

SPJST Rules of Conduct for Youth Activities

SPJST maintains a valued and well-deserved reputation for integrity, fairness and for providing the best protection for our members and their families. The SPJST Rules of Conduct are provided to help you make the right choices. While there may not always be specific laws to direct us, integrity and personal responsibility should guide our actions. Where there are laws, we have to obey them, and we should be aware that violations of the law, SPJST By-Laws or Rules of Conduct or guidelines set forth in the SPJST Youth Club Handbook can lead to disciplinary action, dismissal and prosecution. No matter how positive our image may be, it can be damaged by the actions of a few. For that reason, our behavior must be appropriate at all times. Our members have come to expect the highest standards of care and ethical behavior from anyone represent-

ing SPJST. We must continue to live up to those expectations. The Rules of Conduct reflect our ongoing commitment to ethical conduct, integrity and fairness.

All youth club members, leaders, chaperones, staff personnel or volunteers representing or acting on behalf of the SPJST have a responsibility and obligation to thoroughly know and understand the SPJST Rules of Conduct and SPJST Grievance Guidelines at Youth Activities. That is why you are requested to review these and acknowledge your understanding in writing. Your signed acknowledgement will become a permanent part of SPJST's files. If you have any questions regarding this acknowledgement, please contact the Supreme Lodge President or the State Youth Director.

These guidelines reaffirm the importance the SPJST Society places on high standards and ethical behavior. Adherence to these standards by all SPJST members is the only sure way the SPJST can merit the support and confidence SPJST member have come to expect. Each SPJST representative is responsible for his/her actions. For each, integrity is a personal responsibility. Violations, or suspected violations, of any of the guidelines outlined here, or in SPJST's rules and practices, should be promptly directed to the State Youth Director or Supreme Lodge President. Violations can result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, and criminal prosecution.

No one will be permitted to justify an illegal act by claiming it was approved by someone of authority. No one, regardless of position, is ever authorized to instruct or condone an illegal or unethical act. Any reprisal against any member

because the member in good faith reported a violation is strictly forbidden.

This form does not include the rules and regulations that apply to every situation. Its contents have been outlined within the framework of SPJST's policies, practices, instructions, and requirements by law. Moreover, the absence of a specific SPJST practice or instruction covering a particular situation does not relieve a member from exercising the highest ethical standards applicable to the circumstances. If you have any questions as to what the proper course of conduct or action should be, consult the State Youth Director or Supreme Lodge President.

By working together, SPJST will continue to provide the best possible care to those entrusted to our care. SPJST members, staff personnel, leaders or any adult working in an official capacity (examples: chaperone, driver, etc.) are prohibited from:

- Negligence of assigned duties.
- Engaging in any conduct constituting a felony as defined by law.
- Stealing.
- Selling, giving, possessing or using alcohol or illegal drugs while at SPJST youth activities.
- Possessing a handgun at camp.
- Engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual behavior, disruptive or offensive to the other SPJST members or the SPJST environment.
- Any malicious or deliberate act to do bodily harm.

Consequences for Violations

- Will be relieved of duty or assignment by State Youth Director, District Youth Counselor (DYC) or youth leader in charge.
- Suspension from working with youth from one month to three years, depending on severity of the violation.

SPJST Grievance Guidelines at Youth Activities

The Hearing Procedure for when a written complaint has been filed concerning adults and/or youth club members during SPJST state, district or local lodge youth activities is as follows:

- A. The Supreme Lodge Officers will appoint a three-member Grievance Committee, each from a different district other than the accused member's district.
- B. Should a complaint be made against any member for violating any part of the rules, regulations, by-laws, or Rules of Conduct for Youth Activities, provisions contained in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* concerning formal procedures for fair disciplinary process must be followed, except if covered in Article 73 of the SPJST By-Laws, the SPJST By-Laws will govern.
- C. All proceedings under these rules shall be private. The name of the member under investigation shall not be disclosed in any communication or to any person other than to persons whose testimony is necessary in connection with the proceeding, or to members of the Grievance Committee. However, at the request of the accused member, a disciplinary hearing and the entire record and proceedings shall be made public. All communications concerning the disciplinary proceedings are to be marked "Confidential," and all disciplinary files are to

be maintained in strict confidence.

- D. In the event of a finding of guilt of the charges filed and a suspension or expulsion from a position, the member may appeal, in writing, to the Supreme Lodge President for a hearing before the Supreme Lodge. Such an appeal must be made within 15 days after receiving the Grievance Committee's notice of action. Likewise, the aggrieved member, if not satisfied with the Grievance Committee's findings, may appeal to the Supreme Lodge in the same manner as the accused member. Upon request by the Supreme Lodge President, the Grievance Committee will furnish a certified transcript of the proceedings to the Supreme Lodge President.
- E. The Supreme Lodge shall hear all evidence, and such manner can be suspended with a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.
- F. The Supreme Lodge shall investigate thoroughly all facts pertinent to the issues of suspension or expulsion of a member from the position and sustain or reject such suspension or expulsion. All proceedings under these rules shall be private, and the name of the member under investigation shall not be disclosed in any communication or to any person other than the persons whose testimony is necessary in connection with the proceeding, or to any person other than to

persons whose testimony is necessary in connection with the proceeding, or to members of the Grievance Committee. However, at the request of the accused member, a disciplinary hearing and the entire record and proceedings shall be made public. All communications concerning disciplinary hearing and the entire record and proceedings shall be made public. All communications concerning disciplinary proceedings are to be marked "Confidential," and all disciplinary files are to be maintained in strict confidence. A representative of the Supreme Lodge shall make a full report of the findings and actions taken by the Supreme Lodge and inform the member under investigation.

- G. In the event that any accusation is found to be unfounded or based on personal spite or malice, the member making the accusation shall be reprimanded by the Supreme Lodge. If such member continues to make such disturbances, then his membership may be suspended.
- H. If a member is suspended for any other reason except nonpayment of premiums, dues and assessments, or misrepresentation or fraud at the time of admission into the Society, he may keep his insurance in force by paying his premiums as due. Except that he may retain his insurance in force, such a suspended member has no social connection with the SPJST or his former local lodge.

Disclaimer: Should there be any discrepancy or conflict in any rules, or should a contingency arise not covered by these rules, the SPJST Supreme Lodge President and/or State Youth Director reserve the right to interpret and proceed in the way they feel is fairest and best for all concerned.

I have read and understand the above texts entitled "SPJST Rules or Conduct for Youth Activities" and "SPJST Grievance Guidelines at Youth Activities" and pledge to govern myself accordingly.

Adult's Signature _____ Lodge No. _____ Date _____