

FAIR PLAY REGULATIONS

Approved by FIDE Council on 10/11/2024
Applied from 18 November, 2024

1. Purpose, guiding principles, definitions

1.1 These regulations deal with the investigation of suspected cheating incidents and other fair play violations. It supplements and clarifies the provisions of the FIDE Charter, the FIDE Ethics and Disciplinary Code, and the Procedural Rules of the Fair Play Commission.

1.2 "Cheating" in these regulations means:

- a) the deliberate use of electronic devices (01. Laws of Chess / FIDE Laws of Chess taking effect from 1st January, 2023 / Art. 11.3.2 FIDE Laws of Chess) or other sources of information or advice (01. Laws of Chess / FIDE Laws of Chess taking effect from 1st January, 2023 / Art. 11.3.1 FIDE Laws of Chess) during a game; or
- b) the manipulation of chess competitions such as including but not limited to, result manipulation, sandbagging, match-fixing, rating fraud, false identity, and deliberate participation in fictitious tournaments or games.

1.3 Online cheating may also be deemed to have occurred when statistical evidence is insufficient to substantiate assumed cheating, but there is additional evidence that the individual may have cheated e.g., video evidence, chess expert opinions (GMs, IMs, and other specialists), and other situational factors (Suspected fair play violation).

1.4 Other fair play violations are:

- a) Over-the-board rule violation:
OTB rule violations include a variety of infractions that occur over the course of the tournament. This includes bringing a phone into the playing hall, bringing other forbidden gadgets into the playing hall (e.g., wallets, smart glasses, pens, watches), being uncooperative with the Fair Play Team or Arbiter, refusing to be searched or scanned. The list of OTB rule violations is not exhaustive.
- b) Online technical rule violation:
Technical violations connected with the video conference system used to supervise the competition, for example, disconnections, playing without a camera on, playing without a shared screen, playing without a microphone on (if it is required by regulation of competition) *per se*, does not lead to the assumption that a cheating offense has been committed, however, the player can be penalised accordingly by either the Fair Play Team or the Arbiter.

1.5 Assumed cheating

There shall be a presumption of cheating if statistical analysis by a FIDE-validated and approved algorithm and/or other methodology applied to a player's performance in a single game, or a series of games or tournaments in competitive play shows a Z-score (reflective of the deviation between the player's actual performance and the projected fair play for a player having comparable Elo rating) above the official Z-score threshold. In such a case, if FIDE PFL institutes disciplinary proceedings against the player in question, the burden to rebut the presumption of cheating and show his or her innocence shall be on the player.

1.6 Thresholds

The Z-score measure of unlikelihood (i.e. the number of standard deviations from the norm) is commonly used in science and can be a composite of several results.

Currently, only Prof. Kenneth W. Regan's methodology is approved by FIDE. In order to provide a statistical judgement, Prof. Regan's model uses three separate statistical tests, each producing a z-score to indicate deviation from the projected performance: Move-Matching (MM), Equal-top value moves (EV) and Average Scaled Difference (ASD). The outcomes of the MM, EV, and ASD tests are further combined into a single overall Z-score. The notion of Z-score is not limited to the methodology of Prof. Regan. Results from other approved methodologies can be cast as Z-scores, and then fall equally under the following proposed thresholds:

- a) For online chess, a threshold of 4.25. This represents a natural frequency of 0.000011, one in almost 100,000. Considering the observed rate of cheating in online chess, this yields appraised odds about 1,000-to-1 against the null hypothesis of fair play, toward the high end of the 99% to 99.9% confidence range regarded as meeting the CAS criterion of "comfortable satisfaction" in the context of chess.
- b) For over-the-board chess, a threshold of 5.00. This represents a natural frequency of one in almost 3.5 million, and is similarly placed with regard to an in-person observed cheating rate.

These provisions apply if there is no other evidence. If such evidence is available, a Z-score of 2.50 or higher may be used in support.

