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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Organized Play Foundation Venture Officer team! This handbook will help you by providing ideas and solutions for your volunteer efforts.

A Venture Officer (VO) is responsible for the part of Paizo Organized Play Programs (POP) administered by the Organized Play Foundation (OPF). Currently, Pathfinder Society (second edition) and Starfinder Society are active POP programs. Pathfinder Society (first edition) and Pathfinder Society Adventure Card Society are legacy POP programs. Our goal is to provide a fair, safe, and entertaining campaign for the greatest number of players. Since VOs are the experts in what works best in their communities, this framework can be tailored to best fit the needs of the local community.

The goal of this handbook is to help you refine your approach and understand your responsibilities to best meet the needs of Organized Play, players, venues, conventions, and Game Masters (GMs).

1.1. How this Guide was Created

In mid-2020 the [VO Handbook Task Force](#) shared an initial draft of the guide with the entire VC and RVC community. It was much shorter and quite different than what you see here. Based on the extensive feedback we received, we re-assessed the community's needs and re-wrote the entire document. These revisions then underwent incremental rounds of feedback and conversation with the VC community.

The initial version of the VO Handbook is the result of

those efforts. By fostering a dialogue with the VC community, the authors of this guide aimed to better understand the needs of the VO corps and to cultivate a sense of shared ownership of the guide — both now and going forward.

1.1.1. Improving the Guide

To give us feedback, any member of the public can visit [our Handbook Ticketing System](#) to open an issue; tickets will be tracked and resolved within that system, and you will receive an email with a link to check on its status. VOs can also start an informal discussion with the Taskforce on our Discord Channel. Changes will be noted in the changelog after they are deployed.

[Open a Support Ticket](#)

1.2. How to Use this Guide

This guide is different from a methodology. A methodology is a system of practices, techniques, and rules used by those who work in a discipline. Instead, this guide serves as the foundation upon which VOs can build their own methodologies, tools, and techniques. Beyond the policies that all events must adhere to (such as the Code of Conduct), VOs are encouraged to tailor how they apply the knowledge in this guide to their own region — after all, every community is different.

2. Venture Officers

Roles of venture officers are descriptively defined here. For complete responsibilities and benefits of being a Venture Officer, please visit [Paizo Organized Play Venture Officer Ranks](#) at The Organized Play Foundation website.

2.1. VO Corps Structure

Note that in some regions, one person may serve in

some or even all positions. For example, a VL may have multiple locations, or a small area may have one person organically working as VA and RVC. Next, note that VO positions are not meant to cover all special positions, such as the [Task forces](#).

2.1.1. Venture-Agents

A Venture-Agent (VA) focuses on public gaming at one location. They work with venue operators to coordinate events on-site, recruit GMs and players, and support the host venue's business. VAs are trusted with accurately reporting tables at the location.

2.1.2. Venture-Lieutenants

A Venture-Lieutenant (VL) may perform the same tasks as a Venture-Agent, but they also coach and support Venture-Agents in the area, they help onboard new Venture-Agents, and they support new public events. Venture-Lieutenants may also support annual events in their area, such as local conventions.

2.1.3. Venture-Captains

A Venture-Captain (VC) performs and oversees all the tasks of the Venture-Lieutenant as required, with a greater emphasis on coaching and supporting Venture-Lieutenants. They also develop new opportunities in that area for the Organized Play Foundation and bring best practices to their region.

2.1.4. Regional Venture-Coordinators

The Regional Venture-Coordinator (RVC) is responsible for a geographic sector of the Organized Play campaign. The Regional Venture-Coordinator collects and reports data from each Venture-Captain in their region, providing region-specific feedback to the Organized Play Foundation. The Regional Venture-Coordinator is responsible for enacting OPF directives within their region, conflict resolution that goes beyond the Venture-Captains, coaching and

supporting Venture Officers, and identifying and supporting new opportunities for Paizo Organized Play.

2.1.5. Discord Server

The Organized Play Coordinator should be able to provide you a link to the Discord server, which serves as the primary wide-ranging communication tool between Paizo Organized Play liaisons and the volunteers of the Organized Play Foundation (the VOs). Your supervising VO can help coordinate this. The goal of the discord is to build community between the Organized Play Foundation volunteers that serve Paizo Organized Play, both within and between regions and VO ranks.

All VOs are expected to:

1. To respond to tagged requests from their superior Venture Officers and Paizo staff in a timely manner, as requested.
2. To conduct themselves like professional adults in a manner befitting the organizations they represent, following all server guidelines.

2.2. The OPF's Relationship to Paizo

Paizo editorial staff create adventures and adjudicate system rules for use in the Paizo Organized Play programs. Paizo operations staff administer conventions and day-to-day program operations, as well as setting program goals. Paizo provides a staff liaison to the OPF responsible for VO engagement, oversight, and program administration. The OPF provides volunteers to Paizo as requested, and may invite members of Paizo staff to serve as liaisons to the board.

3. Organizing Local Events

An event is held at a public venue at regularly occurring intervals and could include multiple tables or sessions. Public events are held to encourage new players to join the community.

Choosing which games to schedule requires a balance of offering games for the existing player base while integrating new players. It is also important to be aware of what other organizers in the area are scheduling and coordinating with them to ensure the community is able to find plenty of games without oversaturation.

3.1. Player Base

A player base consists of the people who play at events — often, they are locals who attend public games at a game shop. They comprise a variety of game preferences, gaming and life experiences, and personalities.

3.1.1. New Players

Many VOs use new player kits that include a new Organized Play number, a letter or business card that provides contact information for the local Venture Officers, a link to where players can sign up for future games, and how to find Organized Play rules on the Organized Play Foundation website.

Understanding the player's familiarity with the game can help the VA tailor the experience. For players with little game system experience, it may be beneficial to ask a more seasoned player to assist in answering their questions while the Game Master (GM) runs the game. Pairing new players with a patient or trusted veteran helps teach new players the basics and sets an example. This also gives public recognition to the veteran player.

3.1.2. Regulars

Organizers should be aware of the gaming habits and interests of regular players in their community. It can be challenging to provide more advanced experiences for veteran players while also providing opportunities for new players to join. It is important to encourage and provide opportunities for experienced players to step into Game Master or Storyteller roles.

3.1.3. Attrition

Be aware of player attrition. The episodic nature of organized play allows players to come and go as their availability permits. Organized play isn't for everyone, and some players will only attend one game. Sometimes, a person's schedule will change and they won't be available to attend events anymore. It's natural for some players to pass through for a time, or to leave and then return.

3.2. Event Rhythm and Tone

An organizer should try to arrive early and to have something on the table, such as a blank flip mat or signage, to let people know they're playing a game. Arriving early affords the VO time to have a conversation with players who wish to — Organized Play can be a social event, too. That said, ensure games start and end on time.

3.3. Locations

Anywhere that has a table is a possible location. The owner of the space must give permission. While homes can be used, this handbook will focus on public spaces and public games. When interfacing with the host, consider their motivations: What do they want to achieve? How can Organized Play help them achieve that goal?

3.3.1. Retail Game Stores

A game store's goal is to build retail sales. When

talking to store employees or owners, it may help to emphasize a positive community and store support. Store support can take the form of the Retail Incentive Program, as well as informing the owner of new products that your players would be interested in. Many VOs print out the terms of the Retail Incentive Program to give to store owners.

Work with the store to plan events well ahead of time so they know how many tables to reserve. Often, gaming stores have a calendar on which they will advertise your event. If the venue will allow it, it can even be good to have a GM around who can jump in and run a beginner event for walk-ins.

3.3.2. Non-Gaming Related Public Venues

Libraries and schools, restaurants, family-friendly breweries, cafés, and other locations have a different array of goals than retail stores. Organized Play's presence may help drive additional foot traffic, but this should not alienate others who are using the space. While a public non-retail location might offer advantages that a store does not (such as privacy), they serve a demographic that often needs quiet.

Keep headcounts, communicate with the host, and confirm the count with them in advance. Often, these spaces are far less flexible than a game store. Develop an understanding of what is important to the non-game store space, and respect that need.

3.3.3. Tips to Keep Your Relationship with the Venue Happy

Whatever the type of location, there are certain things the VO can do to enhance and maintain a harmonious relationship with owners.

- *Clean up after yourselves.*
- *Be proactive:* follow venue rules and talk to players who break them before owners need to.

Many public venues have children; try to keep in mind OPF events are often for ages 13 and up.

- *Be sociable:* put a little effort into saying hello before the game, and saying goodbye after you are finished cleaning up. Check in with them from time to time to see how they think your events are going.

3.4. Game Master Support

Check in with GMs before an event and get to know them; make sure to thank them for volunteering their time.

Keep an eye out for opportunities to support your GMs — for example, if they are struggling with questions, go over and offer to help. Be aware of common questions for the systems (including FAQs and Errata) so you can help clarify rulings. For an item not covered by errata, rules, or FAQs, the Game Master has the final say but the VO can offer guidance based on their experience. In cases of player death or other PC-centric crises, a VO can pause the game and reach out on the VO Discord for immediate clarification or assistance.

