@pokemon.com within 7 days following the tournament's conclusion.

5.5.3 Known Technical Issues

Provided below is a list of known technical issues that have been observed to occur during gameplay.

5.5.3.1 Minor Issues

Minor issues that generally do not result in an impact to the outcome of a game:

Final Battle Action Delay	The animations associated with the last action to be performed in battle are delayed, but the action occurs as normal
Matchmaking Error But Game Starts	Players receive an error message while connecting, but the battle begins as normal
Incorrect Visuals (Minor)	Some graphics are displayed incorrectly during battle. Downloading assets to the device may prevent this in future
Protect Shield Issue	The protect shield animation displays incorrectly though no protect shield is used
Game Synchronization Issues	One player appears to begin their turn later than the opponent despite inputs occurring at the same time
Visual Lag	Some graphics are delayed during battle, though their associated actions occur as normal

5.5.3.2 Major Issues

Major Issues provide one player with an unfair advantage or disadvantage, and usually impact the outcome of a game. Affected games are usually considered void.

Fast Attack Prevents Charged Attack	One player using a Charged Attack while their opponent uses a Fast Attack knocks out the player's Pokémon incorrectly
Forced Swap Missed Turn	A player's only remaining Pokémon experiences a delay when it is switched into battle. This issue presents in a number of ways, including damage delays, animation delays, or a temporary inability to select a Charged Attack
Player Sees Battle Screen During Cancelled Game	A player who cancels a Battle Request by leaving the matchmaking screen may experience an incorrect visual of the battle arena, including the first of their opponent's

	chosen Pokémon. Potential for abuse exists due to the private information revealed. Judges should take extra care to determine that this issue in particular is not intentionally induced by a player
Incorrect Visuals (Major)	Some graphics are displayed incorrectly during battle. As a result, critical information is not available to one player. Downloading assets to the device may prevent this in future
General Lag	A player experiences a delay between their input and the associated game action occurring. A "weak connection" notification may accompany this issue
Application Failures & Freezes	On rare occasions, the application may fail, freeze, or quit unexpectedly

6 Rules Violations & Penalties

6.1 Introduction

Play! Pokémon protocols and procedures are intended to foster a spirit of friendly competition at all Play! Pokémon tournaments. However, occasional situations arise, whether unintentionally or otherwise, in which attendees fail to abide by tournament rules or standards of conduct. Failure to adhere to these rules may result in a player earning penalties.

Penalties often constitute adjustments made to the circumstances of a player's game in progress or next upcoming game to offset potential advantage gained or disruption caused through rules violations.

Players may not refuse to abide by the conditions of a penalty that their opponent has earned. For example, a player may not choose to concede a game to an opponent who has received a Game Loss penalty for that game.

6.2 Types of Penalty

Though the ways in which penalties may be earned differ depending on the type of event that is being played, the definitions and applications of these penalties remain the same regardless.

The penalties below are presented in order of increasing severity, from a verbal warning (Caution) through to removal from the tournament (Disqualification).

These are the only penalties that should be applied at Play! Pokémon tournaments—judges may not apply any penalty that is not listed below, nor can they modify those that are in any way.

6.2.1 Caution (C)

A Caution is a verbal note to the player that a rules violation has occurred.

6.2.2 Warning (W)

A Warning comprises both a verbal note to the player that a rule violation has occurred and a written record of that note.

Please note: The final word on what penalties should be applied to which players and at what time is up to the Head Judge of the event. While the Organizer and other judges may assign penalties, they should always check with the Head Judge before assigning a penalty more severe than a **Warning**. Additionally, all **Caution**s and **Warning**s assigned by any judge or the Organizer should be reported to the Head Judge of the event.

6.2.3 Game Loss (GL)

6.2.3.1 Definition

The Game Loss penalty is generally used when a mistake has been made that has a severe impact on the game state, to the point where the game is irreparably broken and unable to continue. This penalty is also used for other major procedural errors or problems.

