

Proposed Sindome Rules Update and Discord

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Proposed Rule Changes / Deletions / Additions

- **I propose we create a new section of the rules that covers all OOC Communication to keep it all in one place.**

~~4.G Disclosing IRL Connections with other players~~
Removed and replaced.

~~4.H Roleplaying with players you know IRL~~
Removed and replaced.

1.A. Metagaming

Metagaming is the act of crossing IC/OOC lines either passively or actively. For instance, using information you as the player know to benefit (or even hinder) your character is active metagaming as is circumventing IC factors (such as SIC dead zones) via OOC methods. Passive metagaming is the sharing of In Character, or game mechanics information through OOC means, such as discussing IC events through OOC channels or, altering your character's behavior towards another character due to your OOC relationship with that character's player, or passing along game-mechanics information such as what stats or skills to pick. Metagaming is against the spirit of the game and will be punished with a suspension (at minimum).

X.F Discord

Sindome has a community Discord server. In order to join you must have a Sindome account. Continued access to the Discord server is dependent on being an active member of the Sindome community. If you are suspended or banned from the game, your access to the Sindome Discord server will be removed until your suspension is over.

All of the game rules apply on the Discord server as well. However, if you choose to connect privately with current or former members of the community via Discord, you do so at your own risk. You are expected to report rules violations (see 2.E Reporting Rules Violations). If you have connected privately with someone on Discord and they are harassing you privately, you

have the ability to report that behavior to Discord, and to block that person. You can report it to the Sindome staff as well, but we Sindome cannot police harassment in private conversations that take place on Discord.

You are expected to listen to Staff and Player Moderators on the Sindome Discord, the same way you would on the game. Failure to do so will result in suspension of your Sindome Discord privileges and possibly suspension from the game.

Discord community guidelines are available for review [here](#).

X.X Character Art

It is against the rules to post character art in a manner that could be used to associate your player and character together. This includes the BGBB and Sindome's Discord as well as other Third Party sites when using accounts of the same name as accounts used in Discord or on the BGBB. You may email art@sindome.org with the art and ask for it to be posted for you. That way it will not be associated with your BGBB name.

It is against the rules to use character art from your current character as your Avatar on the BGBB or on Discord, as it would reveal who you play. Please respect this rule or at a minimum your access to the BGBB and Sindome Discord may be removed.

X.B Sharing Contact Information

Sharing your contact information on OOC-Chat, or the BGBB is allowed as long as doing so does not alert anyone to what character you play. For example, making a BGBB post or an OOC-Chat post with your Discord information is acceptable as long as it will not give away who you play. However, sharing your OOC contact information in a way which reveals who you play (for example, over local OOC, even if disguised) is prohibited, as it would cause our Conflict of Interest rules to kick in right away. Sharing OOC Contact information through IC means (gridmail, SIC, etc) is forbidden. If you want to share your contact information with a specific player upon deciding to leave the game, you may xhelp and ask the Staff to facilitate the exchange.

X.C Chatting Privately OOCly

We do not encourage players to slide into each other's DMs because it has a high likelihood of triggering our Conflict of Interest rules which will result in not being able to roleplay closely with the character of the person you are DMing with. However, if you choose to do so, you are expected to follow all the rules governing OOC communication and report any violations you witness as detailed in 'Reporting Rules Violations' below. Do not share who you play (or you will trigger our COI rules and not be able to RP with that player's character). Do not share game-mechanics information such as how stats or skills work, or how to build out a character.

Do not share IC information of any sort. A rule of thumb is: If it wouldn't be acceptable on OOC-Chat or the BGBB, it isn't acceptable in a direct message.

You are not required to alert staff of private OOC conversations unless they violate the rules or trigger our Conflict of Interest rules (see below).

You can read more information on what is/is not acceptable in 'help ooc-discussion'.

X.C Conflicts of Interest - Roleplay Restrictions due to OOC Contact

If you are talking privately (in person, on Discord, etc) with another player, and you become aware of what character they play, our Conflict of Interest rules are triggered. In this situation you must xhelp and let the admin know about the situation. Additionally it is now against the rules to roleplay closely with that character. You may not live together, work for one another, exchange gifts or chyen, or be involved in plots where you spend significant time together. You can interact in passing during 'bar style' roleplay, or if your job dictates, but you must otherwise steer clear of each other.

After that disclosure to Staff and verification with the other party, the staff will handle coordinating letting the person know your character name (if they don't know it), so you can safely distance yourself from each other in roleplay. This rule remains in place until both characters are perma-killed. It is retriggered if at any time your OOC conversations reveal who either of you plays. It does not end if you stop talking OOCly.