Venture Officers who have a laptop or tablet with them can often complete reporting on the same day of an event — or even before players leave the table. No matter what tools a VO has at their disposal, they must establish a strong cadence of reporting sessions. VCs and VLs should work with their VAs to ensure sessions are being reported, communicate with them, and if needed assist the VA in unblocking any issues.

Keep an eye out for GM burnout. This can happen when one player steps up an inordinate amount of times to run games... and it can also happen to VAs. A VA can show appreciation for GMs by running special games or modules for them. A VA who's getting burnt out should prioritize GM recruitment; paradoxically, it may be a net-good to let a table here

and there fail to muster due to lack of GM instead of stepping up. When players see that games don't happen without GMs, the ones capable of running games will often step up.

3.5. Regional Support Program

Organized Play events have a variety of regional support benefits such as increased Achievement Points. VAs should check in with their VCs to see what steps are needed to get their events approved, as each region follows its own guidelines and approval [process for Regional Support](#). This page contains multiple Organized Play policies. To get to the Regional Support Program, after navigating to the page provided via the link, click the "+" next to Event Support Programs, then click Regional Support Program.

3.6. Equipment and Tasks

Many VOs bring equipment to their events (some even work with the store owner to store equipment at the location). Here is a list of items that might be included in a VO kit (remember these are only recommendations and can be tailored to what works for your community):

1. Table tracker log for large events
2. New player Organized Play ID cards (keep track of how many you hand out)
3. Pregens of basic iconics for new players
4. A flyer or poster for the next event at that location
5. A printed quest or evergreen scenario with chronicles ready
6. "Welcome to Pathfinder/Starfinder" handouts
7. VO Business Cards
8. Tokens for players without minis
9. Spare dice
10. Extra pens and paper
11. Clipboard/Combat Pad/index cards
12. Power Strips

Make sure GMs understand their responsibilities; for example, the GM should know if they are responsible for printing chronicles.

3.7. Event Growth

New members replace the normal attrition that will happen in a player base. They can also energize the established players and develop into an influx of new GMs. Every location must have a way to broadcast information ahead of time; this is usually a web presence of some kind (and is strongly recommended); examples include Warhorn, Meetup, Facebook, and Discord.

3.7.1. Word of Mouth

Games that are well-run, timely, and fun will spark their own excitement. Players bring friends to games that are entertaining. Stores may tell customers who are looking for games about your event as well — especially if it has a reputation for fostering a welcoming atmosphere.

3.7.2. Fliers

Fliers are a tried and true method. Often, game stores, libraries, and public spaces have areas for fliers. Make sure to get permission from the space's owner before placing any flier.

3.7.3. Social Media

Some communities may use social media. VOs can leverage this to advertise their events. Often, this can take the form of a Facebook group, a Meetup group, a website, Discord, or more. There is no single best practice here. VOs should use the tools they are comfortable using. Some may even find it a best practice to maintain a single site in order to keep things simple; do what works best for your community *and* within your bandwidth.

3.8. GM Recruitment

Recruiting and training new GMs is critical to event health. Actively recruit GMs by asking players of appropriate temperament if they would like to try GMing. Creating an environment where new GMs feel comfortable volunteering will allow the event to grow. Some events kindly ask those who are comfortable doing so to GM once for every 5 games they play, though it's important to remember that some players may *never* feel comfortable. Some VOs create yearly "GM 101" events so that experienced Game Masters can transfer their expertise to others. Samples of those documents are linked in the resources below.

3.9. Planning Ahead

Players need to know how to keep playing. This is usually achieved with a public calendar (such as Warhorn), updated on a cadence that works for the community (some events update monthly, or quarterly, etc). The important thing to remember is consistency. Games should always have a start time, a location, a clear sign-up procedure, and a way to contact the VO with any questions.

Try to be flexible. For example, you can schedule more tables or allow a waitlist for a game that proves popular (up to your space and GM limitations). Regional tools like Discord, website forums, Facebook groups, and Meetup can help a VA gauge community interest.

3.10. Local Policies

Many events grow by creating policies that benefit their communities. As with other suggestions, any tailored policies must be in keeping with OPF rules. VAs are encouraged to talk to their VL or VC for help forming these policies. Here are some examples of policies used by lodges around the world:

- **No-call-no-shows:** After the second infraction the player is not allowed to reserve seats, but welcome to walk in if there is room available.

- **Illegal Characters:** Pre-game audits are an option. Failing that, the player can play a pre-generated PC.
- **High-level play being held up:** The GM may want to carefully audit PCs, asking them to send their character sheets via email or to take extra time before the game.
- **Overlong VTT Games:** Recruit GMs at a 5-player cap.

Whatever the case, these policies should be understood by players. This is often achieved by publishing them on the signup website (such as the Warhorn event page), placing them on whatever welcome packet info the lodge has, and reaffirming them at live events.

4. Organizing Conventions

Convention planning starts long before the first guest arrives. There are many ways to execute a convention, but for Organized Play there are unique considerations. This section of the handbook provides guidance for both planning at another organization's convention (such as PaizoCon) and where you are responsible for the entire convention.

4.1. Planning for a Convention where your lodge is participating

Paizo Organized Play supports gaming at many conventions globally. These conventions can be any size and in any country. Local conventions typically occur within a geographic region or as part of the Online region. A number of conventions are taking on a blended format, which includes intricacies not

present when planning for a “standard” offering of either in-person or online. Online and blended conventions offer a way to help make table minimums for tiers and qualifying for specials, and it opens up convention participation to people who, for whatever reason, are not normally able to attend an in-person convention.

Conventions are also categorized by tiers, which affect how many vouchers the event receives as well as other forms of support from Organized Play. For specific questions on the amount of support a given convention tier will receive, reach out to the Organized Play Coordinator directly.

4.1.1. Tables & Tiers

Tables	Tiers
Less than 15	None*
15-24	Tier 5
25-39	Tier 4
40-59	Tier 3
60-74	Tier 2
75 or more-	Tier 1

* can be an [RSP](#) event, talk to your RVC

4.1.2. Planning

A few months ahead of the convention, you will want to both create your event on the Paizo website and start coming up with which scenarios you wish to offer at the convention. Refer to the Convention Info for organizers document in the important-links channel of the VO Discord Server to see what scenarios are coming up if you intend to offer relatively new releases. If you are going to offer Interactive Specials, be sure to review the [Rules for](#)

[Running Specials](#) and download the appropriate Interactive Presentations (also found in the important-links channel of the VO Discord Server). It may be advisable to speak with the other VOs in your area and your potential Game Master (GM) pool to get feedback and requests on the scenarios you plan to offer.

You’ll also want to find out about the space where you will be situated - the size, the layout, the number of tables - as well as the time slots the convention intends to offer gaming and determine from there the amount of HQ staff you will need, as well as the final amount of slots you will need to schedule for games; this will tell you how many GMs you will need. Be sure to adhere to any deadlines given by the convention organizers when it comes to turning in your schedule.

When you have a strong idea of the tables you’ll have, submit the [Event Support Request Form](#); this should be done no later than 4 weeks out from the convention.

At a minimum of 3 weeks before the convention, submit the [Scenario Request Form](#) so your GMs can have the scenarios they will be running put on their accounts. In the event GMs sign up after the Scenario Request Form is submitted, per OP policy, a VO can either print or electronically send a single copy of a scenario to a GM, but this copy must either be returned to the VO or destroyed after use.

You will likely also want to request a number of new player IDs at this point. If you believe you will need 10 or less, you can request them via the Paizo website directly. If you need more than 10, send an email to organizedplay@paizo.com to make the request. (the website currently shows an outdated email address to use to make this request - ignore this and use the one provided here). These cards should be printed out (for physical conventions) or electronically stored (for online or blended conventions) and kept at HQ to give out to new players as they are given sign-in instructions once the players are identified as new. You may also want to give a few to table GMs in case

a new player somehow bypasses HQ.

Determine how many volunteers to help set up the game space and HQ. The setup may occur in the days before the convention, or it may occur on opening day before the first player arrives at a table.

Be sure to include reporting in your planning. You will need to decide if you will be responsible for all reporting or if you will enlist the aid of others.

4.1.3. Sharing the Schedule

Many conventions choose to share the schedule in stages. When outlining a large convention's events, organizers often use a tool like a spreadsheet to keep things organized. It helps to share the schedule and get feedback from staff. When the staff agrees, you can then optionally share it with potential GMs in the community (often, the VO corps). Some conventions have their own web presences and sign-up workflows; if yours does not, it helps to think about what online tools can be used to the convention's advantage.

Remember that Organized Play has a partnership with Warhorn, so it may be a good idea to utilize Warhorn for your scheduling and GM/Player sign-ups, but it is not required.

4.1.4. Convention HQ Staff

Staff positions assist GMs and players during the convention. In your sign-up of volunteers, be sure to request volunteers for and allocate these positions, as having to be both a GM and an HQ staff simultaneously can be a distraction or worse.