1.7 Reckless or manifestly unfounded accusation of chess cheating:

Any player or official who, or National Federation which, makes public or private allegations of cheating against another player or official without acceptable grounds existing for a reasonable suspicion of cheating; provided that a player or a captain is not precluded from reporting in private to an arbiter or anti-cheating official during a competition any suspicion of cheating by another person for the purposes of monitoring the behaviour of such person.

1.8 For the purposes of this regulation, attempts at cheating will be considered cheating.

2. Jurisdiction

2.1 The Fair Play Commission (FPL) has jurisdiction in all cheating-related matters, including false accusations. People subject to FPL jurisdiction include any person

with FIDE ID, players, supporting persons, and team captains. Supporting persons include, but are not limited to, heads of delegations, seconds, trainers, managers, psychologists, organizers, spectators, relatives, journalists, chess officials, arbiters when involved in cheating incidents.

2.2 All FIDE-rated over-the-board games are subject to FPL jurisdiction.

2.3 Online chess falls under FPL jurisdiction for official FIDE competitions. For such tournaments, the provisions of Appendix 1 of the FIDE Online Chess Regulations shall apply in addition. Additionally, FIDE may monitor private online events that meet specific criteria, such as those offering money prizes or involving top-level players.

2.4 All cheating incidents occurring in tournaments that require maximum and increased levels of protection (as defined in the Anti-Cheating Protection Measures) must be reported to FPL. However, FPL may decide to refer a cheating incident that occurred in such tournaments to a National Federation (NF).

2.5 Cheating incidents occurring in tournaments that require standard levels of protection (as defined in the Anti-Cheating Protection Measures) are to be referred to NFs, except when the cheating incident affects the awarding of a FM/WFM title, and/or involves a person, either as claimant or respondent, holding the FM/WFM, IM/WIM or GM/WGM title. Such cases must be reported to FPL as well. If such cases are not reported as required, FIDE FPL may initiate an independent investigation and refer the responsible National Federation and/or tournament organizer to the EDC.

2.6 When an investigation is referred to an NF, the NF will investigate the case and apply those sanctions they deem proper. NFs are required to notify FPL of their decisions together with the evidence considered during the proceedings. The FPL may adopt this NF decision and/or refer the case to EDC. If the FPL does not adopt the NF decision, then the sanction will only apply at the national level.

2.7 If an NF sanctions a player in a cheating-related case and the NF is not required to report the case to FPL, the sanction will only apply at the national level. However, the NF can apply to FPL to adopt the sanction if a ban of at least 12 months has been imposed.

2.8 While FPL has jurisdiction as detailed under Section II, National Federations are expected to create their own Anti-Cheating regulations and systems.

3. Complaints and investigations

3.1 Triggering an investigation

3.1.1 Investigations can be initiated based on a complaint:

- a) an In-Tournament Complaint (“ITC”);
- b) a Post-Tournament Complaint (“PTC”).

3.1.2 Investigations can also be triggered by:

- a) a report of the Chief Fair Play Officer or Chief Arbiter of a tournament;
- b) FPL initiative;
- c) a request by the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission (EDC) or any other body of FIDE authorized by the FIDE Charter.

3.2 Complaints

3.2.1 Any person having a FIDE Identity Number can file a complaint.

3.2.2 All Complaints must be submitted in writing and addressed to the FPL at fpl@fide.com.

3.2.3 In- and Post-Tournament-Complaints must be filed via the relevant Complaint form (Annexes A-B). If a complaint does not meet this requirement, the complainant will be asked to submit the form within a specified period of time. If this does not happen, the chairperson of the FPL shall reject the complaint as inadmissible.

3.2.4 The complainant shall provide all the information required in the Complaint Form and must detail the reasons why the Complaint is being made, listing all basis available at the time of filing.