If you have questions about how this rule applies, please xhelp. Exceptions to this rule are extremely rare and made only at the discretion of Senior Staff.

Failure to report and abide by the rule will result in disciplinary action which may include suspension or ban.

X.D Contacting Admin OOCly

The only acceptable way to contact a Staff member is over xhelp or via email to their Sindome email account. Do not directly message staff members on Discord/Facebook/Twitter/etc.

X.D Admin Contacting Players OOCly

Admin should not OOCly contact players except through approved channels (xhelp, email). Admin with pre-existing OOC relationships with players are required to disclose those relationships during their initial staff interview so they can be marked as Conflict of Interest for those players. Failure to disclose an OOC relationship of any kind will result in suspension or removal from Staff. An admin who has a pre-existing relationship with a player and who discloses it, is not expected to no longer be friends or message with that person (or vice versa), but the admin cannot discuss the game with that player. Admin who are marked as Conflict of

Interest for a player should follow the rules relating to COI that are outlined in supplemental admin policy documentation, which typically boils down to not puppeting for or making decisions about that player or their character.

X.X Revealing Who You Play

It is against the rules to publicly reveal who you currently play (on Discord, OOC-Chat, Reddit, etc). It is acceptable within the rules to reveal who you play privately but this is heavily discouraged as it immediately triggers our Conflict of Interest rules and you are required to report it, and no longer roleplay closely with the person you have revealed it to (See Conflicts of Interest - Roleplay Restrictions due to OOC Contact).

If your character perms you may not publicly or privately reveal you played them for 3 years. Per our rules on Discussing Old Roleplay, you may publicly reveal past characters you played as long as they have been perma-dead for at least 3 years. You may also privately acknowledge that you played a specific character 3+ years after they perm.

X.X Revealing Who Someone Else Plays

It is against the rules to publicly or privately reveal who a player plays, who a character is played by, who an admin plays, or that a character is an admin alt. It simply isn't your decision to make. Revealing this information even by accident will result in a suspension, revealing it purposefully may result in a perma-ban.

X.D Reporting Rules Violations

If you take the step of contacting other players Out of Character, you are taking on the responsibility of reporting any violations of our rules that take place during those conversations, be they in private, or in a chatroom that you are in (even if you aren't actively involved in the conversation). This includes someone sharing IC information with you, explaining how mechanics work to you, discussing IC events, sharing their stats, or asking you to share any of this type of information with them. This is a PvP game and it is only by respecting the rules that the game can be fair for those with OOC friends who play, and those who do not.

When reporting a rules violation, Staff will reach out (where possible) to the other players involved and give them an opportunity to come clean and discuss the infraction.

If by reporting a rules violation you have to admit to a rule break yourself, Staff will take that into consideration when determining the severity of punishment to be enforced.

Report rules violations via xhelp and by emailing help@sindome.org with logs & screenshots. Failure to report rules violations will result in disciplinary action which may include suspension from the game.

Admin Rules

7.L Admin Communication

Staff members are allowed to post clarifications, updates and engage in discussion within the game, BGBB & Sindome Discord but are not to make public statements regarding the game, staff business, or the results or outcomes of bans & suspension votes without first getting a Senior's sign off. This applies everywhere.

Supplemental Help Files

help ooc-discussion

This help file is intended to provide specific examples to help players understand what is and is not acceptable during OOC Discussions about the game.

PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS

First and foremost, we recognize the desire to get to know people OOCly, and even to discuss some aspects of the game. However, it is 100% a slippery slope and a lot of care must be taken if you decide to go down this path. The easiest way to stay off the slippery slope is to simply not talk to people via DMs, Out of Character. The second easiest, if you decide to talk to people OOCly, is to not discuss the game at all.

If you do decide to discuss parts of the game that are allowed to be discussed OOCly, much care must be taken. If anyone reveals who they play, directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, our conflict of interest rules kick in (see @rules) and it must be reported by both parties to the staff via xhelp or email and the characters involved can no longer roleplay closely with each other (see @rules).

A good rule of thumb is that a discussion that could take place on OOC Chat is probably acceptable in private. Here are some additional examples of what is and is not allowed to help shape your understanding:

ACCEPTABLE

- Stuff that has nothing to do with Sindome
- A cool idea could be to add (some feature) to the game
- Discussing lore from this public lore file

AGAINST THE RULES

- What stats should I raise?
- What skills should I choose?
- What skill does making ammo use?
- You should raise your strength to get good at X

- Crazy that the mag-lev got bombed today
- Discussing who someone else plays

TRIGGERS CONFLICT OF INTEREST RULES

- Figuring out who someone plays via OOC discussions
- Telling someone who you play
- Someone telling you who they play

SEE ALSO:

- help metagaming
- @rules
- help ooc
- help foig
- help expectations
- help bleed
- help small worlding
- help roleplaying

FAQ

Do I have to have a Discord?