At large events, a headquarters table with chairs can be set up away from traffic lanes. At large shows, you might even put it on a riser to help manage the room better. Place sign-up sheets with every table listing in an area where people can congregate. You may also want to consider using an electronic sign-in sheet and/or chronicle sheet generator. This will allow the players to sign in using any electronic device connected to the Internet to both sign in and for receipt of their chronicle. If you plan to use an

electronic sign-in sheet, make sure your HQ staff knows where to direct players to sign in while mustering before your session.

As the organizer for your convention, you can create or tailor an existing set of duties for your HQ staff and make sure these duties are given in advance and posted at their location. Also, it is a good idea to make sure your HQ Staff is aware that they will be awarded Achievement Points for volunteering, and that they will need to decide whether they want Pathfinder 2E or Starfinder Achievement points. Though discussed in the Reporting section, it is important to note that only VCs and RVCs have the ability to award Achievement Points directly to volunteers outside of actual game reporting. HQ Volunteers should be rewarded the same amount of Achievement Points a GM would receive for running a slot your convention for the same amount of time volunteered.

4.1.5. Convention Layout

There are likely to be other campaigns and games at the show. Cooperate with the other campaigns. Avoid surprises by ensuring everyone knows about Organized Play's plans if there will be a need to coordinate things like the Interactive Specials.

Ideally, table space at conventions will be adequate for player traffic movement as well as to accommodate a 6 player per table seating arrangement, but every convention is different, so tailor as needed. Try to plan lanes for players to get in and out with bags and books, and mobility aids like canes, crutches, or wheelchairs. If storage is needed, consider asking for small tables against the wall. In the event the space allocated is insufficient, try to work with convention leadership to see if additional or alternate space is available. You can also, if need be, limit the table size to a number lower than 6 players if there is not adequate space and the convention is unable to allocate you more.

4.1.6. Convention Tools

In addition to the standard VO tools, other items are helpful and can be added to an event list for conventions, such as an inexpensive printer and laptop, cough drops or throat lozenges for GMs, hand sanitizer, rubber gloves, and baby wipes, and paper towels, PPE (when necessary, or just to avoid crud), extension cords, and outlet strips (if your convention allows you to use these or does not provide them for you). Fans may also be a consideration in order to assist with ventilation or temperature (if the convention will allow you to bring/use them). Some convention organizers also include bottled water in order to either provide hydration to volunteers and/or players (in the event of need). Note that these are optional items. While most conventions cannot provide a budget for this, VOs aren't expected to invest significant personal funds either.

It may also be a good idea to have extra copies of chronicle sheets and sign-in sheets (if you do not use an electronic sheet) available at HQ in the event they are needed, and to be sure HQ knows where these are being kept.

4.1.7. Public Health

During times of public health crises (or even for con crud/flu season), conventions should keep the safety of their communities in mind. All convention planners must follow federal, state, and local health policies. In the case of policy changes, local government press releases and websites (such as those designating “opening tiers”), including the convention’s website, should include the most recent updates to their health and safety policy. All VOs and volunteers are required to adhere to the policies set forth by the convention, however, as stated below, if you feel these policies are not appropriate to keep you and your players healthy and safe, it is completely within your power to decline to participate.

Remember, if you do not feel the convention is taking

appropriate measures to safeguard your health and safety, it is always within your power to decline participation in the convention. This right to decline to participate extends to all volunteers at a convention, not just VOs. VOs should make sure their volunteers are aware of this as part of the recruiting process.

4.1.8. Issues at the Convention

For issues with players, GMs, or VOs at a convention, please see the section on [Crises and Problems](#) later in this document.

If a GM cancels with short to no notice, every attempt should be made by HQ volunteers to try to seat the players awaiting that session at another session, whether it’s one occurring at the same time theirs was to occur or at another point during the convention. If this is not possible, HQ and GM HQ volunteers should work together to try to run something, either the initially-scheduled scenario or some other scenario that is acceptable to those impacted.

With the player portion of the session handled, refer to your lodge’s established policies or your VC to determine how to handle the situation with the GM, which will be either exacerbated or mitigated by both the circumstances of the absence and whether the GM in question has a history of this type of action.

If a VO no-call/no-shows a volunteered time slot, the issue becomes a discussion between the VC and RVC, as appropriate action will need to be taken and vary by region and context. If the VO is not from within your footprint or region, this should be raised to your VC (within your region but not part of your lodge) or RVC (outside your region) to have a discussion with the other VO’s VC or RVC.

If an incident occurs where action is taken by convention staff, security, or law enforcement, be sure to document it and make the VO responsible for planning and coordinating aware of the incident so they can take appropriate action.

In the event of an issue with the facility, convention staff, or another campaign, volunteers and VOs should be encouraged to report these to the VO responsible for planning and coordinating the convention so they can discuss with convention leadership.

Keep in mind that conventions are required to comply with anti-harassment policies if they want current and future support offered by OPF. Incidents of harassment are not tolerated and should immediately be reported to HQ or the OP convention organizer.

4.1.9. Reporting

Reporting is a basic duty of all VOs. Reporting in a timely fashion is critical, especially since all active campaigns are using Achievement Points on the Paizo website, and players may be wanting to use their characters in multiple sessions during the convention. If the HQ staff is willing and can perform this function for your convention, be sure they have the means to do so and have been added as reporters on the event. If your HQ staff will not be performing this function, do your best to get the reporting addressed as quickly as you can so both player, GM, and volunteer Achievement Points are updated. Since OP has indicated the After Action Report should be submitted within a month of the convention completion, good practice would be to also have the reporting done no later than by that same time, at the latest, though having it done within a week of the close of the convention would be preferable. If you need assistance completing the reporting, reach out to other VOs in your chain to enlist their assistance.

If your event is for charity and will be awarding Charity Boons, be sure to fill out the [Charity Boon Recipient Form](#) after winners are determined.

Don't forget to have your VC or RVC award Achievement Points to your HQ Staff (this function is only available to VCs and RVCs). If your VC is unable to commit to having this done within the same time frame as reporting, reach out to VO. See the

[Appendix on Awarding Achievement Points as an RVC](#) for this process.

Another reporting consideration is the [After Action Report](#). The After Action Report should be filed within one week of the end of the convention, per the most current revision of the Venture-Officer Agreement. Should you need additional time to file the report, it is your responsibility to reach out to the Organized Play Coordinator to explain the circumstances behind the request for additional time. Failure to file the After Action Report (AAR) within 30 days may cause Organized Play to refuse your future support requests. Provided you file your AAR, you are eligible to receive a \$50 voucher (given out by OP quarterly) as a way to thank you for your time, effort, and any expenditure of funds for planning the convention. Venture-Lieutenants are eligible to receive one voucher per year. Venture Captains are eligible to receive two vouchers per year. At this time, filing your AAR late does not disqualify you from being voucher eligible, but it may become a disqualifier in the future.

It may also be advisable to keep a "Key Learnings" document for yourself of things that occurred or that you learned from the beginning of the planning through the final submission of the After Action Report. This way if you are involved with the convention again in the future, you can refer back to the document as a way to not only give a refresher of what to expect, but as a way to possibly suggest improvements to the convention planners (for instance, if the volunteer sign-up process is too involved, you may be able to suggest changes or at least ask questions about it based on your past experiences).

You may also want to send a final email to the volunteer VOs and GMs, thanking them for contributing to the success of the convention, as well as to let them know when reporting has been completed.

4.1.10. Wrapping up the Convention

As part of the planning process, you may want to include asking for volunteers from the final day and time slot(s) of gaming at the convention to stick around to assist with cleaning up and gathering any equipment and supplies left in the game area. Cleaning up after your convention is a way to make sure your relationship with convention leadership stays on good terms.

4.2. Planning for a Convention Where You or Your Lodge Have Overall Responsibility for the Entire Convention

This could mean that you, as a VO, or your lodge, are responsible for the entire convention, either solo or in conjunction with other VOs/lodges, and not just for scheduling PFS/SFS sessions at the convention.

4.2.1. Planning

Planning for a convention when you are responsible for more than just planning game sessions takes on a very different dynamic. It makes you responsible, in part or on the whole, for budgeting, getting a location, working with outside sources (vendors, other gaming groups, etc.) for either goods, services, or volunteers, security, and more. Remember that when it comes to this type of convention you have a lot more responsibility. Keep in mind that Organized Play does not expect a VO to have a large financial output for conventions.

For purposes of this document, a full discussion on setting up and managing your own convention is not in scope, as this document is specific to Paizo Organized Play as administered by the Organized Play Foundation. For more information on starting or

running your own convention outside the scope of Paizo Organized Play, there are a number of resources available online, and you can always ask your VC/RVC for any guidance they can provide.

Once you have the venue chosen and the space set aside for each group, you'll want to pass that information on to whoever will be handling the game scheduling for PFS/SFS, unless that person is you. From this point forward, the steps in section 4.1 (above) will be followed.

