



PLAYER HANDBOOK



**SURVIVAL
FEST 2025**

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Introduction

First off, we the moderators wish to formally welcome you all to this year's edition of the Player Handbook.

This document isn't just the rulebook - It is an in-depth guide to the Humans vs. Zombies portion of our event. From player conduct rules to Human/Zombie dispute protocols, a majority of the game's general rules, regulations & policies are covered within this document.

As such, most questions any player could have about the game are answered somewhere within. However, if after reading you still have questions **PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE MODERATION TEAM.**

How to Get the Most out of the Player Handbook:

- We **HIGHLY** recommend all players read the entire handbook
- Both the table of contents above and select footnotes located throughout the document are hyperlinks that direct you to that specific section of the handbook.

We hope you all enjoy it, and cannot wait to see you at Survival Fest 2025!

- *Your Survival Fest 2025 Moderation Team*

General Rules and Player Conduct

General Rules

1. **Don't be a DBAG** - be more sportsmanlike, do unto others how you would like to be treated, etc.
2. If it seems like it's unsafe, **don't do it (OR don't complain if you get hurt)**.
3. If it seems like it might hurt someone else, **don't do it**.
4. If it seems like you're cheating, you probably are - **stop it**.
5. If it seems like it might get the game banned, **don't do it**.
6. **A moderator's decision is final in any situation**
7. **A POLICE OFFICER'S DECISION IS FINAL IN EVERY SITUATION.**
8. Moderators reserve the right to temporarily and/or permanently ban you from Survival Fest events.
9. **IGNORANCE OF THE RULES IS NOT AN EXEMPTION FROM THEM!**
10. **The rules do not exist for you to find loopholes.** We are all here to play a game and have fun. If you are not here for these reasons, please locate the nearest exit and use it quickly so that we can continue to have fun without you. 😊
11. Moderators reserve the right to change the rules (temporarily/permanently) whenever we deem it appropriate to **A) preserve the safety of players, B) to alleviate the concerns of police and/or campus administration, and C) to create a better game for all involved.**
12. **HAVE FUN!**

Player Conduct and Discipline

- All of us play Humans vs. Zombies to have fun and to cultivate a positive player community.
- **If you are creating a toxic play environment, you will be asked to stop and/or even be removed from the game.**
- For most breaches of player conduct rules, players will receive at least **ONE** official warning before receiving a ban.
- **There is no set number of warnings a player can receive before they are banned.**
- There is however a small list of actions that will result in the immediate ban of a player:
 - Purposeful destruction and/or theft of property belonging to the host venue, Survival Fest, and/or another player.
 - Modifying darts with the express intent to cause added pain and/or injury
 - Breaking of university, local, county, state, and/or federal laws
 - Sexual harassment and/or assault
 - Involving oneself in a physical altercation

Requirements to Play

- All players must complete the following before being allowed to play:
 - Register for the event
 - Attend a rules and safety briefing
 - Have all gear and equipment approved by moderators

Age Restrictions

Ages <12	Not permitted to play
Ages 12-17	Must have a parent, legal guardian and/or individual in loco parentis over the age of 18 with them AT ALL TIMES whether they are actively participating in the event or not. The minor-to-guardian ratio MUST be 1:1.
Age 18+	No play restriction

Required Gear and Equipment

- Player Bandana (will be provided)¹
- Eye protection
- Approved Blaster²
- Approved Ammo³
- Approved Throwables⁴ (if desired)
- Appropriate clothing⁵
- Any necessary medications/treatments
- A positive attitude

Recommended Things to Bring

- Preferred drinks
- Preferred snacks
- Sunscreen

¹ See **Bandana Rules and Regulations** for more information

² See **Blaster Specific Rules and Regulations** for more information

³ See **Ammo Specific Rules and Regulations** for more information

⁴ See **Throwable Specific Rules and Regulations** for more information

⁵ See **Clothing, Gear and Masks** for more information

Before You Begin Playing the Game

Registration

- Players can register to attend the event one of two ways: Online or in-person
 - Online registration can be completed via the registration section on our website⁴
 - In-person registration can be completed on-site at the event.
- Players are **HIGHLY** recommended to register online before arriving to campus as this helps streamline the check-in procedure, thus saving you (and us) time.
- **Online registration will be open until 7:00 AM EST on Saturday, May 31st, 2025**
- **In-person registration will be available during both check-ins on Friday, May 30th, as well as the morning of Saturday, May 31st, 2025.**

Player Check-In

- **Player check-in will be run during the following times:**
 - Friday: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM (during the convention)
 - Friday 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (before M0)
 - Saturday 7:00 AM - 8:30 AM (before M1)
 - **Important Note: The final in-person safety briefing will begin at 7:30 AM, so plan accordingly.**
- Once inside, all players will proceed to their respective check-in tables depending on registration status:
 - If you **HAVE** registered online, you will find the tables marked “Online Registrations” and present your registration ticket to the moderators.
 - If a player has already attended an online safety briefing, they will immediately be given their wristband⁵.
 - If a player has not already attended an online safety briefing, they will receive their wristband at the end of the rules and safety briefing.
 - If you **HAVEN'T** registered online, you will find the table marked “New Registrations” and the moderator there will walk you through the process.
- **Minors will check in alongside their guardians.**
- After the player is checked in, they may enter the briefing room(s), after which they may go to blaster check, safety briefing and/or both (if necessary).

⁴ Website address: <https://www.hvzsurvivalfest.com>

⁵ See **Player Wristbands** for more information

Equipment Check-In

- Prior to participating in any missions, all blasters, ammo and throwables a player plans on using **MUST** be checked by members of the moderation staff to verify game legality.
- Equipment Check-In will be held outside on the northside of Walter Hall.
 - In case of inclement weather, a secondary location within Walter Hall will be chosen and announced via our social media.
 - For indoor equipment check-in, all chronographs **WILL** be using lighting kits.