6.2.3.2 Application (Double and Single Elimination)

When issuing a Game Loss penalty during an active game, the game is recorded as a loss for the player receiving the penalty.

In extreme cases where significant errors have been made by both players in a game, a Game Loss penalty may be issued to both players simultaneously. In a double or single elimination bracket, a match winner must be declared. If a match is terminated with no winner, an additional game must be played in order to determine the winner, but the penalty should still be recorded.

If this penalty is issued between rounds, the penalty is applied to the player's next game.

6.2.3.3 Application (Swiss)

When issuing a Game Loss penalty during an active game, the game is recorded as a loss for the player receiving the penalty.

In extreme cases where significant errors have been made by both players in a game, a Game Loss penalty may be issued to both players simultaneously. A single-game match terminated in this manner is not a tie; it is recorded as having no winner.

If this penalty is issued between rounds, the penalty is applied to the player's next game.

6.2.4 Match Loss (ML)

6.2.4.1 Definition

The Match Loss penalty may be used when one player's Player Conduct infraction irreparably compromises the integrity of a match, rather than that of a single game.

Such circumstances usually result in one player being unable to participate in the match any longer due to extreme discomfort as a result of their opponent's behavior.

6.2.4.2 Application

When issuing a Match Loss penalty during an active game, the game is recorded as a loss for the player receiving the penalty.

If this penalty is issued between rounds, the penalty is applied to the player's next match.

6.2.5 Disqualification (DQ)

6.2.5.1 Definition

Disqualification is the most serious penalty that can be issued at a tournament. Its use should be strictly reserved for the most extreme cases, where a player's actions (whether intentional or unintentional) have significantly and negatively impacted the integrity or operation of the entire event.

Players who receive this penalty are removed from the tournament and become ineligible to receive any prizes.

6.2.5.2 Application (Double Elimination)

During Double Elimination rounds, players receiving a Disqualification will also receive a Game Loss for all games in their most recent Double Elimination match. Should this result in their first loss for the tournament, they also receive a Game Loss for all games in their next upcoming match.

If a player is disqualified while their Double Elimination match is still ongoing, the losses are applied to the current round and, where applicable, to the following round.

If a player is disqualified during Double Elimination rounds while they are <u>not</u> participating in an ongoing match, the losses are applied to the most recently completed round and, where applicable, to the following round.

6.2.5.3 Application (Single Elimination)

During Single Elimination rounds, players receiving a Disqualification will also receive a Game Loss for all games in their most recent Single Elimination match.

If a player is disqualified while their Single Elimination match is still ongoing, the losses are applied to the current round.

If a player is disqualified during Single Elimination rounds while they are <u>not</u> participating in an ongoing match, the losses are applied to the most recently completed round and the opponent from that match will advance, if eligible.

6.2.5.4   <u>Application (Swiss)</u>

If a player is disqualified during Swiss rounds while their match is still ongoing, that player should also receive a Game Loss for all games within that match that have yet to complete. The disqualification is then applied.

If a player is disqualified during Swiss rounds while they are <u>not</u> participating in an ongoing match, the disqualification is applied immediately.

6.3 Penalty Categories

6.3.1 Player Conduct (Category A)

Infractions that fall under the category of Player Conduct include those that contradict the rules of tournament participation at the most fundamental level.

6.3.1.1   <u>A.1. Procedural Error</u>

Minor: Caution	Major: Warning	Severe: Game Loss

Procedural errors have an impact on the smooth and uninterrupted progression of the tournament, not just for the player or players involved, but potentially for the staff and for the wider participation group.

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a.   **Minor procedural errors** do not cause any substantial delay or inconvenience to tournament proceedings and can be rectified almost immediately.

Examples may include:

- A player accidentally enters a designated "staff only" area.
- A player forgets to sign a match slip or fails to report their match results upon leaving the play area but is called back immediately by a member of staff.