3.2.5 Oral or informal Complaints are not accepted.

3.2.6 In-Tournament Complaints must be delivered to the Chief Fair Play Officer. When there is no CFPO, then they should be addressed to the Chief Arbiter. Upon receipt of an ITC, the Chief Fair Play Officer or the CA shall:

- a) Inform the complainant about the penalty for filing a manifestly unfounded ITC;
- b) Take steps to investigate the case in the usual manner, with reference to Article 12.9 for possible penalties;
- c) Forward the complaint and their report including all findings to the FIDE FPL and FIDE ARB.

If the Chief Fair Play Officer comes to the conclusion that the ITC is unfounded he may dismiss the complaint during the tournament, subject to his duties under 3.2.6.c above. The player retains the right to file a Post-Tournament Complaint on the same incident.

3.2.7 When a Post-Tournament Complaint is filed, the complaint must contain an explanation of why an ITC was not filed earlier.

3.2.8 All Complaints shall list all basis available at the time of filing.

3.2.9 All Complaints based solely on the unsupported assumption that a person is playing stronger than expected due to his/her rating will be considered manifestly unfounded.

3.2.10 FPL may initiate an investigation based on any piece of information that may come into its knowledge regarding a possible cheating incident, including false accusation.

3.2.11 When an investigation is triggered by a request by EDC or any other body of FIDE authorized by the FIDE Charter, FPL shall act as a Fact-Finding Committee of the triggering body.

3.2.12 All information about complaints and investigations shall remain confidential until an investigation is completed by the FPL. Relevant FIDE officials and other involved parties will receive information as deemed appropriate by the IP; however, strict confidentiality must be maintained throughout the investigation process. In case of breach of confidentiality requirements by complainants or the Chief Arbiter or any other person with knowledge of the complaint or the investigation before the investigation is completed, the FPL can refer all offenders to the EDC.

4. Investigation procedure

4.1 When a cheating incident is brought to the attention of the FPL, an Investigatory Panel (IP) or an Investigator can be nominated to investigate it.

4.2 FPL has the right to perform preliminary investigations with respect to any alleged or possible case of cheating-related violation.

4.3 If a complaint is inadmissible or manifestly unfounded on its face, the FPL Chair may reject it. 3.2.3 remains unaffected.

4.4 The IP will consist of up to three FPL members. The nominated IP members then select an IP Chair.

4.5 The IP shall consider the presented physical and observational evidence. It will also consider the statistical evidence gathered as part of the investigation. It can also gather additional evidence in the course of its investigation, including but not limited to GM opinion.

4.6 Players, organisers, arbiters, national federations, and other parties are all required to cooperate with the IP. Failure to do so may result in a referral to EDC.

4.7 The IP should investigate each case within a reasonable time.

4.8 The burden and standard of proof are governed by Art. 16.13 - 16.16 of the Ethics and Disciplinary Code.

4.9 If the IP comes to the unanimous conclusion that no cheating occurred or there is not enough evidence to meet the standard of proof, it shall dismiss the complaint and inform the Chair and the Secretary of FPL, the complainant, and the accused person with a brief note. If the National Federation of the accused person was involved, it will be informed as well. If an investigator is appointed, 4.10 applies instead.

4.10 When a conclusion other than unanimous dismissal is reached, at the end of the investigation, the IP shall:

- a) prepare a report indicating: the action that triggered the investigation, the factual circumstances of the incident, the findings of the investigation, and a proposed sanction. The report may cover any other breach of FIDE regulations found by the IP and

b) present the decision and report to FPL for consideration.

FPL may ask the IP to consider additional facts and/or carry out further investigations.

4.11 Once a report is deemed final by the IP, FPL decides by a majority vote if the case is to be forwarded to EDC for judgement. If the case is not forwarded to EDC, it is considered to be dismissed. The FPL shall forward its findings to the complainant and the accused person. If the National Federation of the accused person was involved, it will be informed as well.

4.12 When the IP is acting on behalf of EDC, it shall present a preliminary report to FPL for consideration. FPL may ask the IP to consider additional facts and/or carry out further investigations. Once the report is deemed final by the IP, FPL shall transmit it to EDC.