Blaster-Specific Rules and Regulations

Blaster Check Procedure

- Moderators will have the player fire **FIVE (5)** times from each blaster through a chronograph.
 - Players may only chronograph **TWO (2)** blasters at a time before being required to get back in line.
- Players **MUST** use the ammo they plan on using during missions to chronograph their blaster.
- Players **MUST** chronograph flywheels at max rev.
- Any blaster whose muzzle velocity averages higher than the designated FPS cap⁶ for any reason will be disallowed from use during the event until appropriate modifications can be made and the blaster is re-tested.
- Moderators reserve the right to omit any clear outliers from the test procedure that may occur due to user and/or equipment error.
- Moderators reserve the right to disallow any blasters they deem unsafe, against the spirit of the rules, or otherwise unfit for play.
- Once approved, a moderator shall place a colored zip-tie on the blaster(s) for easy recognition.
 - Blasters that do not receive an approval zip tie at blaster check will **NOT** be allowed to be used during missions.
 - Any player caught using an unapproved blaster will receive either a warning or ban (depending on the severity of the case)
- All blasters **MUST** be chronographed in the state they are intended to be used in.
 - If any player is found to have knowingly increased the FPS of their blaster(s) after having them tested through modification, changing battery type and/or any other means without the approval and consent of a moderator, **the blaster will be immediately removed from play.**
 - Depending on the severity of the changed state, **the player may also be removed from play.**

⁶See **FPS Caps** for more information

FPS Caps

- Due to the differences in mass between different ammo types, Survival Fest 2025 has chosen to follow a variable FPS system based on **AMMO TYPE**.
- All blasters will be required to average **BELOW** the FPS Soft Cap. Any shots that read **ABOVE** the FPS Hard Cap will **INSTANTLY** disqualify the blaster.
- **Blasters that can fire multiple ammo types must be tested with all ammo types the player intends to use. Approval will be on a per-ammo-type basis.**
- For masterkey blasters and other equipment comprising multiple blasters attached to each other, each individual section of the blaster will be tested as if they were individual blasters.
- Below is a chart outlining which ammo types fall under each set of FPS Soft/Hard caps.

What the Blaster Fires	FPS Soft Cap (Max Average)	FPS Hard Cap (Max Allowable)
Full-Length/Half-Length/Rival/Ultra	120 FPS	130 FPS
Mega/Vortex	100 FPS	110 FPS
BoomCo/Mega XL/Rockets	70 FPS	80 FPS

Coloration and Profile

- Along with checking a blaster's FPS, moderators will also be checking the coloration and visual profile of all blasters.
- **ALL BLASTERS MUST HAVE A 0.25IN BLAZE-ORANGE TIP**
 - I.e. If a moderator places their palm against the tip of your blaster, it **MUST** be touching orange.
- If the coloration of the blaster causes issues, **moderators reserve the right to cover it in brightly colored tape.**
 - The tape selected WILL be the most embarrassing print the moderators have (several of them did go shopping)
- **All blaster silhouettes MUST look like toys**
 - Blasters with semi-realistic profiles may be banned at the moderator's discretion.
 - This includes both blasters themselves and body kits.
- **If you have questions concerning blaster coloration and/or silhouette, please reach out to the moderation team via the Survival Fest Discord⁷.**

⁷Direct Discord Link: <https://discord.gg/cYGc6uAeTp>

Outright Banned Blasters

Blowpipes	Zing Bow	Full PVC Constructs
CO2 Powered	HPA	LPA [Without explicit approval]
Bow-powered blasters	Any blaster with exposed internals and/or hazardous mechanics	Any blaster with exposed wiring and/or battery cells

NOTE: THIS CHART IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE. DO NOT MAKE US EXPAND IT.

Ammo-Specific Rules and Regulations

Ammo Check Procedure

- As a reminder: All players are required to bring their own ammo
 - The only ammo that Survival Fest will be providing for players is specific BFG ammo
 - BFG ammo will be easily recognizable to players
- Moderators will first take a quick look through ammo for any banned types.
- If any banned ammo is found, moderators will then fully examine a player's ammo supply.
- If you are found to be in possession of banned ammo:
 - Your name will be taken
 - A description of the ammo will be noted
 - You will be asked to return the banned ammo to your vehicle
- If you still choose to use the banned ammo, you WILL be removed from the game IMMEDIATELY
 - Any ammo type on the banned ammo list is there for a reason
 - **DO NOT** let it be the reason you are removed from the game
- Moderators reserve the right to allow and/or disallow ammo types in the interest of player safety.
- THE NEXT PAGE OF THIS HANDBOOK OUTLINES BOTH APPROVED AND BANNED AMMO TYPES.

Approved Ammo

Full-Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any from reputable vendors Unmodified w/ squishy tip
Half-Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most from reputable vendors* Unmodified w/ squishy tip⁸
Mega	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any from reputable vendors Unmodified w/ squishy tip⁸
MegaXL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any from reputable vendors Unmodified w/ squishy tip
Ultra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any from reputable vendors Unmodified w/ squishy tip
BoomCo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any from reputable vendors Unmodified w/ squishy tip
Rival/HIR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official Brand Most off-brand
Vortex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official Brand Most off-brand
Reactor Balls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official Brand Most off-brand
Rockets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official Brand Most off-brand

Banned Ammo

Any hard tipped	Full Vinyl Jackets	Stefan/Full Homemades	Incompressible Rival
Any modified tips	Paintball	Airsoft	Gel Ball
Zombie Strike and/or Rebelle Arrows	All Heavyweight Darts	.50 cal Foam Balls	Hyper

NOTE: THIS CHART IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE. DO NOT MAKE US EXPAND IT.

⁸Players **MAY** use cut down darts pending approval from the moderation team during Ammo Check.

Throwable Specific Rules and Regulations

- Must pass the squish test
- Any throwable deemed a tripping hazard for any reason shall be banned at the discretion of the moderators.
- **Food is NOT a legal throwable**
- **MUST BE AT LEAST 2 INCHES IN AT LEAST ONE DIMENSION AND AT LEAST 1 INCH IN ALL OTHERS.**
- **ANY THROWABLE YOU USE IN-GAME MUST BE ONE YOU ARE OKAY WITH BEING ON THE RECEIVING END OF.**
 - **AKA: Keep your throwables dry and clean**

Approved Throwables

Socks*	Foam Practice Golf Balls (Rival XL)	LARP Approved Throwables
Plushies w/o hard bits	Soft Foam Stress Balls	

*Sock Throwable Specific Regulations

- Can be made of any size sock **BUT MAY CONTAIN ONLY ONE SOCK.**
- Tape may be used to keep the sock together.
 - May not cover more than 50% of the surface area.
 - Must be applied in 3 layers or less.
- Velcro may be affixed to the sock to aid in attachment to vests/blasters, etc.
 - **ONLY the soft side of the Velcro is permitted.**
 - Counts as tape.
- **NO SOCK WHIPS/FLAILS/BOLOS!**
- **NO HOT GLUE!**

Miscellaneous Banned Objects

Nerf/Other Brand "Grenades"	Tripwires/Trigger Devices	Remote-Activated Blasters
R/C Vehicles	Melee	Drones

THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE. DO NOT MAKE US EXPAND IT!