No. Discord is opt in. We are looking into connecting the OOC-Chat and Discord OOC-Chat channels. Or we may create a new channel like Discord-Chat in game, so people who want to follow along with Discord can, without actually being on Discord. However, we have to ensure that is technically possible. Either way, Discord is opt-in.

Will I have the ability to set/change my Discord name?

Your discord name for the server will be your BGBB Name / OOC Chat name. However, it will still be possible for people to see your full Discord username if they look at your profile. If you are worried about your Discord username providing people with OOC information about you, we recommend creating a new Discord account or changing your Discord username to something unique to Sindome.

My BGBB name is the same as my current character name, what do I do?

You can put in a service request for Seniors, provide a new name, and ask that your BGBB / OOC / Discord name be changed to that. You must do this -before- getting the Discord set up.

My Discord Account name (not my server alias) might inform someone who I play.

You should change it to something else, or create a new Discord account.

I have an IC story I want to tell about one of my dead characters, but I'm not sure if everyone involved is dead or not. What do I do?

You should not tell the story. It would be both time-consuming and potentially spoiling IC information to confirm or deny if a character is dead or alive. At all times err on the side of caution when telling a story like this. Make sure that no details of it are revealing IC mechanics or touching on characters that are still pertinent to the current IC gameworld. Ideally, tell stories only about characters long gone and on events that do not matter to the current IC world.

A bunch of people were previously suspended or banned for violating rules that will be changed if these changes are adopted. Does that mean they will be allowed back?

The rules changing now do not change the fact that they were broken previously. There will not be any blanket changes to previous suspensions and bans. However, Sindome has a long history of giving people second chances. We have already spoken with a number of people who were previously suspended and given them timelines for when we will discuss and vote on allowing them to return to the community. This will be done on a case-by-case basis, and take into account the full scope of rules violations that led to the suspensions (as well as previous suspensions).

This is a big change, how long has this been in the works?

We've made changes to our rules around OOC contact a bunch of times over the years. Usually to make them more restrictive, or to clarify them based on feedback. This time is no different.

Admin have been discussing these changes for several months and iterating on the proposed rules, gathering feedback, etc.

Why are you making these changes?

We want to modernize our OOC Communication rules for our increasingly interconnected world while maintaining the IC/OOC boundaries that are at the core of what we believe makes Sindome such a fun and engaging game. We don't want the mystery of the game ruined for anyone. But we do want people to feel like they can make meaningful and lasting friendships as a result of Sindome.

We've received a bunch of feedback from a bunch of different sources, discussed it as a staff, discussed with a number of players, weighed the pros and cons, and feel that at this point this is a good experiment to try. It's clear that people want to communicate OOCly, and that it helps them feel more a part of a community.

It's also clear that the people who want to cheat aren't stopping just because of the rules and pushing restrictive OOC communication rules on the entire community in an attempt to stop all Metagaming has not been as effective in the increasingly connected world as it was in the past.

The staff want to show our players trust, and want the players to feel that staff trusts them to make good decisions that don't violate the rules, spirit of the game, sportsmanship, and cooperative competition.

What if these changes make things worse?

Then we'll iterate again. This is an experiment. If we find it isn't working and is instead driving increased Metagaming, then we'll make future decisions about the rules with that data in hand.

It is possible that opening up a Sindome Discord will lead to more people jumping into each other's DMs, which could lead to (un)intentional OOC cliques forming, and non-Sindome Discords.

This is something that makes the staff uncomfortable, but at the same time, our rules around OOC communication currently prohibit metagaming through OOC cliques that share IC information or back each other up.

The Staff would prefer people stay out of each other's DMs, because it can lead to a slippery slope of discussing the game in a way that ruins the mystery of the game and violates the rules, but if we have a Discord, there is no way we can prevent people OOCly sliding into DMs, and thus, we need to accept the eventuality and trust the playerbase to be adults about how they handle themselves privately.

I told someone who I play and now I'm worried they are using that information for/against me ICly. What should I do?

Telling someone what character you play comes with the possibility that they will use that information ICly, even if they do so unintentionally. It is for this reason that we say you do this at your own risk. The Sindome Staff cannot police subjective views on IC/OOC situations. If you are worried about this happening, do not share who you play.

You must also alert the staff when you have revealed to someone who you play, discovered who someone plays, or been told who someone plays.

A player contacted me OOCly and are harassing me. What do I do?

You can report this to help@sindome.org so we are aware, however we cannot police the internet. Blocking them is your best bet.

