

A Guide to Addressing Core Values Concerns for Judge Advisors and Tournament Directors

Core Values are the foundation of the *FIRST* LEGO League program and underlie all aspects of FLL tournaments, including judging and the Robot Game. While the Core Values are clear statements about behavioral expectations, people can interpret the behavior of FLL team members differently.

While Judge Advisors and Tournament directors may receive many positive reports of teams demonstrating the FLL Core Values, this guide is intended to clarify appropriate reactions to concerning behaviors and the procedures Judge Advisors and Tournament Directors are expected to follow when an issue arises.

Procedures for Addressing Core Values Concerns

1. Judges, Head Judges, and other volunteers (referees, queuers, etc.) notify the Judge Advisor or Tournament Director of the potential issue, including a description of the behavior and their level of concern. When the Tournament Director is notified first, the report is brought to the Judge Advisor.
2. Judge Advisor asks the person who made the observation for more information and evaluates the appropriate level of consideration, using the table below as a guide.
 - Each team starts at Green, as good Core Values are expected from all FLL teams.
 - Yellow behaviors do not require further investigation unless multiple minor observations are collected about a team.
 - Behaviors that seem to be Orange or Red require further investigation. The Judge Advisor visits the team or designates other Judges to visit the team and learn more about the situation.
 - If multiple observations occur at any level, the consideration may be elevated at the Judge Advisor's discretion.
3. After gathering additional information, the Judge Advisor determines the level of consideration appropriate for the behavior. Seeking additional information is a critical step in the process and helps to ensure fairness of decisions.
 - **Yellow** behaviors are considered minor and are not serious enough to impact considering a team for an award. Observations do not need to be shared with Judges and deliberations discussions should not spend any time focused on Yellow behaviors.
 - **Orange** behaviors may be used as a decision point during deliberations between two teams receiving an award or advancing, but are not serious enough to cause disqualification. When possible, behavior observed early in a tournament should result in a warning informing the team how the behavior is being perceived.
 - **Red** behaviors cause the team to be disqualified from receiving any awards or advancing to the next level of competition. There must be clear evidence that the behavior was serious enough to cause disqualification. The Judge Advisor must make every effort possible to notify the team of the disqualification *before* the Awards Ceremony.

FLL Judges are often tempted to make assumptions based on their own perceptions, but observations of concerning behaviors are often not what they seem. For example, if seen using a team's computer, a coach might not be doing work for the team and instead checking email, doing other non-team related tasks, appropriately assisting the team, or troubleshooting issues. Some FLL team members may have Asperger Syndrome, Tourette Syndrome, or other conditions influencing their behaviors. Remember, only observations during a given event should be considered, not any behaviors reported from past events.

Teams, coaches, and parents should always be given the benefit of the doubt; however the Judge Advisor and Tournament Director are responsible for determining inappropriate behavior and level of consideration within the framework provided.

Core Values Observation Reports

Judge Advisors should use this table as a guide during FLL Tournaments when determining the amount of consideration appropriate for observed behavior.

Recommended Consideration Level	Example Behaviors
<p>Yellow:</p> <p>Not the best Core Values. Individual observations of these behaviors should <i>not be given any decision making weight</i> on their own. If multiple observations occur during a tournament, they may be raised to a higher level of concern at the Judge Advisor's discretion.</p>	<p>Team Member Interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swearing • Playful name calling or play fighting • Throwing stuff at each other • Looking at an adult for cues during judging sessions <p>Adult Intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult carrying the robot • Adult setting up presentation materials with a good reason (heavy, large, numerous, difficult set up, etc.) • Adult switching slides during presentation
<p>Orange:</p> <p>These Core Values observations are relatively minor and can be used as a decision point during deliberations. Judges might use the information to <i>decide between two teams to receive awards or advancing</i>. Some behaviors might cause a team not to be considered for Core Values awards. Orange behaviors are <i>not</i> serious enough to warrant any disqualifications.</p> <p>Observations of Orange behavior must be investigated further before making any decisions.</p>	<p>Team or Adult Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hostile or aggressive behavior • Disrespect toward others • Poor sportsmanship • Bullying • Inappropriate language or topics of conversation <p>Adult Intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult handling the robot, computer or other materials • Adult using a computer (Further investigation determines if adult was doing work for the team, computer use was appropriate assistance, or was not team-related.) • Team members cannot answer questions or demonstrate understanding of their work. (Unclear situations or Judges' intuitions remain Orange without additional evidence.) • Adult speaking in judging sessions (Occasionally there is an obvious and appropriate reason) • Adult attempting to appeal Robot Game scores
<p>Red:</p> <p>These behaviors are rare at FLL events and <i>result in the team being disqualified from winning awards or advancing</i>.</p> <p>Reports of Red behavior must be investigated further before making final decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal behavior (stealing, vandalism, physical fights, etc.) • Clear evidence of serious bullying or abusive behavior • Clear evidence an adult did the work for the team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examples: A team member tells a judge their coach did the work with judge's follow up questions to confirm interpretation and understanding; a team presents work far above their skill level and is not able to explain it or demonstrate understanding. ○ Adult intervention does not stop after a direct warning • Clear evidence of cheating or intentionally negatively impacting another team's FLL experience