Rules and Safety Briefings

- Players may attend the rules and safety briefing in one of two ways: **Online** or **In-person**.
- **Online rules and safety briefings** will be held in a designated Stage Channel on the Discord⁹ in the weeks immediately leading up to the game.
 - **You must have already registered and have included your name AND discord handle in the registration to receive credit.**
 - Attendance for these briefings will be taken at random intervals at the moderation team's discretion as attendees must be present for the entirety of the virtual rules and safety briefing.
- **In-person rules and safety briefings** will be held multiple times Friday afternoon before the optional Mission #0 and again one final time Saturday morning before Mission #1.
- Exact times and room locations for all rules and safety briefings will be released via our various social media, including the Discord.
- After completing their briefing, players will receive their player wristband.
- **FAILURE TO ATTEND A VIRTUAL OR IN-PERSON RULES AND SAFETY BRIEFING BEFORE GAMEPLAY BEGINS WILL RESULT IN YOU BEING BARRED FROM PARTICIPATION IN SURVIVAL FEST 2025.**

Player Wristbands

- Your wristband marks you as a participant in Survival Fest 2025.
- **Because of this, PLAYERS MUST HAVE THEIR WRISTBAND ON AT ALL TIMES!**
 - If a player's wristband comes off/breaks for any reason, players are to bring it to the moderators ASAP to receive a new one.
- Without it, **YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE.**
- **MODERATORS WILL PUT THE WRISTBAND ON THE PLAYER FOR THEM.**
- Due to the nature of this year's venue, **all minors are required to be supervised by their guardians at all times whether their guardian is actively playing or not.**
 - To help facilitate this, **they will be given special wristbands to make visual identification in the field easier for the moderation team.**
 - When they check-in, they will be required to be together and will receive matching wristbands.
 - Out in the field, moderators will do periodic checks to make sure that minors and their guardians are together.
 - **If they are found out in the field alone, moderators will remove them from the game until they can be reunited.**
 - **If they are found out in the field alone REPEATEDLY, both the minor and their guardian will be removed from the game PERMANENTLY.**

⁹Direct Discord Link: <https://discord.gg/cYGc6uAeTp>

General Game Mechanics

- All players will begin the game as a Human **UNLESS** they volunteer to start as a zombie.
- Humans complete mission objectives to win the game and/or get tagged in the most glorious way possible.
- Zombies simply try to stop Humans from completing objectives and turn them via tagging.

Player Identification Marker Rules and Regulations

Player Bandanas

- **Bandanas will be provided by Survival Fest.**
- Bandanas must be folded and worn at a width **NO SMALLER THAN 2 INCHES.**
- While in active play:
 - **HUMANS** must have their bandana on their **UPPER ARM BETWEEN THEIR ELBOW AND SHOULDER**
 - **ZOMBIES** must have their bandana on their **HEAD** (unless stunned)
 - Being stunned is the only time zombie players may remove their bandana and only for the duration of the stun timer while in active play.¹⁰
- Bandana must always be visible:
 - May not be covered/camouflaged, even partially, by anything (including hair)
 - Must stand out from what you are wearing.
- Bandana should not be removed/obscured even in no-play zones while in **active** play.¹¹

Other Identification Markers in the Game

- Throughout Survival Fest 2025, players will encounter individuals that have special roles within the game, be it administratively and/or narratively.
- Some of these special roles are denoted through the use of colored bandanas other than the orange player bands, while others are marked via colored vests.
- The next section of this rules document both covers and explains the functions of the different identification markers players will see throughout the game.

¹⁰ See **Getting Stunned** for more information.

¹¹ See **Zoning Information** for more information.

Identification Marker Chart

Color	Location	Role
Orange Bandana	Upper Arm OR Head	Standard Player <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worn on the Upper Arm as a HUMAN. Worn on the Head as a ZOMBIE.
Blue Bandana	Both Upper Arms	Game Director and Moderators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Game Director and Moderator Section on the next page for more Information.
Pink Bandana	Upper Arm	Game Medic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has been fully vetted by the moderation team. Can be called upon to aid if a player requires medical attention, or can jump in of their own volition. Can call local game pauses in case of injury or emergency.
Yellow Bandana	Head	Special Infected Zombie¹² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zombies with modified mechanics. The full list of specials will be available closer to the event.
Red Safety Vest	Torso	Medium Tier Zombie¹³ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be combined with either an orange or yellow headband. Can only be stunned with Medium Tier Ammo or above.
Blue Safety Vest	Torso	Heavy Tier Zombie¹² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be combined with either an orange or yellow headband. Can only be stunned with Heavy Tier Ammo or above.

¹²See **Special Infected Zombies** for more information

¹³See **Ammo Resistance** for more information

Game Director and Moderators

- While attending Survival Fest 2025, players will interact with three distinct types of moderators: the Game Director, Field Moderators, and Character Moderators.
- Due to the nature of this year's event, moderators **MAY** switch in and out of being either a field or character moderator from mission to mission.
- **ALL MODERATORS ARE TO BE TREATED WITH THE SAME LEVEL OF RESPECT NO MATTER THEIR FUNCTIONAL ROLE.**

Game Director

- Serves as the ultimate authority of the game.
- Leads rule enforcement.
- Gives out official warnings.
- Mediates disputes between players and moderators.
- Makes rules callings in odd situations.
- Can change the schedule.

Moderators

- Knows full ruleset and is a knowledgeable expert
- Rule enforcement - will **never** make a ruling on an issue involving themselves
- Can and will call full game pauses when appropriate, including to allow non-players to pass and in the case of injuries and emergencies.
- Give official warnings
- Mediator of minor disputes between players
- There are two types of moderators:
 - **Character Moderators**
 - Prioritize the player experience and in-game interactions
 - Wear a costume appropriate for their character
 - **Field Moderators**
 - Prioritize the logistical running of the event
 - **Should be the preferred moderator for players to go to for disputes, rules questions, and similar issues.**

In-Game Elements

Objective Items

- Throughout all missions, players will encounter In-Game Objective Items.
- Objects will be located within the mission boundaries within reasonable access to players.
- These objects will either be:
 - Placed clearly in the open and obvious for all
 - Hidden away for players to find
- **All In-Game Objective Items will be clearly marked as such.**
 - Example: Stack of marked cardboard tagged with "M1-Group 1"
- **PLAYERS MAY ONLY INTERACT WITH IN-GAME OBJECTIVE ITEMS BELONGING TO THEIR RESPECTIVE SIDE**
 - Aka: Zombies cannot touch In-Game Objective Items belonging to Humans and vice/versa.
- **In-Game Objective Items must always be carried visibly.**
- **In-Game Objective Items must always remain in-play.**
- **If either A) Human is tagged and/or B) a Zombie is stunned while in possession of an In-Game Objective Item, they must immediately place it down where they were tagged.**
 - If tagged in a dark place, the In-Game Objective Item must be placed on the nearest well-lit path.