I accidentally revealed IC information to someone, what do I do?

xhelp or email us and let us know the situation. We understand that this happens sometimes. It is possible it will result in a suspension, but self-reporting an issue (as opposed to the other

person or persons reporting you) will show that you didn't mean to break the rule, and that will be taken into account when we discuss a punishment.

I accidentally revealed current IC information on the War Stories channel, what do I do?

xhelp or email us and let us know the situation. We understand that this happens sometimes. It is possible it will result in a suspension, but self-reporting an issue (as opposed to the other person or persons reporting you) will show that you didn't mean to break the rule, and that will be taken into account when we discuss a punishment.

Someone revealed IC information to me, what do I do?

Remind the person in question about the rules (if you feel comfortable) and then xhelp or email us to let us know the situation. Please include a log + screenshots. We will tell you what the next steps should be from there.

Someone revealed current IC information on the War-Stories channel, what do I do?

Remind the person in question about the rules (if you feel comfortable) and then xhelp or email us to let us know the situation. Please include a log + screenshots. We will tell you what the next steps should be from there.

Who will moderate the Discord?

The discord will be moderated by Staff and by player moderators. They will be responsible for enforcing the rules, restricting access if someone breaks the rules, and generally making sure that people are behaving. We already have OOC-Chat moderators, and it will function in a similar way. There will be in game commands that Staff and Player Moderators can use to report issues they see on the Discord Server.

Will there be voice chat on the Discord?

Not by default. There will be situations where Staff open up voice comms in a moderated fashion, but voice is much more difficult to moderate and keep an eye on than chat, so voice will be reserved for special occasions.

Doesn't this change have the potential to remove some of the mystery around the game that makes it great?

It does. That's why Discord, DMing, and revealing who you play are opt-in. Most likely we will have a channel on Discord where old stories can be shared, that way they stay out of the main channel and can be avoided.

That doesn't change the fact that increased OOC communication, and a relaxing of our rules around OOC contact and how it relates to who you can roleplay with, definitely have a possibility to increase metagaming. We're relying on the community to self-police this and reinforce that fair play means getting your IC information ICly.

What about bad actors that will take advantage of this change?

Bad actors will happen. It's inevitable. It will be up to all of us to report bad actors.

Already Adopted Rules

0.X Punishments (all new, all adopted)

1.H Discussing Old Roleplay

For players who have been members of the community for a long time, it is tempting to discuss old roleplay that you believe does not have an impact on current IC events. This is only acceptable if the roleplay happened over 3 years ago, you have first-hand knowledge (you are not retelling a story someone else told OOCly), all player characters involved have permed, it doesn't pertain to ongoing IC events, and if you include a disclaimer beforehand stating 'The events described next happened over 3 years ago and all players involved have permed. It still might contain spoilers'. Any storytelling happening through chat tools provided by the game should take place in the 'War-Stories' channel so people who want to take part can opt in. If you are unsure if a specific event or story fits this criteria, err on the side of caution and do not share it. Failure to abide by this criteria even unintentionally will be considered a violation of 1.F Metagaming and be punished as such.

2.E Reporting Rules Violations

If you take the step of contacting other players Out of Character, you are taking on the responsibility of reporting any violations of our rules that take place during those conversations, be they in private, or in a chatroom that you are in (even if you aren't actively involved in the conversation). This includes someone sharing IC information with you, explaining how mechanics work to you, discussing IC events, sharing their stats, or asking you to share any of this type of information with them. This is a PvP game and it is only by respecting the rules that the game can be fair for those with OOC friends who play, and those who do not. You can report rules violations via xhelp or by emailing help@sindome.org with logs & screenshots.

4.A. Failure to comply with punishment

If you break the rules, you will be punished. If you are punished, you need to comply with that punishment. If you feel you have been treated unfairly, email help@sindome.org and explain your situation, and a Senior Staff member will read and respond (if needed). Failing to comply with a punishment will result in a longer suspension or ban.

4.F. Community Harm

Sometimes a player's behavior, despite not breaking other rules, negatively impacts a large portion of the community. The severity of this impact is subjective and decided by the admins by vote. If a player cannot de-escalate misbehavior after communications with admins, they may be suspended temporarily or permanently banned.

4.G Multiple Accounts Playing from the same IP

Multiple people playing from the same IP address requires special permission from the admin. This is to prevent multi-playing (see 1.E). You may xhelp to speak with an admin or email help@sindome.org to request permission, though this permission may not be granted.

4.H Using a Proxy or VPN

Due to a history of suspended & banned players using proxies & VPNs to hide their IP addresses and return to playing the game on new accounts while suspended or banned, connecting to the game using a Proxy or VPN is prohibited. If we detect you connecting from a proxy or VPN, we will remove you from the game and ask you to connect from your real IP address.