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b.   **Major procedural errors** have the potential to cause a delay to the tournament or to cause an inconvenience to surrounding players while they are rectified.

Examples may include:

- A player arrives late to their match (by less than 5 minutes).
- A player forgets to sign a match slip or fails to report their match results upon leaving the play area, causing a delay to tournament proceedings while staff attempt to locate them.

- Following Team Preview, player takes an unreasonable length of time to choose which three Pokémon to bring to battle.

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c. **Severe procedural errors** not only cause disruption to the tournament, but have the potential to negatively affect the experience of others.

Examples may include:

- A player arrives late to their match (by more than 5 minutes).
- A player sits at the wrong table and plays the incorrect opponent.
- A player forgets to sign a match slip or fails to report match results upon leaving the play area and cannot be located before the next round begins.

6.3.1.2   A.2. Unsporting Conduct

Minor: Warning	Major: Match Loss	Severe: Disqualification

Unsporting conduct infractions are caused when poor personal conduct on behalf of a tournament attendee results in a detraction from the experience of others.

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a. **Minor Unsporting Conduct** is characterized by mild lapses in judgement that result in a contained incident, or the annoyance of a small group of attendees.

Examples may include:

- A player swears mildly in annoyance, or in conversation with a friend.
- A player disturbs a match in progress.
- A player leaves food wrappers or other detritus in the play area after their match is over.

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b. **Major Unsporting Conduct** is characterized by behavior that displays a lack of respect or consideration for fair play, or for the enjoyment of others in attendance.

Examples may include:

- A player attempts to distract or intimidate their opponent into misplay.
- Unintentional violations of the Play! Pokémon Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity Policy that nonetheless cause distress to others.
- Refusal to cooperate with a tournament policy, such as signing a match slip.

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c. **Severe Unsporting Conduct** demonstrates a blatant disregard for the Play! Pokémon Standards of Conduct, and actively contributes toward the disruption of a safe and family-friendly environment.

Examples may include:

- The use of profanity, slurs, physical threats, or insults toward any other attendee.
- Deliberate violations of the [Play! Pokémon Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity Policy](#), made with the intent to provoke or cause distress to others.
- Assault, theft, or other criminal activity.
- Willfully lying to tournament staff, such as during an investigation.
- Bribery or coercion of other players.
- Determining the outcome of a match by random means or via other disallowed methods.

6.3.1.3   A.3. Cheating

		Severe: Disqualification

There is simply no place in Play! Pokémon for those who choose to cheat to gain an advantage over their opponent. As such, all instances of cheating are regarded as severe, and merit disqualification.

Examples may include:

- Intentionally committing an infraction with the intent to gain an unfair advantage over an opponent.
- Soliciting and acting upon private game information from an external source during a game in progress.

6.3.2   Pokémon GO Penalty Guidelines (Category D)

6.3.2.1   D.1. Gameplay Error

Minor: Warning		Severe: Game Loss

Gameplay errors are infractions committed during a game in progress. These infractions are most often caused by a player improperly handling their device while playing a game.

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a.   **Minor Gameplay Errors** have a brief, reversible effect on the proper progression of a game.

Examples include:

- Delaying the beginning of a match due to needing to source a charger.

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b.   **Severe Gameplay Errors** usually lead to the irretrievable loss of a game in progress.

Examples include:

- Closing the Pokémon GO application during a game in progress.

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- Behavior that directly induces a major technical issue.

6.3.2.2   D.2. Team Legality

Minor: Warning	Major: Game Loss	Severe: Disqualification

Infractions that fall under the Team Legality category include all problems found with a player's team. Such problems are usually caused due to a discrepancy between the Pokémon in the team and those detailed on the team list.

In all cases, the contents of the team list always take priority over the contents of the team. Any discrepancy between the two should therefore always be rectified by modifying the team to remove the offending Pokémon from play.