Dossiers

- Dossiers are returning for Survival Fest 2025!
- Unlike last year where dossiers contained additional Human mission information and had strict team possession rules, this year Dossiers are more fun hidden easter eggs for players to find while out completing objectives. 😊
- Dossiers will be manilla envelopes in plastic baggies, just like last year.
- Once a Dossier has been collected by either a Human or Zombie, **it belongs to that player.**

Tagging and Getting Tagged

Tagging

- **Zombies** tag Human players to turn them into Zombies
 - A successful tag is defined as any **firm and appropriate** contact to a Human via:
 - A single open-palmed hand
 - Zombie equipment¹⁴
- **Humans** can be tagged almost anywhere on their body* and on anything attached to them.
 - Backpacks, capes, costume pieces, etc. count as an extension of the body.
 - Any item that a Human has actively in hand and using (blaster, flashlight, etc) CANNOT be tagged.
 - **Due to this: Active items in hand CANNOT be used to block tags.**
- *All tags must be kept appropriate and not be considered overly aggressive.
 - An inappropriate tag is defined as any tag occurring in the swimsuit zone/"no-no square".
 - An overly aggressive tag is defined as one that involves tackling, latching onto a human, red marks/bruising an hour after the tag, etc.
 - **Tags to the face are also considered overly aggressive tags**
 - Inappropriate/overly aggressive tagging will be left up to moderator discretion.
 - Depending on severity, violations **WILL** result in immediate ejection from the game.
- **THERE IS NO LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF TAGS AN ACTIVE, UNSTUNNED ZOMBIE MAY GET.**
 - On the rare (and glorious) occasion that a Zombie successfully achieves a significant chain of tags, that Zombie should take the time to confirm all tags and welcome their new teammates to the horde.
 - Welcoming new teammates to the horde should happen no matter the number of tags. 😊

¹⁴ See **Zombie Equipment** for more information

Getting Tagged

- When a Human is tagged, they are immediately considered a stunned Zombie.
 - They must then either break line-of-sight or move themselves the necessary spawn distance away (30 ft) from the nearest Human and remove their bandana from their arm.
 - Newly turned Zombies **MAY NOT** have equipment in their hands if they wish to tag humans.
 - They must either temporarily place their blasters, ammo, throwables and/or any other equipment off to the side or immediately return them to the briefing rooms to avoid confusion in the field.
 - **DO NOT LEAVE EQUIPMENT COMPLETELY UNATTENDED IN THE FIELD FOR LONGER THAN NECESSARY.**
 - Moderators **WILL NOT** watch over unattended gear; their job is to moderate the game.
 - The briefing rooms will be kept open for players to leave their equipment in.
 - Moderators will be posted in these rooms for most of the gameplay, however, Survival Fest is not responsible for any personal belongings you leave sitting in the briefing room.
 - Newly turned Zombies **MUST wait for the next available respawn (whether that be by timer or by another respawn mechanic) to become active.**¹⁵
- Players who feign injury and/or “flop” to avoid a tag will be examined by one of the designated medics and potentially removed from gameplay.

Minor/Guardian-Specific Tag Regulations

- In the case that both a minor and their guardian are actively playing and one becomes a Zombie before the other, it is the guardian’s responsibility to do one of the following:
 - **Guardian Gets Tagged:**
 - Completely disband and continue following the minor until they themselves are turned.
 - Require the minor to also become a Zombie.
 - **Minor Gets Tagged:**
 - Completely disband and continue following the minor as a non-active participant.
 - Join the minor as a Zombie.

¹⁵ See **Respawn Protocol** for more information

Zombie Modifiers

- During the event, Humans **WILL** encounter Zombies that may be carrying equipment, be resistant to certain types of ammo, and/or have special behavioral mechanics.
 - These Zombies will be denoted by one or more of the following: specific items, a colored vest, or a yellow bandana.
 - Yes, Zombies can have **multiple** different modifiers.
- Once a Zombie has been given Zombie Equipment, granted Ammo Resistance, or become a Special Infected, **THEIR MARKERS/ABILITIES CANNOT BE PASSED TO ANOTHER ZOMBIE WITHOUT EXPLICIT MODERATOR APPROVAL.**

Zombie Equipment

- Throughout the game, Zombies **MAY** be granted access to equipment that will make tagging easier for themselves and/or their fellow Zombies.
- These types of equipment include **Noodles, Shields, and Spitter Balls.**
 - **Noodles** - Extends a Zombie's reach, **CAN** block darts, tags humans **AND** stuns other Zombies
 - **Shields** - Blocks darts, **but renders its user unable to tag**
 - **Spitter Ball** - Thrown objects that wounds Humans upon direct hit¹⁶
 - Can also block darts 😊
 - **Important Note: Spitter Balls are ALWAYS active, therefore ricochets DO count.**
- **MOST ZOMBIE EQUIPMENT WILL BE PROVIDED BY SURVIVAL FEST.**
 - Personal Zombie Equipment **MAY** be allowed on a case-by-case basis pending moderator approval.
 - **Personal Equipment Guidelines:**
 - **Standard Noodles**
 - Must have no core of any kind and must squish and bend easily.
 - Can be cut down, but must be at least 30" in length.
 - Must have a diameter of less than 3"
 - (Standard "swim" size noodles are 2.25")
 - May have tape, but must not be present higher than 3" from the base of the noodle.
 - May not be carved beyond cutting down length.
 - Noodle gauntlets may be allowed on a case by case basis.

¹⁶ See **Getting Wounded** for more information

- **Vests**
 - Personal Medium and Heavy Ammo Vests may be approved by the moderation team to accommodate better fitment of the player.
 - Vests should be composed of predominantly red or blue fluorescent fabric and reflective strips.
 - In bright, ideally reflective, text should read the ammo required to interact with the vest, such as “Medium Tier” or “Heavy Tier”.
 - “M” or “H” in conjunction with the corresponding color vest may be sufficient.
- **Shields**
 - Will be solely provided by moderators for Survival Fest 2025.
- **Zombie Projectiles**
 - Will be solely provided by moderators for Survival Fest 2025.
- There is also the possibility that during select times, a small number of Zombies **MAY** have access to other forms of projectiles.
 - These may be in the form of different throwables and/or blasters.
 - If a Human is hit by any of these projectiles, **THAT HUMAN IS CONSIDERED WOUNDED JUST AS THEY WOULD BE IF HIT BY A SPITTER BALL.**
- Zombies may also be granted access to mission-specific equipment that will be explained in detail during relevant missions.

