

Anti-Cheating

1 Introduction

This document deals with the definition of cheating, how it can be dealt with when discovered at an event, to whom it should be reported, what further sanctions the ECF can apply, and what records will be kept.

FIDE-rated tournaments must also satisfy the FIDE Anti-Cheating Guidelines. These can be found in section A10 of the FIDE Handbook.

2 What Constitutes Cheating

The ECF is only concerned where a player has deliberately used outside help to gain an advantage in one or more games. For example, a player having a phone on his person quite rightly leads to the loss of the game, but would not be considered cheating unless they use it to access outside help.

Cheating can take many forms, for example, collusion, signals from others, verbal help as well as electronic devices.

3 Resources to detect Cheating

The main resource to detect cheating is, of course, constant vigilance.

This can be supplemented by using mobile phone signal scanners or metal detectors which are the least invasive way of checking for hidden devices.

Software programs have been developed that can indicate that the player is making moves clearly above their playing strength. If an arbiter or organiser suspects a player of cheating, their games can be submitted for comparison. This can only be used as an indicator and would normally need to be supported by other evidence.

4 Investigation of Cheating

Once a complaint of cheating has been received, the arbiter shall take steps to investigate. This will include the following:

- identify the complainant
- invite the complainant to complete a Complaint Form and sign it. In the case where only the complainant was witness to the cheating, refusal to complete and sign the form will mean that no investigation can take place.
- warn the complainant about the consequences of filing a false report (see section 8)
- investigate the report, using their best judgement as to how this can be carried out
- add all pertinent additional information to the report
- make his or her decision and apply tournament-level sanctions
- at the end of the tournament, send the report to the ECF, whether sanctions are applied or not.

A more detailed procedure for investigating In-Tournament complaints is outlined in the FIDE Anti-Cheating Guidelines which can be found at

<https://www.fide.com/FIDE/handbook/Anti%20Cheating%20Guidelines.pdf>

5 Sanctions at Competition Level

The sanctions that can be applied during the competition are detailed in the FIDE Laws of

Chess, Article 12.9. For deliberate cheating, this would normally be expulsion from the tournament. If the offence does not attract this sanction, it is unlikely that the ECF will apply additional sanctions. However, all instances of suspected cheating should be reported to the ECF.

6 Reporting of Cheating and ECF Investigation

When a case of cheating, or suspected cheating, is investigated, in either FIDE-rated and/ or ECF-graded events, it must be reported to the ECF using an ECF report form. All people involved in the discovery must be identified, especially the complainant, the accused, the arbiter and any witnesses. They may be invited by the ECF investigation team to make a statement, depending on what the investigation team decides. This must be done in writing, signed by the arbiter or organiser involved in discovering the cheating. It must also be signed by the person who originally brought the accusation of cheating, together with his, or her, original report.

Once the submission has been received, the following actions will take place

- the Chief Arbiter will set up an investigation team to look into the incident.
- the offender will be informed and invited to make a response.
- the investigation team may invite other submissions, if needed.
- the investigation team will make it's decision and recommend appropriate action.

7 Sanctions at ECF Level

Once the investigation team has confirmed that a player has been caught cheating, the ECF will sanction that player. These sanctions will take the form of a period of suspension from playing. The following should be considered as the maximum period over which sanctions will be enforced.

For a first offence,

- If the player is under 14 years of age at the time of the offence, 1 year.
- If the player is over 14 and under 18 years of age, 2 years.
- If the player is 18 years of age or older, 3 years.

For a second or subsequent offence,

- If the player is under 18 years of age at the time of the offence, 5 years.
- If the player is 18 years of age or older, 10 years.

The nature of the ECF relationship with individual members limits the nature of the sanctions that can be imposed. The following sanctions may be applied on receipt of the Investigation Team's recommendation:

- The ECF may revoke the player's membership.
- The ECF may refuse to accept an application to renew the player's membership during the period of the suspension.
- The ECF will refuse entry to the player to any and all ECF competitions during the period of the suspension.
- The ECF will not select the player to play in any ECF teams during the period of the suspension.
- The ECF may refuse to grade any games for the player during the period of the suspension.

The ECF will inform the following organisations of the suspension

- The Union(s) in which the player resides and plays.
- The County(ies) in which the player resides and plays.

- Controllers of all leagues in which the player has played during the previous year.
- Organisers of all events in which the player has played in the previous year.

8 False Accusations

Accusations must be supported by concrete facts. Those that cannot be supported by such facts are regarded as 'false accusations'. Any false accusations will also be recorded. These records can be used to identify where more training is needed for arbiters and organisers failing to apply the rules correctly. Any player making a malicious false allegation against another player may face appropriate sanctions.

9 Records

9.1 What Records will be kept?

Where suspicions of cheating are upheld, records will be kept of the player involved, the arbiters and organisers involved, where and when the offence occurred and details of the offence. If other players are involved, their details will also be recorded.

A record will also be kept of false or incorrect accusations. This is to be used to check whether arbiters or organisers need more training to detect cheating.

9.2 Where will the Records be kept?

The records will be kept at the ECF Office.

9.3 How Long will the Records be retained?

The nature of the problem, and the possibility of repeat offences, means that the records must be kept indefinitely.