5. Reporting & Data Collection

Data and local feedback help plan for the future. ***It's required to report all games on the Paizo website in a timely fashion.*** In this case, "timely" ideally means within a week, and no more than two. This data helps the Organized Play Program better plan for the future. It also helps your players: they need reporting done in a timely fashion in order to collect the rewards they have earned, such as AcP and GM credit. If a VO has the ability and time to do so, they can even report events on their laptop or tablet at the venue during the event.

All VOs — especially VLs and VCs — are expected to provide training to their VAs so they can complete reporting as quickly as possible. VAs should work with their VO corps to determine the cadence of other reporting, such as sharing how many tables mustered that quarter.

5.1. What Data Should be Collected

Collecting and retaining data helps the event. Rerunning the same scenarios, or running too many events that don't muster burns out volunteers just as fast as too few events will cause players to lose

interest.

At a minimum for tables, VOs should collect the sign-in information for every table at their event. This includes the player's Organized Play ID, Character number, faction, and other game notes. This is the data that needs to be reported to Paizo by the reporting tool on the Paizo website.

Saving and archiving this data in some way, such as saving sign-in sheets or putting the information on a spreadsheet, can be helpful in resolving reporting errors down the road.

5.2. Reporting is Required

As stated above, *every table at every event must be reported*. This is one of the VO's core duties. Event reporting not only helps players keep good records, it also helps the OPF. All new players should be given OPF IDs and sign in for reporting, even if they may never come back for a second game.

Some areas share reporting duties, adding VOs as designated reporters to VC/VL-owned events or vice-versa. VOs need to report and support their VAs if reporting is blocked — everyone should help one another out wherever possible, whether that is unblocking issues by providing training or remediating reports for a VA who is unable to do so quickly. Tools such as RPG Chronicles may facilitate reporting and chronicle generation, but are not free; other options such as spreadsheets and sign-in templates exist (there are many on [PFS Prep](#)) to facilitate reporting.

5.2.1. Dealing with Reporting Errors

Reporting is a requirement for VOs. If it is not done in a timely manner, it negatively impacts a player's ability to get their in-game rewards; it also impacts their attitude toward Organized Play and willingness to continue participating. When reporting is not done (or not done correctly), players have the right to ask

to have it corrected (typically by reaching out to the session GM or via the [<orgplayreportingerrors@paizo.com>](mailto:orgplayreportingerrors@paizo.com) email address, but they could reach out to any VO as well). If a player reaches out to a VO, they should ask the player if they have reached out to the GM prior to following any of the following steps.

5.2.1.1. Required Information for Incorrect or Missing Reporting

To get reporting issues fixed, there is a subset of specific information that will need to be provided to assist with either the VO, the VC, or OP addressing the issue: Not all of the below will be applicable to every situation, for instance, if a player signed the sign-in sheet with the wrong character number, but, any escalation to OP will need most, if not all, of the below information, and it will be helpful to the VO who is attempting to assist the player.

- Player ID
- Character Number
- Character ID
- Event Code
- Scenario Number, Scenario Name
- Session Number (if available to the player or via search within the event code on the reporting page)
- Date of Session
- Venue
- If incorrectly assigned, the player should also provide the correct character name and number for assignment.
- A copy of the chronicle sheet earned by and given to the player for the character they are indicating has the reporting error

5.2.1.2. Confirm Game Info and AoR (Area of Responsibility)

Review the report from the player. If you are not on

the session as a reporter, or if the session has been closed as fully reported, you will need to escalate to your VC to review.

The VC should check the following:

- Has the session been reported at all?
- Is the event or session in question a convention?
- Is this an ongoing issue with a VO not completing their required reporting within a reasonable time (defined in the [VO Handbook](#) as within 2 weeks of session completion)?
- Is the event or session in your Area of Responsibility (AoR)?

5.2.1.3. VC Escalation

As a VC, you have the capability to fix most issues that occur within your AoR. You also have the ability to search for and report on events (even closed ones), though the sessions may not show up in a search. If a reporting error falls outside your AoR or you run into an issue trying to address the issue, you can submit the required information to <orgplayreportingerrors@paizo.com>.

If a VO within your reporting structure is not completing reporting in a timely manner, you should take appropriate action based on whether this is an isolated incident or an ongoing issue, and include a reminder for the VO to complete reporting within the 2-week window given from the completion of the session, and the importance of not sitting on reporting until the last minute. In the event reporting is being done by a non-VO and it is not being completed within the same 2-week timeframe and it is on a VO's event code, it is the responsibility of the VO for the event code to follow up with the non-VO to get the reporting issue addressed. If it becomes a continued issue, the non-VO should be advised to submit the reporting information to the VO for completion. If the event code is a private code used by a specific non-VO GM, the best that a VO can do is

to reach out to the GM and ask them to complete the reporting at their earliest convenience.

5.2.1.4. Closing the Loop

Report or edit the session with the correct information. Confirm it is saved.

Once you have addressed the player's concerns, you should reach out to the player to let them know their issue should be fixed. In the event you have to forward the player's issue to <orgplayreportingerrors@paizo.com>, you may wish to copy the player on the email so they will be able to check the reporting site once the reporting issue has been corrected.

5.2.2. Character Audits and Illegal Characters

GMs and VOs can audit characters at any time. When a character is audited, the current version of the character is reviewed and the chronicle sheets attached to the character are presented (either physically or electronically) for review.

5.2.2.1. Purpose

What purposes do audits serve? Audits are not punitive actions taken against a player. Rather, they are an expository action taken which verifies the following:

- All items, spells, powers, feats, etc. are sanctioned for use.
- Equipment has been purchased appropriately via the purchasing rules for the game system .
- Copies of additional resource material that are required by the Character Options pages for each game system are made available to the auditor by the player, either physically or digitally. This can include logging into their Paizo account to show the .pdf list (provided the

auditor is also shown the username to verify it belongs to the player) or the receipt from the FLGS where it was purchased.

- NOTE - The onus to describe how something should work is on the player, so they should at least attempt to have access to the rule that allows the options to be used.
- Options in use by characters which are only granted by boons are earned and documented appropriately (such as with Achievement Points).
- Characters in play have played the requisite sessions to be in the level range for the adventure being run.

Finally, note that audits can often help players find items in their favor that they may have missed, such as missing feats or ability boosts.

5.2.2.2. Performing the audit

There are specific things to review when auditing characters. The critical items are:

- Does the character sheet and supporting documentation indicate it was created and leveled up in alignment with the purpose statement above?
- Does the character have any items that are inappropriate for their level, or that have not been sanctioned for use in Organized Play?
- Are there missing chronicle sheets?
- Does the player have physical or digital copies of the required source material for any of the items they're using from the Character Options page that requires source material?
- Does the character have, between gear and available funds, a level of earned wealth that would be appropriate for their level?
- Has the player kept track of gear sold/purchased and character changes made between sessions?
- Does the character's reputation meet the

minimum for any faction-specific boons they may have slotted or in-game items granted to them by their faction or training?

5.2.2.3. What do you do if you find one or more issues during your audit?

Human error happens. Not every issue found is nefarious in nature.

NOTE - The information in this section should be freely shared with any non-Venture-Officer Game Masters who may perform audits or who believe a player is using a character that is built using unsanctioned material.

If a player has an error, they can be asked or directed to correct the error. For instance, if their character has a weapon that has not been sanctioned for use in the Organized Play campaign, you can ask that they select a different weapon for their character to use. If they refuse to make any changes, they can either use a pregen or be disqualified from participation in that session.

If a character has multiple issues, the same advice as above stands. However, if the multiple issues needing correction would result in delaying a game start time for other players, the player can be advised to either use a pregen or be disqualified from participation in that session. Higher-level character audits will take a longer time to perform than lower-level characters (they can take hours to go through fully). If a character will require a deep dive vs. a spot audit, encourage the player to use a pregen for the session until the audit can be completed. Deep dive audits should be a rare occurrence.

In either of the above events, the player should also be advised of the issues with their character, what actions they can/should take, and where to find the rules that indicate what content is available for them

to use for their character.

No matter whether a character passes or fails an audit, a record of the audit should exist, even if it is something as simple as "GM XXXX performed character audit on Character ID XXXXX-XXX. Audit found no/one/some issues". This should be kept locally by the Venture-Officer over the specific event or venue where the audit took place and only passed up the chain if requested or if an escalation is required (see below).

5.2.2.4. How about ongoing issues?

In the event you have a player whose character audits are regularly failed, escalate to the Venture-Officer to whom you report as this could enter the conflict resolution escalation process or need to be discussed by the Venture-Officer with their other reports, in the event the player in question may play at other venues.

The Venture-Officer who is the next in the chain of escalation should either request or be provided by default the documentation around the audits that were failed and any resulting discussions with the player in question.

Player sanctioning should follow the guidance in [Section 6.2 of the VO Handbook](#)

5.2.3. Lost Chronicles

Players are required to keep the chronicle sheets given as proof of completion of a scenario.

Characters are subject to audit at any time by a GM. Without chronicles, a PC is not considered legal or playable in the Organized Play Campaign Setting.