Ammo Resistance

- Ammo Resistance makes Zombies only stunnable via ammo of a certain tier or higher.
- The following chart outlines the specifics of each level of ammo resistance.

LEVEL	MARKED BY	MINIMUM AMMO TYPE NEEDED FOR STUN	WHAT ELSE DOES THIS AMMO TIER STUN
Light	N/A	Full Length, Half Length, Rival, Ultra, Vortex, BoomCo	- Light Tier Zombies
Medium	Red Vest	Throwables, Mega, Reactor Balls	- Light Tier Zombies - Medium Tier Zombies
Heavy	Blue Vest	Mega XL, Demolisher Rockets, Titan Rockets	- Light Tier Zombies - Medium Tier Zombies - Heavy Tier Zombies

Special Infected Zombies

- Special Infected Zombies are a variation of Zombies who have special behavioral mechanics that may affect them **AND/OR** other zombies around them.
- **All Special Infected Zombies will be played exclusively by Survival Fest Moderators.**
- Some examples of these behavioral mechanic modifiers could include:
 - Becoming an instant respawn point for Zombies upon being stunned.
 - Reduced movement speed in favor of constant pressure.
 - Invulnerability during their running charge.
 - Honking like a goose to make themselves unstunnable.
 - **ANYTHING YOU BRING UPON YOURSELVES...**
- As a reminder, **all Special Infected Zombies will be marked via a **YELLOW** headband, NOT AN **ORANGE** ONE!**
- The full, detailed list of playable Special Infected Zombies will be released closer to the event in a separate Special Infected Handbook.
 - The Special Infected Handbook will be available via our website, as well as all available social media closer to the event date.
- **Mechanical details on certain Special Infected Zombies played by Moderators may be withheld until the relevant briefing.**

Stunning, Getting Stunned, and Wounding

Stunning

- Humans can stun Zombies by hitting them with either **A)** approved ammo fired from an approved blaster and/or **B)** approved throwables.
 - Throwing multiple approved throwables at once to stun a zombie **IS** allowed.
- **As a reminder:** Blaster ammo is **NOT** considered throwable and melee is **NOT** allowed.
- Hits on any part of the Zombie, anything attached to them, and/or anything they are holding **OTHER THAN ZOMBIE EQUIPMENT** counts as a stun.
- While **HEAVILY DISCOURAGED**, headshots **do** count (remember Rule #1)

Getting Stunned

- When hit with any approved ammo and/or throwable in an appropriate manner, the Zombie is immediately stunned.
 - Ricocheted ammo/throwables **DO NOT COUNT AS A STUN**.
 - Zombies cannot normally block ammo/throwables with anything attached to their person.
 - Zombies **MAY** use equipment given by the moderation team to block.
 - Zombies **MAY** use natural cover as buildings, trees, bushes, etc. to hide themselves.
 - Zombies **MAY NOT** use inactive Zombies and/or non-players as cover **EVER**.

Identification of Stun

- Zombie players must immediately identify themselves as inactive by either:
 - Moving their bandana around their neck and holding their hands in the air.
 - Completely removing the bandana and holding it **VISIBLY** within their hand.
- Zombies may lower their hands after identifying themselves as stunned after a reasonable time.

Stunned Zombie Do's

- Immediately remove themselves from gameplay.
- Move towards an area to respawn by either:
 - Moving yourself **AT LEAST 30 FEET AWAY** from humans
 - Moving completely out of sight from humans.
 - Moving towards any zombie respawn point.
- Pick up ammo and/or throwables to give back to the Humans/moderators at the end of the mission.

Stunned Zombie Don'ts

- Do not interfere with the game in any way - this includes meatshielding.
 - **Meatshielding** - the act of blocking ammo and/or throwables so other Zombies do not get stunned.
- Do not relay any intelligence regarding Humans **EXCEPT** the following:
 - Where you were stunned
 - How long ago you were stunned
 - How many Humans were there when you were stunned
- If there are Humans present, do not pick up ammo and/or throwables with the intent of keeping Humans from retrieving them **OUTSIDE** of possible Zombie reward mini-objectives.

Getting Wounded

- When hit with a Spitter Ball, a **Human is immediately considered wounded for 30 seconds.**
- When wounded, Humans:
 - **MUST** immediately place both hands above their head and cross their wrists, **thus they MAY NOT defend themselves.**
 - **MAY** communicate useful information with other Humans
 - "I'm Wounded! Heal me!" **IS** useful information
 - **MAY NOT** move from the spot they were hit outside of pivoting on one foot to avoid actual injury.
- Unwounded Humans **MAY** help heal wounded Humans by placing a singular, full, empty palm on the wounded Human's shoulder and maintaining uninterrupted contact for **15 seconds.**
 - If contact is broken before the 15 second count is completed, **the count must start over ENTIRELY.**
- Unwounded Humans healing wounded Humans **MAY** defend themselves with their free hand.
- Unwounded Humans **MAY** help heal two wounded Humans at one time.
 - Doing so requires both hands, thus you can no longer defend yourself.

Respawning

Respawn Methods

- **Rolling Respawn System**
 - With this system, all Zombies respawn at the same time based on the clock.
 - **For example: respawns may be set "On the 10's" - 10:10, 10:20, 10:30, etc.**
- **Special Zombies**
 - There will be Special Zombies that have the ability to respawn Zombies before the rolling timer turns over.
 - The number of these types of Zombies **WILL** vary from mission to mission.
 - Details on these spawn conditions will be given in mission briefings.
- **Respawn Relays**
 - Due to the size and nature of campus, devices known as Respawn Relays may be put into play during select missions.
 - Respawn Relays will be small PVC constructs with bandana flags.
 - Completing a half-circle around a Respawn Relay while stunned **instantly** respawns that Zombie.
 - **Stunned Zombies may respawn at any Respawn Relay even if Humans are in close proximity and without having to break line-of-sight.**
 - Respawn Relays may only be placed and/or relocated by Moderators.
 - Respawn Relays **MAY NOT** be physically obstructed by players and/or objects placed by players.
 - Respawn relays may be deactivated by Human players by knocking over and/or disassembling them.
 - Pieces must be left at the location of the Respawn Relay and cannot be scattered.
 - Unstunned Zombies may reactivate the Respawn Relay by setting it upright and reassembling it if necessary.
- **Other**
 - Other respawning methods may appear at mod discretion on a mission-by-mission basis and will be explained to players as appropriate.