Afterward, if the Pokémon described on the team list is immediately available, the player should then be given the opportunity to add the correct Pokémon on their team. If the player is not able to comply, the offending Pokémon should remain on the team but be prohibited from play. The player must inform each opponent that this Pokémon will not be used during Team Preview. If this results in a player having fewer than three usable Pokémon remaining in their team, the infraction should be escalated.

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a.   **Minor Team Errors** are discrepancies that are between the Pokémon in a player's Battle Team and those on the team list and that do *not* give the player a potential advantage.

Examples include:

- A Pokémon is listed without accurate form information, but other information on the team list makes it apparent which form is being used.
    - Example: The team contains Sunny Castform, but the team list lists simply "Castform." However, the intended form can be identified due to the form-exclusive move Ember recorded on the team list.

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b.   **Major Team Errors** are discrepancies that are between the Pokémon in a player's Battle Team and those on the team list and that *do* give the player a potential advantage.

If a player concedes the game after identifying a Major Team Error with their Pokémon, any Game Loss penalty earned as a result of the infraction should be recorded as usual but not applied to the match. However, players may not concede once a Game Loss penalty has been assessed.

Examples include:

- A Pokémon not included on the team list is incorrectly selected for battle.
- A Pokémon in the team knows the move Thunder Punch, but that move is listed as "Thunder" on the team list.
- A Pokémon's CP is not listed (or is listed incorrectly) on the team list.

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- A Pokémon is listed without accurate form information, and no other information on the team list makes it apparent which form is being used.
    - Example: The team contains Sunny Castform, but the team list lists simply "Castform." The intended form cannot be identified from information recorded on the team list.

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c. **Severe Team Errors** occur when either official tools indicate that a Pokémon has been illegally manipulated, or a player's team contains too few Pokémon to continue on in the tournament.

Examples include:

- A player has fewer than three usable Pokémon remaining after receiving earlier penalties.
- Use of a modified Pokémon GO client or any other third-party application that may affect the integrity of the tournament.

6.4 Deviation from Recommended Penalties

Pokémon Organized Play acknowledges the myriad different factors at play within each individual ruling, and requests that Professors assess each situation based on its own potential to provide advantage or to confuse the game state. In support, the Play! Pokémon program adopts underlines rather than rules when it comes to penalties.

The penalties for infractions are simply recommendations and may be increased or decreased in severity based on the individual circumstances of the situation. This may include the point at which the error was caught and the ease with which the corresponding action may be reversed.

6.4.1 Repeated Infractions

One of the purposes of penalties is to educate the player of their mistake and remind them to take extra care when completing game actions and interacting with others at tournaments. If, however, infractions are repeated, it may be appropriate to escalate the penalty for each subsequent infraction to further reinforce the necessity of adhering to Play! Pokémon tournament rules.

6.4.2 Age & Experience

Consider the age, experience, and current standing of the player. Although these are not always relevant factors, Professors should be aware that mistakes may be made due to lack of experience or the intimidation of playing in a competitive environment.

Players who commit more than one type of infraction during a tournament are often genuinely uninformed. Competitive tournaments can be daunting, and there is much to learn about procedure, etiquette, and fair play. It can also be nerve-wracking to compete for prizes at the age of many of our players, and they should be given every chance to learn about the game and the Play! Pokémon system.

6.5 Penalty Delivery

Play! Pokémon Professors seek to create fun, safe, and non-stressful play experiences for our players. For this reason, the application of penalties should be handled in the most polite and discreet manner possible.

Whenever a penalty is assessed and delivered, that delivery should include the following:

- An explanation of how the player's actions are not allowed;
- How the assessed penalty will impact the player's tournament;
- A reminder that the player may appeal this or any other penalty to the Head Judge.

6.5.1 Discussing Penalties

Due to the nature of some infractions, it is often inevitable that the wider player community will become aware of penalties assessed in some circumstances. It is important, however, that Pokémon Professors treat information pertaining to penalties with sensitivity to prevent any undue embarrassment to those involved.