5.2.3.1. Single Lost Chronicles

Players who lose a chronicle can ask the GM or VO to replace them. A VO should only replace a chronicle if they were the GM, or when the game's GM is

unresponsive or unreachable, and only within their region. If a player asks for a replacement for another location or an event/convention, they should be encouraged to reach out to that location's or event's/convention's organizing VO or committee. If a player does not know who the VO over a venue is, they should reach out to the area's VC for assistance. In the event the lost chronicle was earned outside the player's home region, they should follow the above guidance on reaching directly to the VO (when known) or to the area's VC or RVC (if they do not know who the VC of the area is).

To request a chronicle sheet replacement, the player will need to provide some specific information, such as the date, the name of the GM (if they have it), their PFS ID, the character number, and the name of the venue where the event took place.

To replace a chronicle, a VO should first audit the event to make sure the session was reported for the player with the PC in question. This guide assumes the session was reported; if it was not, the VO needs to follow up on getting the game reported in the first place. If the reporting does not match, the VO should follow up with the GM and player to clarify the discrepancy. Throughout the process, the VO should consider the context, such as whether the player:

- Often loses paperwork
- Has failed audits in the past
- Is considered trustworthy
- Remembers what boons they earned on the chronicle, success conditions, bonus reputation, and what rewards (credits/gp) they received
- Has all other chronicles for the PC, demonstrating what XP their PC had when applying the missing chronicle

This process is intended to maintain the integrity of the chronicle system; it is not a punitive measure against the player. As such, the VO is encouraged to work with the player, either recreating the chronicle using the honor system or helping them reach a

compromise such as reducing the bundles, or removing any plot-based boons.

5.2.3.2. Multiple Lost Chronicles

In most cases, losing multiple or all of a PC's chronicles means the character is no longer valid for Organized Play. Players may choose to simply start up a new PC. However, under special circumstances (e.g. player's house burning down, robbery, etc) a VO might be motivated to help a player reconstruct a beloved PC from scratch.

Replacing multiple (or all) lost chronicles will take significant effort on the VO's behalf. They should only undertake such a project willingly --- this is not a task they are required to do. In addition, the VO may need to get authorization from their RVC (or VC if there is no RVC available), depending on the policies within their region. It is relevant and appropriate for the VO to ask the player for a screenshot or some other listing of chronicles from the Paizo reporting system (players can always view their completely reported sessions on Paizo.com by going to Organized Play > My Organized Play > Summary). Under each character's listing of name, faction, and reputation, there is a link that reads "Show Sessions" that the player can select to show all sessions where a chronicle had been issued to them. This will help with the rebuilding of the missing chronicle sheets.

As above, the context of the situation is key. In this case, the VO can also lean on their VC and/or RVC for help.

Tailor the rebuild process with the player, working together every step of the way. The VO can leverage existing benchmarks and tools where appropriate. Some examples include the fact [most PFS2 scenarios are designed to offer 8 treasure bundles](#), and the rebuild boons such as [Evolving Destiny](#) or [Career Change](#) (depending on system availability) can set benchmarks or even be purchased by the player. Similar benchmarks may be available for all existing

live Organized Play Campaigns and should be leveraged in much the same way if they do exist. Yet another option might be referencing old character sheets provided by the player.

5.2.3.3. Auditing Reported Games

The VO will likely need to check other area sessions, and possibly sessions outside their home area. To do so, they will have to reach out to other VOs with the player's information. Before doing so, they should acquire permission in writing from the player to use their data (name, OPF ID, Character ID, Play Dates) in other regions to respect player privacy and to keep on the right side of privacy policies and laws.

5.2.3.3.1. Bonus Factions

There is no good way to discover bonus faction reputation when recreating the chronicles without reviewing the chronicle sheet at the end of each scenario as it is only shown on the page when editing a session (something that the VA doing the reissuing may not be able to do). Again, the VO must consider the player and the context.

5.2.3.4. Signing Off

All regenerated chronicles should contain the original GM's information, the original play date, the reissue date, the reissuing VO's name, and a statement that this is a reissue for a lost original chronicle. This way, the VO can be contacted if there are questions later on.

5.2.3.5. Closing the Loop

Once the sign-off has been completed, the chronicles should be given to the player (either physically or digitally). This should also, if requested by the VC or RVC, be included in the VO's quarterly report (the request and fulfillment). Player specifics, if requested by the VC or RVC, would be a consideration when

gaining a player's consent to provide their information as part of the recreation process and should be expressly requested of the player should the VC or RVC want it on record.

5.3. Record-Keeping & Confidentiality

Documentation is important, but it must adhere to applicable privacy laws. This means that a VO should not keep documentation past a certain shelf life, and should be careful about what information they save and what they transmit.

The authors of this guide currently lack guidance on this from a legal standpoint; the OPF is investigating a policy that can be applied for its global organization and we await that feedback. As such, this section is currently a recommended best practice based on what the authors know at the time of writing.

RVCs and VCs should try to understand their region's privacy laws as best they can to help tailor their region's record-keeping policies.

5.3.1. In the USA

Paizo is based in Washington, and VOs should err on the side of Washington's data retention policies with a minimum for meeting WA's standard of 3 years for non-criminal items and data retention.

5.3.2. EU and GDPR

Global VCs should be careful to follow EU law, even though the OPF is a US-Based entity. From what the authors of this document understand, VOs may keep records at the local level, but records that include player names, email, and other personal information cannot be stored on US servers. In addition, any escalation to US-Based parts of the Organized Play Foundation (OPF) which includes a player's personal information without their specific consent to share it may run afoul of GDPR and would need the person's express permission to use their data in such a way.

The recommendation is to only refer to any individuals involved with any case overseas (such as OPF ban) by Player ID, avoiding the use of the name or any other identifier such as email. If a player appeals their ban or investigation, they may need to give the OPF permission to use their data for the purposes of the investigation.

5.3.3. Confidentiality

Privacy is important. VOs should abstain from discussing any ongoing investigation or any incidents with others unless they need to know (such as for the purposes of an investigation). Generally, no one outside the VO corps needs to know.

5.3.4. Quarterly Reporting Format

Quarterly reporting calls for VOs to collect and submit specific data up their reporting chain to Paizo OP (VA>VL>VC>RVC>OP). The current required information is as follows:

- # of Venues run (at a VA level, this is normally 1, while at the VC level, it should include all the venues reporting sessions for the quarter)
- # of New Member IDs handed out/registered
- # of Unique GMs running sessions this quarter
- # of Unique Players this quarter
- RSP Event Code(s) for next quarter
- # PF2 Scenarios
- # PF2 Quests
- # PF2 Bounties
- # PF2 Adventure Paths
- # PF2 One-Shots
- # PF2 Standalone Adventures
- # PF2 Specials
- # SFS Scenarios
- # SFS Quests
- # SFS Bounties
- # SFS Adventure Paths
- # SFS One-Shots
- # SFS Standalone Adventures
- # SFS Specials

- # PF1 Scenarios
- # PF1 Adventure Paths
- # PF1 Modules
- # PF1 Quests
- # PF1 Specials
- # PACS Scenarios
- # PACS Adventure Paths
- # PACS Specials

NOTE - Standalone Adventures are Free RPG Day Adventures and Pathfinder Adventures/Starfinder Adventures as they appear in the webstore.

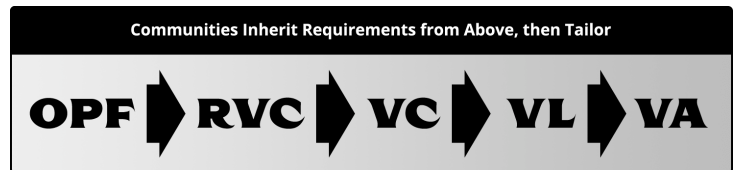
6. Crises and Problems

This section presents a variety of tools and techniques that can be tailored to your community, in addition to a minimum standard that must be met by all OPF events. This document only applies to official OPF events.

6.1. Standards of Conduct

Events must follow the Paizo [Code of Conduct](#). This expectation should be made clear upfront and early to all new players. The VO Taskforces are also working on a harassment policy, which will include mandatory policies that all events must follow.

Organized Play is a global community filled with a variety of cultures; every community is unique. Core Requirements such as the Harassment Policy and Code of Conduct are dictated by the top levels of the OPF and must be adhered to without exception, while more granular specifics can be elaborated down the chain so local VOs can truly serve their own unique community. These standards are developed in accordance with how Paizo wants OPF to manage their Organized Play Program.



It is important to consider the region's VO structure; not all regions have the exact chain of command. Usually, it is up to the VO who's working at the most local level to create standards that serve their particular community. These standards must always meet the requirements set by the OPF and be created with the guidance and support of fellow VOs such as the VC and RVC. For example, a VA running events at a store with a strict stop time might institute a policy that tables finish 15 minutes before closing and have this policy endorsed by their VC; a VA at another store in the same region might have more flexibility and never need such a policy. Both VA's policies are tailored to their event's constraints and do not break any of the requirements set out by the OPF.