Respawn Protocol

- When the stun timer rolls over, Zombies must:
 - Have broken line of sight **OR** be the necessary spawn distance (30 ft) away from the nearest human
 - The onus of breaking line of sight/being 30 ft away is **ALWAYS ON THE ZOMBIE!**
 - If a Zombie can see a Human within 360 degrees of their position, they aren't out of sight.
 - All Zombie Equipment must break line of sight as well.
 - Move their bandana back to the active position on their head
 - Zombies are prohibited from making tags until their bandana is **SECURELY** back in this position.
 - If a Zombie has to hold the bandana on, it's not secure.
 - Immediately re-enter the game.
- **HUMANS MAY NOT EXCESSIVELY STALK ZOMBIES TO PREVENT RESPAWNING**
 - Doing so is a violation of Rule #1 - DBAD
 - Zombies may wait to respawn past the respawn timer if they are doing so to avoid being "spawn camped" by humans.
 - **Spawn Camping** - Humans standing too close in an effort to disallow stunned Zombies from respawning.
 - If a Zombie is being "spawn camped" when the stun timer rolls over, they are permitted to move in any direction that allows them to break line of sight **OR** get 30 feet away from the nearest Human.

Disputes

- If a Human and Zombie find themselves in disagreement over whether or not a tag and/or stun was valid, use the following chain:
 - Immediately defer to **ANY MODERATOR** who may have witnessed the event.
 - A field moderator should be addressed first if one is present. If not, defer to the character mod.
 - If a moderator did not witness the event, defer to any players **not within your immediate player group** who may have witnessed the event and can say for certain what happened.
 - If no one confidently saw what happened, you may choose any game of luck and/or skill that will satisfy both parties.
 - Examples: Coin flip, dance off, rock/paper/scissors, rap battle etc.
 - If you still cannot reach a resolution, **any of the moderators will decide a resolution method for you.**
 - If any of the other moderators have to pick the method of resolution, it will be the most embarrassing/entertaining option available.
 - A word of caution: Several moderators **WILL** make you participate in an honor duel.
 - **NO HUMAN IS SAFE DURING DISPUTE SETTLEMENT!**

Ending the Game

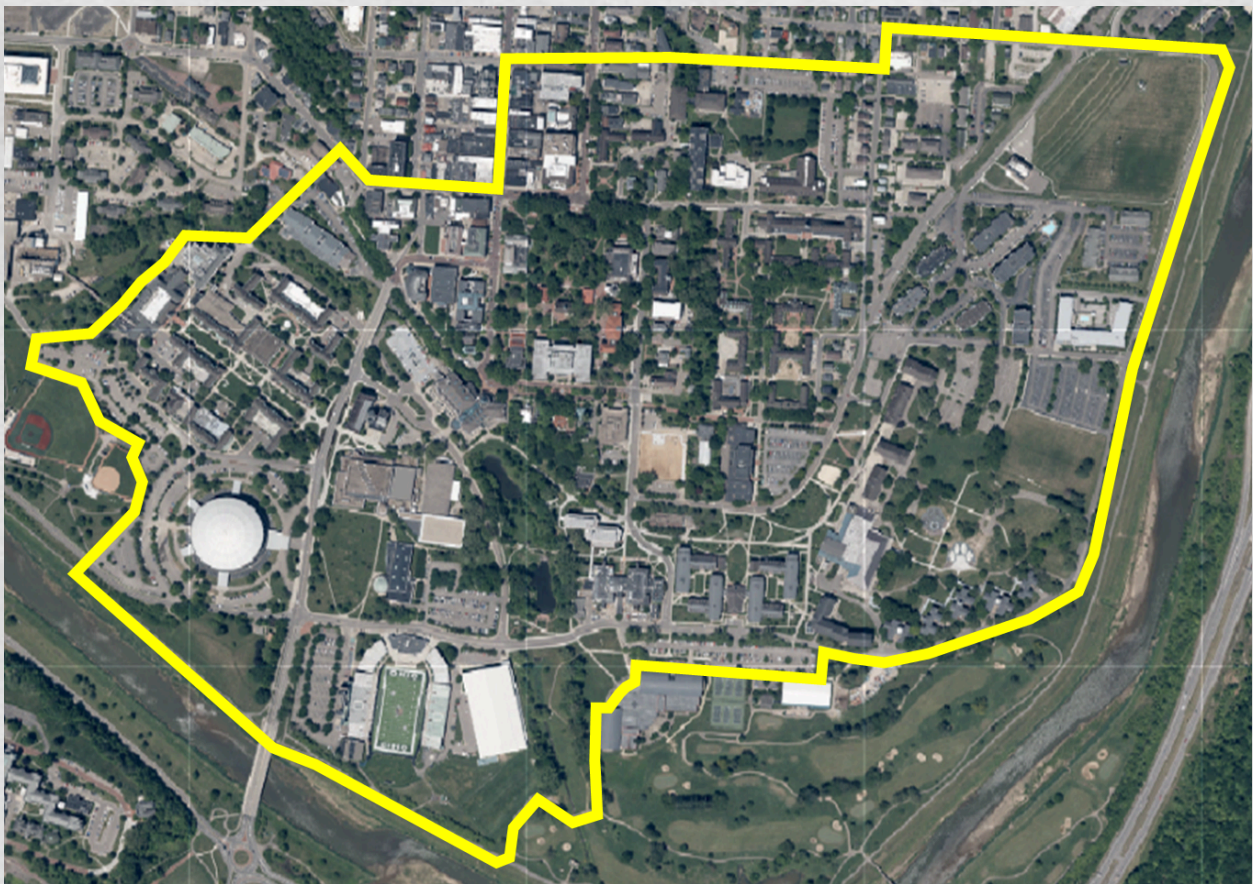
- The game ends when any of the three following events occur:
 - The Human team meets the final mission win condition
 - The Zombie team has successfully tagged every Human
 - The timer for final mission hits 0:00
- **HUMANS NOT IN ATTENDANCE AT THE FINAL STAND (VIA HIDING/RUNNING AWAY) WILL BE COUNTED AS TAGGED WHEN THE FINAL STAND CONCLUDES!**

Zoning Information

Mission Boundaries

- For Survival Fest 2025, missions will take place in the highlighted area of the map below.
- Gameplay can extend beyond these boundaries, **but missions will remain inside them.**
- Athens traditionally plays with no game borders, and we are keeping with that tradition.
 - Gameplay can continue outside of the Ohio University main campus.
 - This includes Downtown Athens and everywhere else.