4.13 In case of a violation of fair play rules other than cheating and in case of assumed cheating, the regulations for the “Fast Track Procedure” apply (see Art. 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, and 9.7 of the Ethics and Disciplinary Code and Art. 32 – 36 of the Procedural Rules for the Fair Play Commission).

4.14. FPL may establish a subcommittee for handling complaints and investigations of cheating allegations (“Legal Department”). The Legal Department should consist of a Chair, a Secretary, and other members who should have a legal background and/or experience in investigating cheating allegations. If a Legal Department is established, its Chair, in consultation with the Secretary, decides on the composition and number of members of an IP on the submission of a complaint to another FIDE Commission on the transfer of a cheating case to an NF and – in agreement with the FPL Chairperson - on decisions acc. to art. 4.3.

5. Manifestly unfounded accusations

5.1 An accusation of cheating that is manifestly unfounded, is a complaint where there is little to no evidence and is based mainly on emotion. An accusation is not manifestly unfounded if, based on the evidence presented, a reasonable person would believe that cheating could have occurred.

5.2 When the FPL determines that an ITC or a PTC is manifestly unfounded, the complainant can receive a warning from the FPL.

5.3 In particularly severe and/or repeated cases of manifestly unfounded accusations, the FPL may investigate the case and forward it to EDC. A manifestly unfounded accusation is deemed to be severe when it is either damaging or distracting to the accused player (normally through spreading to other players or posting on social media).

6. Provisions about the procedure

6.1 The statute of limitation is five years, in online events one year after the last round of the tournament in question.

- 6.2 The working language of the IP is English. The IP may, at the request of any party, authorize a language other than English to be used by the parties involved. In that occurrence, the IP may order any or all of the parties to bear all or part of the translation and interpreting costs. The IP may order that all documents submitted in languages other than English shall be filed together with a certified translation in the language of the procedure.
- 6.3 When the IP does not unanimously dismiss a case, the accused person must have been informed in writing (whether by letter, e-mail, or otherwise) of the pending case and given the right to present to the IP any statements and documents in support of his/her position.
- 6.4 The complainant and the accused person have the right to be represented or assisted by persons of their choice. However, any panel representing the accused person shall express its opinion and interact with the IP only through a single representative.
- 6.5 Documents pertaining to the proceedings should be submitted in writing, preferably by e-mail.
- 6.6 Each party involved in an investigation is responsible for its own costs directly or indirectly associated with the case.
- 6.7 When a person subject to the disciplinary jurisdiction of another FIDE Commission is a party to an investigation, FPL shall provide the relevant information to that FIDE Commission.

ANNEX TO THE FAIR PLAY REGULATIONS

Explanatory comment on Art. 1.2a

The words **other sources of information** refer to data gathered from sources other than the player himself/herself during the game. The information may come from chess books, notes, coaches, or spectators, among other sources.

Explanatory comment on Art. 1.2b

Manipulation of chess competitions means an intentional arrangement, act or omission aimed at an improper alteration of the result or the course of a chess competition in order to remove all or part of the unpredictable nature of the aforementioned chess competition with a view to obtaining an undue advantage for oneself or for others.

The term “**competition**” covers each event, i.e. game and match, but should not necessarily be interpreted as covering either the whole tournament or all of the competitions taking place within the framework of an event involving several competitions or tournaments (for example the World Championship). Since processes such as the draw of the opponents or the designation of the arbiter matter to the competition, it should be considered as part of the competition.

The words “**aimed at**” indicate that the definition includes not only arrangements, acts or omissions which improperly alter the result or course of a chess competition, but also the acts committed with the intention of improperly altering the result or course of a competition, even if the arrangement, act or omission is unsuccessful.

The term “**in order to**” indicates an intention to obtain an undue advantage for oneself or others, even if this intentional arrangement, act or omission, aiming at improperly modifying the results or course of a chess competition, fails to obtain the advantage sought.

Sandbagging refers to deliberately playing below one’s actual ability in order to lower one’s rating to play in a future event with a higher handicap and consequently with a better chance of winning.