Penalties discussed publicly for reasons of training should be sufficiently anonymized, and penalty history regarding specific players should be shared between Professors only when relevant.

Judges should also refrain from providing a public opinion on actual rulings and penalties for which they were not present. The many and varied factors a judge must consider when applying a penalty are easily overlooked or misrepresented in a social forum. To refrain from providing comment is to avoid sharing an underinformed viewpoint that may accidentally undermine a fellow judge.

6.6 Reporting Penalties

Pokémon Organized Play tracks each player's penalty history to differentiate intentional repetition of infractions from unintentional occurrences, and to determine if disciplinary action is necessary.

To aid in this effort, the following documentation must be submitted to Pokémon Organized Play via the Play! Pokémon Customer Support service upon completion of a tournament.

6.6.1 Tournament Penalty Summaries

The Tournament Penalty Summary fully details all penalties assessed during any one tournament.

To create a Tournament Penalty Summary, a .csv format spreadsheet file with the below headers should be created:

Tournament ID	Round of Issue	Judge Player ID	Player Player ID	Category	Severity	Penalty	Notes
XX-XX-XXXXXX	*1*	*XXXXXX*	*XXXXXX*	*A*	*Minor*	*Warning*	

A new row should then be completed for each penalty issued.

Once the file is complete, the file should be attached and submitted via the Play! Pokémon Customer Support service's Tournament Report tool. Select "Penalty Summary" from the relevant drop-down menu. The subject of your submission should be "Penalty Report: XX-XX-XXXXXX", where XX-XX-XXXXXX is the tournament ID.

6.6.2 Disqualification Reports

In the event of a disqualification, it is the responsibility of the Head Judge to submit a full and thorough report of the incident to Pokémon Organized Play. This report should detail all factors that contributed to the decision to issue this penalty, as well as the names and Player ID numbers of all Professors who were present at the time of the incident.

Once complete, the file should be attached and submitted via the Play! Pokémon Customer Support service's Tournament Report tool. Select "Disqualification Report" from the relevant drop-down menu.

A disqualification report is required to be submitted following any disqualification issued at a Championship Series event. Repeated failure to submit a thorough report may result in disciplinary action, including ineligibility to hold leadership roles at future events.

6.7 Disciplinary Action

Should a pattern of rules infractions be observed across multiple tournaments, Pokémon Organized Play may consider taking disciplinary action against the player responsible. Such action may include a suspension from the program. In these cases, the players will be notified, and their names and Player IDs will be made available to Organizers.

A suspended player should not be allowed to participate in or attend any Play! Pokémon events as a spectator, player, or judge, or in any other capacity. If a suspended player disrupts an event by trying to participate and refusing to leave, the incident should be reported to Pokémon Organized Play. An extension to the existing suspension may then be applied.

7 Summary of Changes

Date of previous issue: June 13, 2023

Date of current issue: September 29, 2023

1 Eligibility Requirements		
Section	**Page #**	**Change**

2 Team Construction		
Section	**Page #**	**Change**
2.1.1	**4**	**Banned list location and updates**
2.1.2.1	**4**	**Trainer Nickname Policy**
2.2	**5-6**	**Remove Team Preview List, Open Team Sheets Language**

3 Equipment Rules		
Section	**Page #**	**Change**
3.1.3	**8**	**Defined Screen Recording** **Clarified screen recording procedures for tournaments - devices not provided**
3.3	**9**	**Procedures for using headphones with provided devices**

4 Tournament Styles		
Section	**Page #**	**Change**

5 Game Play		
Section	**Page #**	**Change**
5.4	**13**	**Clarification of match resolution**
5.5	**13**	**Terminology change: Dispute → Review**

6 Rules Violations & Penalties		
Section	**Page #**	**Change**
6.2.5	**15**	**Clarification on how to handle double game loss for different tournament structures**