Mission Boundaries Map



No-Play Zones

- **Minor No-Play Zones are areas in which no gameplay may take place in and should be avoided unless absolutely necessary to enter.**
 - These include:
 - Major Roads¹⁷
 - Designated building entries/exits
 - Areas immediately at the top and bottom of staircases¹⁸
 - Gardens/Places of Delicate Planting
- **Major No-Play Zones are areas in which no gameplay may take place and should be avoided at all costs.**
 - These include:
 - Construction Zones
 - On-campus Fraternity Property
 - Cemeteries
 - Downtown Athens Parking Garage at the corner of W. Washington and College St.
 - Ohio University Golf Course (located on South Green behind Ping Center)
 - Ohio University Botanical Garden
 - Ohio University President's Mansion
 - Private Property
 - Any business areas, including outdoor patios.
 - A map outlining important Major No-Play Zones will be released closer to the event to allow moderation a better understanding of any possible campus construction projects.
- **Players SHOULD NOT:**
 - Attempt to stun/tag each other in no-play zones.
 - Use no-play zones as safe zones
 - Attempt to gain any in-game advantage by utilizing no-play zones.
- **If players are found to be abusing no-play zones, moderators reserve the right to give players official warnings.**

¹⁷ See **Roads** for more information

¹⁸ See **Staircases** for more information

Zombification Zones

- Stepping into an active zone will instantly turn a Human into a Zombie when they enter.
- During the initial mission briefing, Humans will be clearly informed if a zone is going to be active or not.
- The size of the zone and how it's identified/marked will be clearly in the mission briefing immediately prior to use so it is well known.
- Humans **may** be informed of zone locations, but generally will **NOT** be informed.
 - AKA: If you're not watching out for it, you could potentially walk into it.
- Zombification Zones can be strategically placed by moderators and/or rewarded to Zombies for them to place near a mission objective.

Safe Zones

- Safe zones are areas where Humans may complete mission objectives and **CANNOT** be tagged by Zombies.
- While inside the safe zone, Humans **CAN** fire outside of the zone to help defend their fellow Humans.
- The moment a Zombie enters a safe zone, **they are immediately considered stunned**.
 - This means that they **CANNOT** participate in gameplay outside of the safezone (i.e. No tagging Humans outside the safe zone while you're inside it).
- Safe zones **MAY** be created/destroyed over the course of the game.
 - In the case of a safe zone being destroyed, moderators will clearly communicate the destruction of the zone and give all players a countdown.
- **FOR PLAYER SAFETY: THERE WILL BE A PERMANENT SAFE ZONE AROUND THE ENTIRETY OF THE BRIEFING BUILDING (Map to be released at a later date closer to the event)**

Entering A Safezone

- Both Humans and Zombies will have officially entered the safe zone the moment they have **one full foot down inside and across** the safe zone boundary line.
- Safe zone boundaries will always be clearly communicated to all players and marked.
- **IMPORTANT REMINDER: DO NOT IMPEDE PHYSICAL ENTRANCES/EXITS OF SAFE ZONES.**
 - I.e. If a safezone is in a courtyard surrounded by small walls, don't block the actual entrance.

Exiting A Safezone

- When a **HUMAN** exits the safezone, they are immediately taggable the moment both feet have vacated the safezone.
- When a **ZOMBIE** exits the safezone, they are stunned until the next rolling respawn or other respawn mechanic.
 - If a Zombie exits the safezone the moment the rolling respawn timer hits, **they are still stunned until the following timer reset.**
 - Zombies **MUST** still adhere to normal respawn rules (30 ft/line of sight).

Entering and Exiting Buildings Other Than The Briefing Building

- As a reminder: The only building any player **SHOULD** be entering during gameplay is the Briefing Building as all buildings/indoors are out of play.
- **However:** in the event of needing a drink, needing to use the restroom, and/or seeking shelter in the event of severe inclement weather, all players must abide by the following procedure:
 - Communicate their verbal intent to enter the building.
 - **DO NOT** pursue players attempting to enter and/or exit a building.
 - **For Humans: Stow blasters as much as possible**
 - You must leave the building from the same door you entered.
 - **Reminder: Designated entry/exit doors are considered minor no-play zones.**
 - **REMEMBER RULE #1! - Players found to be abusing this procedure will face discipline.**
- Specific details outlining the location of accessible buildings will be released closer to the event.

Player and Campus Safety

Clothing, Gear and Masks

- Players may not wear any form of clothing which may cause a student, faculty member, and/or any non-player to believe that anything other than a game of tag is occurring.
- Chest rigs for holding extra ammo **ARE** allowed (and highly encouraged as you will need the ammo).
 - We ask that all clothing underneath be as colorful as possible **AND/OR** the rig itself be brightly colored.
 - I.e: No all-black clothing with a black chest rig.
- Players with questionable clothing and/or gear combinations **WILL** be barred from participating at moderation discretion until one of the following changes are made:
 - The player changes the clothes under their gear.
 - The player covers the gear in brightly covered tape.
 - As a reminder: Survival Fest will have tape that is both bright and embarrassing.
- If you have questions concerning clothing and gear coloration and/or profile, please reach out to the moderation team via the Survival Fest Discord¹⁹.
- Masks **ARE NOT PERMITTED**, with the exception of masks used to prevent illness.

Game Halts and Pauses

- Game halts and/or pauses will be signaled by a moderator and/or game medic giving one long whistle blow, then yelling “GAME PAUSE”.
 - For this reason, **players are prohibited from having whistles.**
- As soon as you hear that the game has paused/halted, stop exactly where you are as though someone pushed pause on a video game until you hear that play has resumed.
 - You **MAY NOT** pick up darts, reload, and/or do anything to impact the game in any way **unless directed to by a moderator.**
 - You **MAY** stand, sit and/or kneel where you are, hydrate, relax, apply more sunscreen and/or talk quietly with players around you.
 - This includes planning what to do after play resumes.
- If for some reason something happens and a moderator hasn’t seen/isn’t around, **players are allowed to call for a game pause.**
 - **When calling a pause, THE TERM TO USE IS “GAME PAUSE”/“PAUSE”, NOT “HOLD”.**

¹⁹Direct Discord Link: <https://discord.gg/cYGc6uAeTp>

Interacting with Non-players

Non-players Unaffiliated with the Game

- As Survival Fest 2025 is being held at a public university during an active class semester, players **WILL** occasionally run into non-players.
- Players **MUST** be kind and courteous in all interactions with unaffiliated non-players **even if they aren't to you.**
 - If an unaffiliated non-player is rude to you, let a moderator know.
 - **DO NOT** handle the situation yourself.
- Players **MAY NOT** harass, frighten, impede, or physically interact with any non-playing pedestrians.
- Non-players always have the right-of-way
 - Moderators can and will temporarily call for a game pause in an area to allow non-players to pass.
 - In the absence of a moderator, it is the responsibility of the individual players to temporarily call for a game pause in an area to allow for the passage of non-players.
 - Players **MAY NOT** use non-players to gain any advantage. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Hiding amongst a group
 - Requesting information that will aid you in the game
 - Using non-players as a means of separation