No matter where a VO falls on the chain, they should seek to understand their community's needs and be proactive in setting expectations and addressing problems. They should strive for thoroughness and fairness when investigating issues, even if it means self-reporting their own missteps or conflicts of interest.

6.2. Infractions

While it is not possible to outline a solution for every occasion, there are three broad categories of problems and general conflict management strategies in the VO's kit. This section reviews them in ascending levels of severity. As always, a specific problem's context may alter its severity — for example, a minor infraction that is constantly repeated may become moderate.

6.2.1. Minor Infractions

Minor infractions are contained to the event or incident, and are often solved with a verbal signal. It's important to try and resolve these issues before they

turn into larger issues. Examples include comments that go a little over the top towards being offensive, attempting to play an invalid character, keeping poor records, and suspected fudging of dice rolls.

Responses

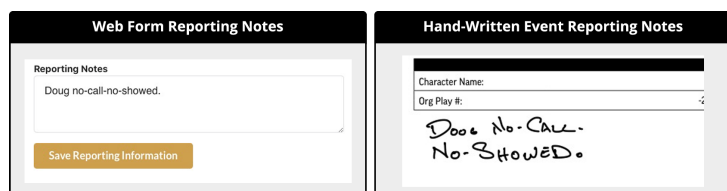
When discussing a player's words, focus on the objective Organized Play Code of Conduct, not the subjective action of the person in question; saying something like "that was in poor taste" or "we don't do that here" is often enough. Solutions for other problems can be simple and non-invasive. For example, a player with poor records can play a pregen; one who fudges dice should roll in the open.

Documentation

VOs *must* document all minor incidents. Unlike Moderate and major infractions, this reporting can be tailored. After all, emailing your VL or VC about every single small occurrence might produce an unusable or confounding quantity of information. VOs should work with their VLs/VCs to tailor how and when they perform minor incident reporting; the goal is to capture information in a *usable* and *actionable* way.

Examples of Tailoring Documentation

Every VO is different, with their own needs and abilities and preferences. Teams should partner to create procedures that reduce barriers to documentation based on team preferences and needs. There are many ways to achieve this; for example, integrating notes into existing flows such as quarterly reports. Many sign-in sheets and reporting systems have a "game notes" section that can be used to collect anecdotal notes that can then be integrated into a quarterly report to your VC, for example.



Some lodges even have online forms that the player/VO can submit reports to, allowing the VC to filter and review as they see fit. Every incident does not need to be reported up the chain as its own separate document, but it should be captured *somewhere*; good records can help VOs identify problem patterns and take steps to remedy them before they escalate.

Sample Game Notes

“

Game Notes: Robert made several inappropriate in-character comments. During break told him comments were not in keeping with the Paizo Organized Play Code of Conduct. He stopped after that

For how long to save sign-in sheets and other documentation, see Record-Keeping & Confidentiality.

6.2.2. Moderate Infractions

Moderate infractions can often lead to a suspension or ban. They must always be documented. Examples of moderate infractions might include constant swearing at the table or the use of demeaning language after warnings, purposefully misgendering players or PCs, fudging dice rolls after warnings, or demonstrating a repeated lack of respect for fellow players at the table (for example, attempting to override or dictate other players' actions or badgering the GM), and breaking event policy rules. Repetition of minor infractions after the initial infractions were discussed and resolved can also constitute a moderate infraction.

Responses

As the VO, it is your responsibility to address problem behavior and communicate with those involved — either during the event or afterward — as the situation warrants. If a GM or player approaches you about an incident involving a player or GM during an event, you must address the issue. Take the subject

of the report aside and inform them that their actions were not appropriate for participation in an Organized Play event, and, if their actions violated the Paizo Organized Play Code of Conduct, make sure to let them know this as well as what specific clause of the Code was violated. As before, make it about the objective policy, not about the subjective behavior. In many cases, this can be a learning opportunity for the player or GM. If there is a ban, there should be terms of reinstatement that include objective, measurable goals.

Documentation

Follow up with the player in whatever way possible (email, Paizo/Meetup PM, Discord/Slack), summarizing the incident and ensuring it's documented. Your supervising Venture Officer should be informed of the situation and then copied on this communication and any other communications about the issue and/or the player. These cases may not need to be escalated to the upper (or parallel) VO ranks to be dealt with, although they may be in some cases. Most often, the situation may work itself out as the person who gave offense may be embarrassed or apologetic. In the best cases, a moderate infraction can provide lessons to learn from and become a net positive for the community.

Sample Email

“

From: VA Alex Sampleson

To: Kathleen Jones

CC: VL William Johnson

Hi Kathleen,

I know we discussed this issue earlier tonight, but I just wanted to make sure we were all on the same page going forward.

At tonight's Starfinder Society game at The Cool Fun Game Store, there was an issue where you repeatedly misgendered another

player, as well as their character. This continued after they gently corrected you until I paused the game and addressed it with you, as doing so violated the Paizo Organized Play Code of Conduct and our lodge's rules. I appreciate you correcting your behavior after the break and your unprompted apology to the player.

In the future, please ensure you're using the correct pronouns for your fellow players and GMs, as well as their characters. I'm not recommending any further action at this time and consider this issue resolved.

Please reach out to me or VL William Johnson (he's copied on this email) if you have any further questions. I'm looking forward to seeing you at future events!

6.2.3. Major Infractions

Violence, threats of violence, discriminatory language, bullying, harassment, and unwanted/uninvited physical contact (such as one player putting their hand on another player's or groping) fall into the "no tolerance" category of infractions. It is unacceptable for a player to be exposed to any form of the above at any event. These incidents often warrant immediate calls to the police or law enforcement and should be communicated to the local VO corps as soon as it is safe and possible. Repetition of moderate infractions may also become a major infraction.

Responses

The game needs to pause (or even end) immediately so the incident can be dealt with. While every situation is different, keep in mind that safety for all participants is of the utmost importance — never put yourself or others in harm's way, even if it means canceling the remainder of the event. The incident must be documented and reported to your local VO Corps when it is safe to do so.

How a VO responds to particular incidents of this nature is not in the scope of this document, nor can the OPF offer guidance on the crisis. The VO corps has curated a list of outside training resources for VOs and it can be found at the end of this section under “Resolution Tools.” That said, there are some general strategies to keep in mind for certain kinds of major incidents:

Violence/Assault

- Secure your personal safety first, leaving the area if you can and if you or your players’ safety is at risk.
- If warranted, call the police or local authorities and other appropriate emergency contacts, particularly if the situation requires immediate medical and/or law enforcement personnel.
- Immediately contact the venue’s supervisor.

Once law enforcement personnel or the event’s manager are on the scene, they should assume control of the situation. Be prepared to provide a description of the violent or threatening individual, details of what was observed, and the exact location of the incident.

Harassment

- Secure your personal safety first.
- Stop the game if it has not been disrupted yet.
- Immediately contact another VO or functional area experts such as the convention staff or store owner to seek help in assessing/responding to the situation.
- Document the incident when you are able to do so and it is safe.

Bullying/Epithets

- If you do not feel safe or comfortable, end the game.
- Pause the game if you feel safe attempting to resolve the incident.
- If you are not comfortable/safe talking to the player(s) about the incident, end the game.
- Only attempt to resolve the conflict if you are

safe and comfortable doing so.

- Document the incident when you are able to do so and it is safe.

Documentation

All communication after the event should be in writing and escalated to your area’s leadership, up to and including your RVC. Follow-up should occur as soon as possible.

For incidents involving criminal activity, participants should be encouraged to report the incident to their local authorities. Documentation should be sent at the earliest opportunity to your local leadership, up to and including your RVC, the Paizo staff liaison, and the OPF board [at their website](#). At a convention, report these types of issues to the OPF event organizer(s) as well as convention management and security, if necessary.

6.2.4. Venue Involvement

Organizers do not have the authority to extend suspensions/bans to venues. Organizers are encouraged to work with venue owners/management to provide safe and secure spaces for players.

A suspension/ban dictated by the venue must be reported by the organizer to their supervising VO. Suspensions or bans enacted by venue owners must also be documented. If a banned member has questions, seeks to violate the ban, or wants to appeal the suspension, the venue VO should coordinate responses with the venue ownership/management.

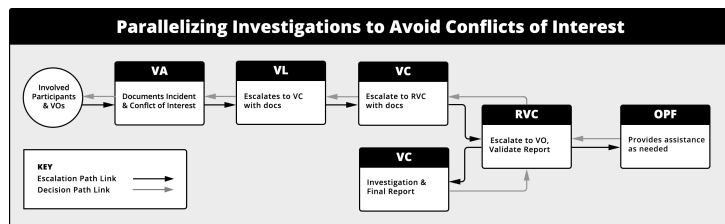
6.3. Investigating a Moderate or Serious Incident

When a player files a complaint, the first step is to listen. Documentation is key to resolving issues, so ask permission to record details, in writing if possible. Gather as much information as you can regarding the

issue. In the event you are unable to get the individual's Paizo ID, get as much information as possible, such as an email address, Discord ID, etc to be able to identify them in some way, shape, or form. Players may remain anonymous if they wish, though anonymity will limit the resolution options of a complaint and this should be conveyed during the discussion. VOs should be transparent about the investigation process: they should note that they will ask involved parties for information and that that information will be shared with other Venture Officers in their reporting chain prior to resolution. If there is a criminal incident, local laws or employment policies may require you to report the incident. If it is reported, make sure the venue and VO corps know this. Note that the OPF's processes are always evolving, and this section may be subject to change at a later date or realign to new policies, standards, or requirements.