Non-players Affiliated with the Game

- Along with unaffiliated non-players, players will encounter two types of affiliated non-players: **Minor Chaperones** and **Media**.
- **Minor Chaperones** are game-affiliated non-players who are simply following Humans and/or Zombies in order to supervise a minor **and do not wish to actively play the game.**
- **Media** are designated individuals approved by the Survival Fest Moderation team to follow both Humans and Zombies in order to photograph and/or take gameplay footage.
- **BOTH MINOR CHAPERONES AND MEDIA ARE TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT AND LEFT ALONE TO DO THEIR JOBS.**
- **ON THE FLIP SIDE: MINOR CHAPERONES AND MEDIA WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH GAMEPLAY IN ANY WAY.**
 - If a player believes that a minor chaperone and/or media member have interfered with the game in any way, **please seek out a moderator.**

Night Play and Flashlights

- As select missions will be at night, the use of flashlights is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** as while campus has ample lighting, **it also still has extremely dark spots.**
- **ALL FLASHLIGHTS MUST HAVE A RED LENS**
- **FLASHLIGHTS MAY NOT BE MOUNTED TO BLASTERS**
- **REMEMBER RULE #0 - DO NOT POINT YOUR FLASHLIGHT STRAIGHT INTO ANOTHER'S EYES**
- Players may not use any strobe feature and/or strobe their light manually.
 - Not only is this painful, but can potentially trigger epileptic seizures in others
- If a flashlight causes problems for any reason, moderators reserve the right to ban its use.
- **DO NOT** bring or use laser pointers. Laser pointers may be given to players to use for mission objectives under heavy supervision. Intentionally shining these in the eyes of another person will result in ejection from the game.

Player Injury

- If during play someone becomes injured:
 - **PAUSE GAMEPLAY IMMEDIATELY BY CALLING "GAME PAUSE"**
 - **Contact a Moderator or Event Medic immediately.**
 - If no Moderator and/or Event Medic is present, alert them of the situation as soon as possible via the "Contact the Mods" channel on the event Discord.
 - If necessary or at the injured player's discretion, **IMMEDIATELY CALL 9-1-1!**
 - Remember to stay as calm as possible and answer all questions from the operator.
 - Be ready to give your name, your rough location and what the rough extent of the injury is.
 - Ex. First Name, Last Name, West Green, Broken Leg

Climbing and Parkour

- When deciding to jump or climb, use your own common sense to move about the campus so long as your actions will not cause injury to another individual.
- **ABSOLUTELY NO** ascending/descending any object higher than your waist on either side (~3ft tall).
- There are chain link barriers located in select areas of campus (College Green and around delicate planting). **Use common sense.**

Inclement Weather

- As Survival Fest 2025 is outside for the majority of the event, the chance of there being inclement weather is non-zero.
 - Thus all players should make the proper preparations for playing in the rain.
- **In the event of light to medium rain:** The game will continue on as planned.
- **In the event of severe rain NOT accompanied by thunder/lightning:** Play may be temporarily suspended at the mod team's discretion.
- **In the event of severe rain accompanied by thunder/lightning:** The game will be put on immediate pause and remain so until conditions improve.
- Due to the size of campus, players **NOT** within the immediate vicinity of the briefing building are to make their way to the closest accessible building.
 - If you find yourself sheltering **WITH** a moderator, they will inform the other moderators to your location.
 - If you find yourself sheltering **WITHOUT** a moderator, please contact moderation through the event Discord.

Campus Cleanliness

- As a reminder to all players, we are all guests on Ohio University's campus.
- **As guests of the university, all players are obligated to keep the campus clean**
 - This includes:
 - Picking up all stray ammo, socks, throwables, etc both inside and outside.
 - Throwing away all garbage/recycling in their proper receptacles
- **Zombies players are heavily encouraged to pick up darts in areas of high engagement AFTER Humans leave the area.**
- **Organized dart sweeps will be held several times throughout the event and will be announced.**

Radio Etiquette

- Due to the size of the Ohio University campus, running between mission groups will be extremely difficult for both players and moderators alike.
- As such, moderators and medics will be using radios to communicate with each other.
- **PLAYERS ARE TO STAY OFF MODERATOR AND MEDIC COMMS AT ALL TIMES**
 - **The moderator and medic radio channel(s) will be announced at the beginning of the event with reminders given as necessary.**
 - If any player is caught listening in to moderator comms, **THEY WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE GAME.**

Staircases

- Play on staircases is **STRICTLY** prohibited as it's a **MAJOR** safety hazard.
- While using staircases:
 - **HUMANS:** Cannot be tagged, nor can they use any equipment.
 - **ZOMBIES:** Cannot be stunned.
- While traversing a staircase, all players **MUST** continue up or down in as safe a manner as possible.
 - If a player is caught using a staircase as a safezone, they will receive a warning.
 - If a player is caught **REPEATEDLY** using staircases as safe zones, **they may be removed from the game.**
 - If a player talks about using the stairs as a safe zone they will receive a warning.
 - **For player safety, the 15 ft. immediately at the top and bottom of staircases is treated as a temporary no-play zone.**
- **REMEMBER: RULES #1 AND #10.**

Roads

- This isn't Humans vs. Zombies vs. Cars - Physics dictates cars win most of the time.
- Athens Public Transit has buses that win every time.
- **BE SAFE CROSSING ROADS!**
- **DO NOT ACTIVELY PLAY IN MAJOR ROADS!**
- **NO SHOOTING ACROSS MAJOR ROADS!**
- **PAUSE PLAY IF VEHICLES ARE BEING OPERATED!**
- **Recklessness in roadways may result in a ban.**

Vehicles

- **Definition of a Vehicle:** Any device that assists a person in moving but isn't required for the person's regular motion.
- **Examples include, but are not limited, to the following:**
 - Bicycles, Roller Skates, Scooters, Hoverboards, Cars, Skateboards, Heelys, Pogo Sticks, Rideable Animals, and **OTHER HUMANS/ZOMBIES.**
- **The use of vehicles within play is STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**
- If for some reason you must enter a vehicle for any reason outside of gameplay, it is considered a mobile no-play zone and is held to the same standard rules.
- Players attempting to enter a vehicle are safe the moment they either:
 - Have one hand firmly on the handle of the door provided the following:
 - The vehicle is unlocked (there is a 10-second grace to prove as such).
 - The owner of the vehicle is allowing you entry.
 - Have one foot firmly inside the vehicle.