6.3.1. Handling Conflicts of Interest

Investigations should limit potential conflicts of interest to the greatest degree possible. When resources and local VO structure allow, VOs should move an investigation to another part of the leadership within their region. This is especially true if the investigation itself is involved with someone inside the local VO leadership structure. If the RVC is unable to do so (for example, due to regional or volunteer constraints), they might ask another RVC to assist by handling the investigation. This best practice will help ensure the integrity of the investigation.



All VOs should fully disclose any conflicts of interest — both ones that might be perceived by fellow players (for example, if a VO once got a ride to the

event with a player who's undergoing an investigation they might be seen as partial to that player), and actual conflicts of interest (for example, a VO performing an investigation against a player who also happens to be his manager at work). Everyone has conflicts of interest; they are not good or bad in and of themselves. Many research institutions have policies that acknowledge this reality; for example [Brown University](#) says:

“

The existence of a conflict of interest does not imply any wrongdoing. Conflicts of interest are not in and of themselves unethical or impermissible. Indeed, they are often unavoidable, and in many cases can be appropriately managed or reduced to an acceptable level. Recognition of potential conflicts, and sensitivity to how personal, financial, and other relationships can be perceived by others, are critical parts of managing conflicts.

Self-reporting a conflict of interest doesn't mean removal from the investigation. However, it allows fellow VOs to evaluate and determine the best process toward resolution; it will also help protect all parties involved (including the VOs) and help maintain the integrity of the VO corps. Any disclosure of conflicts of interest should occur between VOs on a need-to-know basis for the purposes of an investigation. If asked about a conflict of interest as it pertains to an ongoing investigation, an appropriate response is simply "this is being investigated by a neutral party." VOs are expected to respect the privacy of one another and not disclose any COI information outside the investigation.

Investigation Process

An investigation has several steps. These do not indeed to be performed sequentially; instead, they should be tailored to the needs and nature of the investigation.

- **Disclose any Conflicts of Interest as soon as possible.** If you are aware of a potential conflict of interest, self-report it and attain guidance from the upper VO corps as needed and in keeping with OPF policy. Whenever a conflict of interest is discovered — at any point in the process — it should be disclosed immediately.
- **Interview the witnesses.** Each involved person (if possible), including the GM or other players at the table, should be asked for their account of what happened. Document their report in a neutral manner. Avoid sharing any confidential information or inserting personal conclusions/biases into the conversation.
- **Interview the subject.** After all reports are taken, discuss the incident with the subject of the complaint without revealing confidential information about the whistleblower. Acquire and document the facts in a neutral manner, without making assumptions or judgments of innocence or guilt.
- **Review with Supporting VOs.** Review the incident with your supervising VO(s), or those VO(s) assigned to assist with the investigation, as appropriate to the level of the incident (note that any VO can reach out to higher ranks if they feel like they need help). If a VO skips a step in the chain the incident should be investigated before discussion with any of the skipped VOs.
- **Document Responses.** Prepare written responses to involved parties, including the complaint filer. Responses should include that corrective measures were invoked, but no specifics to the actions taken. For example:

“

Although we are unable to get into specific details of the actions that have been taken, we encourage you to reach out in the event the reported issues have not improved or gone away.

- **Ensure all parties know they have been**

heard. Objective, measurable changes or outcomes should be clear to everyone involved.

- **Share the Actions Taken.** The specifics of actions taken should be shared with the VO corps as needed, especially in the event of suspension/bans.

Overall, it is essential to keep good records of the incident. If an issue escalates or the subject of the investigation invokes their right to appeal (as outlined in the Roleplaying Guides' Violation Enforcement Procedures for [Starfinder Society](#) and [Pathfinder Society](#)), documentation is needed to address the severity. The absence of documentation can hamper the resolution of ongoing community issues. If you are not sure, err on the side of too much documentation.

Sample Investigation Report

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The following sample report is not intended as a hard and fast template to follow, but as an example of the sort of information, the OPF would like to see in a summary.

Incident: *On June 30, 2021, after running a game at The Cool Fun Store in Anytown, I was approached by a member of our lodge, Ian Rights. He was obviously upset and asked to speak with me about an incident that had occurred earlier that evening.*

Ian told me that during a break in their game, another player (Jim Jameson) cornered him in the hallway. Jim grabbed Ian's shoulder and asked why "he hadn't healed his [expletive deleted] barbarian," referring to Ian's cleric character. When Ian didn't respond, Jim shook him roughly and said "if he dies, I'm gonna make you pay for the rez," then left. [See my attached notes for further details of Ian's report]

I thanked Ian for telling me about the issue

and asked if he felt safe going home alone. After we returned home, I resolved to make sure they were not seated at the same table in the following weeks, and I reached out to the GM of the game (Kathleen Jones).

7/1: Via phone, I spoke with Kathleen Jones about the game the previous evening. She said that she stayed at the table during the break, but that when Ian returned he was very clearly shaken up and didn't speak much the rest of the evening. She provided me with a list of the players.

7/4: I spoke via phone with Robert Smythe, one of the players in the game, privately at another event at The Other Store in Secondtown. Robert said that he saw Ian and Jim in the hall together, but didn't hear the conversation.

7/6: At the following week's session, I make sure to sit Ian and Jim at separate tables well apart from each other. I checked with Ian to be sure that he was alright and let him know that I was looking into the incident. The two did not have any interactions that night.

I also spoke with three of the other players, who confirmed Ian's change in demeanor after the break. One of the other players had also seen them in the hallway together.

Following the game, I asked Jim to stay after and sat down with him and Kathleen to ask for his account of what happened (see attached notes). Jim said that he had talked to Ian during the break, and confirmed that he had asked Ian to heal him more often. When I asked him directly if he had touched Ian, he denied it. I reminded him that bullying and harassment are against the Paizo Organized Play Code of Conduct and asked him again if there had been physical contact, which he denied.

Conclusion: Based on my investigation, I have no way to confirm the entirety of Ian's report. However, regardless of whether or not there was physical contact between the two, I am comfortable saying that there was some level of harassment directed at Ian from Jim. As this is the first offense, I am recommending a two-week suspension from play for Jim at The Cool Fun Store in Anytown beginning on 7/13, and will endeavor to keep the two of them at separate tables for a further two weeks after the suspension is lifted.

6.4. Incidents that do not Violate OPF Policies

Certain minor-level incidents do not violate the Code of Conduct but warrant attention. A VO doesn't just administer policy, they curate a dynamic community of individuals from a variety of cultures, abilities, worldviews, and personal histories. Some degree of conflict is a natural and expected part of this existence. Conflicts can arise from a variety of sources such as legitimate differences of opinion, uncommunicated agendas, misaligned preferences, personality differences, or miscommunication. For example, sometimes players simply do not get along with one another due to subjective differences in playstyle. At other times, interpersonal issues that do not violate any OPF policies may become a barrier to enjoyment and engagement.

In these cases, it is up to the VO to understand the unique context of the situation, serve as a leader, and navigate the situation in a way that is most helpful to their community. As such, this guide cannot instruct VOs on how to handle such conflict (though there is a curated list of further reading at the end of the document). As with Major Incidents, there are some general guidelines.

- *Respect the privacy of others.* If you become aware of a conflict do not discuss it with other

players who do not need to know.

- *Uncover the root cause.* Often, a conflict may have a deeper root cause that can be discovered through conversation. For example, one player might have misgendered another player several times, leading to outbursts of frustration that seem totally unexpected and unrelated. In this case, a VA seeking the root cause of the problem has uncovered a legitimate infraction and should proceed to resolve it following the appropriate track for OPF policy violations.
- *Focus on behavior and events instead of personalities.* A VA should always endeavor to avoid bias and focus on specific incidents instead of their perception of the player(s) in question.
- *Provide feedback where appropriate.* A VA may take other approaches, such as providing a GM or player with feedback about their behavior. As always, this kind of effort requires situational leadership and an approach tailored to the context, culture, maturity, and personality of those involved.
- *Help Players Avoid Conflict.* In many cases, the optimal situation is to use an avoidance tactic by separating the players before games. This can be achieved by mustering them at different tables. While avoidance is often seen as a poor tactic in the workplace, remember that people attend events for enjoyment. This simple solution can often be leveraged for subjective playstyle differences or personality differences. A VO should try to construct event musters that minimize potential sources of interpersonal conflict to enhance enjoyment for all players involved.

6.5. Escalation Triggers

6.5.1. Issues with Players

Exactly when an incident should be escalated is

subjective, but there are a few general things to keep in mind. Consider whether it is something a VC or VL needs to know. A VC may not want an email every time a player has a minor faux pas at a table. However, if it's becoming a repeated problem, then it may be time to share or refer them to your documentation.

Here are some general conditions that could trigger escalation; this list is by no means exhaustive:

- Is it something you need an outside opinion on?
- Is it something you're not comfortable dealing with?
- Is it a Moderate or Major infraction?
- Does it involve another VO?
- Is the player a guest at your location, and a regular of another region?
- Does it involve a Paizo / OPF staff member or employee?

If the answer to any of these is "yes" then it's a good candidate for escalation. The essential thing to keep in mind is that the leaders in the VO corps are there to help you. Never hesitate to escalate something or ask for help. If the person above you is a problem, never hesitate to reach above them to request the investigation be handled by another region.

6.5.2. Issues within the VO Corps

When the VO is the one demonstrating problematic behavior, the situation often falls on fellow VOs to resolve. If a VO sees another VO breaking the rules or breaking the OPF community standards, they should document the incident as best they can and report it to that VO's local VC or RVC. As with other forms of documentation, it should be objective and clear.

More often, it is players who see the behavior. Any player can move up the chain from any VO with their concerns at any time, and this is crucial to the integrity of our volunteer corps. It's a good idea for communities to make their entire VO corps

accessible: for example, VA might publish (with express permission) the names and public contact emails of their VL and VC on their event's Warhorn. Another area might put the information on their website. Still another option is to include the contact information for the area's leadership in their welcome packet. As a final measure, they can include the OPF via [contacting them on their website](#) to escalate issues beyond the local chain or seek help.

No matter what, VOs should strive to remove any and all barriers that could prevent a community member from being heard. If asked, a VO must know and be able to readily provide the public contact info for the next person up the chain of command at the player's request; barring that, the best place to find outside assistance or mediation from the OPF itself. It is a best practice to provide points of contact for the region's VO Corps so long as they give their explicit permission for you to do so; this is a safety tool for players and VOs alike.

6.6. Suspensions of Service/Bans

Every Organized Play suspension of service must be supported by written documentation. A suspension is reported to the RVC level and may be shared among any other regions or VO teams who need to know, and copied to Paizo staff as warranted. Suspensions are not shared with uninvolved players who have no need to know.

A two-week or two-game suspension may be the first step, with the behavior that caused the ban outlined clearly. However, in some cases that may not be appropriate. For example, a player who doesn't play frequently might be suspended for two games instead of two weeks; a player who no-call-no-shows might not be able to reserve seats in advance but allowed to sit at a table if they show up on time and there are seats available. Suspensions should always be discussed with the VC or RVC, who can help guide you based on their general policies as well as the context

of the situation. A two-week suspension may be followed by escalating suspensions such as one month, two months, etc. Each new infraction must be supported by written documentation and reported. Generally, after three incidents, the RVC will decide on how to proceed.

Note that suspensions are not necessarily bans from the campaign, but from local or regional events. A single event cannot dictate how other events operate, nor can one area dictate who can or cannot participate in the worldwide Organized Play Foundation program. However, VOs can work together with documentation, communication, and teamwork alongside their RVC or the OPF to ban a problem player from multiple venues at once.

Complete denial of service (aka bans) may come from either the OPF or Paizo Organized Play, depending on whether the ban is for a single community or any organized play programs administered by OPF. RVCs may recommend bans, but they must be enacted by Paizo Organized Play operational leadership. The OPF Executive Director may recommend bans for enactment by the OPF Board. Community members have the right to appeal suspensions of service by escalating the incident to the next level of campaign leadership. Correspondence about the denial of service should include providing contact information for the next level up the OPF chain. That is the player's right and it is your responsibility to let them appeal any decisions to the proper channel.

6.7. Resolution Tools

Tailoring is important in all leadership situations: individuals come from a variety of backgrounds, upbringings, abilities, and worldviews. As a leader, it is important to be respectful of others' viewpoints and abilities and to try and tailor your approach to the needs at hand. A successful resolution may leave both parties feeling grateful for having learned something. What follows are some general strategies for the VO.

6.7.1. General Strategies

1. **Define acceptable behavior:** Before there is any hint of a conflict, reduce or even eliminate potential problems by sharing the Paizo Organized Play Code of Conduct.
2. **Do not avoid conflict:** Everyone has their own comfort levels when it comes to dealing with problems. In some cases, a disagreement between two players might work itself out and can be monitored. However, in other cases conflict can fester. Do not avoid dealing with problems just because it makes you uncomfortable. As a VO you have the responsibility and authority to act when it is called for.
3. **Choose a neutral setting:** If you must discuss an incident at an event, do so away from the table, in private. If you email after an event, keep the tone neutral.
4. **Offer guidance, not punishment:** Conflicts can be learning moments for players, who come from a huge array of life experiences and backgrounds.

Further Learning

- [Conflict Management Specialization](#) on Coursera
- [7 Essentials Steps in Any Online Community Moderation Process](#)
- [How to Respond to Code of Conduct Reports](#)

7. Resources

1. Promotional Flies
 1. [OP Signs \(various sizes\)](#)
2. Important Documents
 1. [Code of Conduct](#)
 2. [Venture-Officer Maintenance Request Form](#)
 3. Convention Docs

1. [GM Scenario Request Form](#)
2. [Event After Action Report](#)
3. [Charity Boon Recipient Form](#)
4. [GM 5th Nova Evaluation](#)
5. [GM 5th Star Evaluation](#)
6. [GM 5th Glyph Evaluation](#)

8. Appendix

8.1. 1. Awarding Achievement Points as an RVC or VC

To do this, log in to your Organized Play account on Paizo's website and click on the Admin tab. On the Admin tab, click the link "Find Users to Grant Organized Play Points". Search for the user by their Paizo ID, input the event number, select a point type from the dropdown menu, award the number of points they earned for staffing HQ (for instance, you may award them the same number of points you would a GM, multiplied by the modifier of your con (Premier vs. Premier+), and click Grant Points.

9. Changelog

Version 1.6: (3/2023)

- Initial guide launched
- Removed direct links to Information for Convention Organizers and Interactive Presentations, added wording directing convention organizers to the important-links channel of the VO Discord Server.
- Added wording in Section 4 to further clarify support tiers
- Added standardized AcP rewards for HQ Staff at

Conventions (Ticket 8 / Tracking ID 4A2-MHB-1BT1)

- Added section on quarterly reporting (Ticket 11 / Tracking ID 689-889-6P2S)
- Added links to RSP definition/process on OPF website to sections 4.1.1 and 3.5 (Ticket 12 / Tracking ID HZX-L8R-QYTQ)
- Added clarification on filing convention After Action Report to align with the VO Agreement requirement of 1 week from the convention's end.
- Added sections on Dealing with Reporting Issues, Character Audits, and Lost Chronicles (tickets 13, 16, & 17 / Tracking IDs GMH-GPG-RW3B, U8S-SQV-2N2R, & 318-JE6-S6HY)
- Added clarification on accessing the Regional Support Program as the Policies page includes multiple policies.
- Clarified what is meant by standalone adventure in the quarterly reporting section

10. Lessons Learned

This section openly broadcasts what we've learned in the process of working on the guide. We are sharing this section so our audience can better understand the authors' process, and so others have the opportunity to gain from our learning experiences.

- **International Privacy Compliance:**
 - The Taskforce should have an Active, Global Membership to ID and mitigate compliance risks like GDPR.
 - Working with GDPR means using OPF IDs only. We theorize that the OPF can safely use only org play IDs for issues escalated overseas without express player permission, but are awaiting further research from legal.
 - Working with GDPR means performing region-based investigations. To keep the VOs safe from legal issues, we recommend investigations staying in one

RVC-owned region.

- **Best Practices for generating docs:**
 - Interface with other Taskforces, especially on escalation and privacy issues.
 - Listen to international members and VOs from unique communities; the OPS and VO communities are not monolithic.
 - Get Feedback from the VC/RVC Community before publishing. It helps with buy-in and collective ownership. Encourage curation of further reading lists as the VOs are excited to share their expertise.
- **Documentation and Investigation of Incidents:**
 - Document with Tailoring in Mind. We found VCs want to tailor to their region, with a minimum set of standards like an ISO. Write for tailoring best practices from the top-down where possible.
 - Do not Endorse Unofficial Products. Products like RPG Chronicles are oft-used but cost money and are not officially supported.
 - Documentation is required at all incident levels. At the lowest level (minor incidents) docs can be anecdotal but must be captured. VOs wish for a more formalized and rigorous process at moderate + infraction levels.
 - Tracking of bad actors needs to be tailored. VOs should get as much info as possible to ID them in an effective way that works for them.
 - Establish a best practice for RVCs to move an investigation to another part of the chain. Some VOs want this to be required but is not always possible due to region size or language barriers. Thus, a best-practice tailoring approach was chosen over making it required.
 - Document processes for subjective problems that do not break OPF

guidelines, but warrant a closer look.

<HR>