



**2021 HEARTHSTONE® GRANDMASTERS OFFICIAL  
COMPETITION RULES v2.6**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Contents

### Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. INVITATION ONLY	3
2.1 Invitation Only.	3
3. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	3
3.1 Grandmasters Regions and Residency Requirements.	3
3.2 Eligibility Subject to Local Law.	4
3.3 Changes of Residency.	4
4. TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE	5
4.1 Tournament Rules.	5
4.2 Grandmasters Seasons and Schedule.	5
4.3 Grandmasters Structure Generally.	6
4.4 Regular Season of Each Season.	6
4.5 Seasonal Playoffs.	8
4.6 Hearthstone World Championship.	8
4.7 Promotion and Relegation for 2021 Grandmasters.	9
4.8 Promotion and Relegation for 2022 Grandmasters Should it Occur.	11
5. PRIZING	11
5.1 Grandmasters Prizing in General.	11
5.2 Regular Season Prize Awards.	12
5.3 Playoff Prize Awards.	12
5.4 Hearthstone World Championship Prize Awards.	12
6. PLAYER CONDUCT AND PRIZE DEDUCTIONS	13
6.1 Prize Deductions and Standards of Conduct.	13
6.2 Effects of a Disqualified/Removed Players.	16
7. SPONSOR, BRANDING, AND STREAMING REQUIREMENTS	16
7.1 No Streaming During Matches in Your Region.	16
7.2 No Implied Endorsements.	17
7.3 Reserved Sponsors In General.	17

7.4	Examples of Possible Reserved Sponsor Categories.	18
7.5	Streaming Requirement During Broadcasts.	19
7.6	Background Requirements During Broadcasts.	19
8.	GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS	19
8.1	No Employment Relationship.	19
8.2	Changes to these Official Rules.	20
8.3	Communications.	20
9.	GLOSSARY	21

## 1. INTRODUCTION

These 2021 Hearthstone Grandmasters Official Competition Rules (“Official Rules”) govern participation and competitive play of *Hearthstone* in the 2021 Hearthstone Grandmasters Tournament (“Grandmasters”).

These Official Rules, in conjunction with the Hearthstone Tournament Player Handbook (the “Handbook”), establish the rules of tournament play, including rules governing player eligibility, tournament structure, point structures, prize awards, sponsorships, player conduct, etc. The Handbook can be found here: [blizz.ly/HSrules](http://blizz.ly/HSrules)

THE TERMS OF THE HANDBOOK CONTAIN A MANDATORY ARBITRATION PROVISION IN SECTION 8 THEREIN WHICH LIMITS YOUR AND BLIZZARD’S ABILITY TO LITIGATE CLAIMS; AS WELL AS A LIMITATION OF LIABILITY IN SECTION 9 THEREIN WHICH LIMITS THE LIABILITY OF BLIZZARD AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BLIZZARD GROUP TO YOU FOR ALL HARM, DAMAGES, INJURY OR LOSS.

Please review the terms contained in these Official Rules and the Handbook carefully. You must agree to the terms contained in these Official Rules and the Handbook in order to participate in Grandmasters. You must abide by these Official Rules and adhere to the terms of the Handbook in order to remain eligible to play in Grandmasters and receive prizes.

## 2. INVITATION ONLY

### 2.1 Invitation Only.

- (a) You may only participate in Grandmasters if you have received an official written invitation from Blizzard and have also entered into a written 2021 Hearthstone Grandmasters Player Participation Agreement and Acceptance Form as provided by Blizzard. Blizzard reserves the right to issue and withdraw Grandmasters invitations in its sole discretion and at any time.

## 3. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

### 3.1 Grandmasters Regions and Residency Requirements.

- (a) In order to be and remain eligible to participate in Grandmasters, you must be a legal resident of one of the places listed below at all times during Grandmasters competition. Grandmaster competition is split into the following three geographic “regions” based on player residency:
- (i) In order to participate in the Americas region, you must be a legal resident of one of the following countries or regions at the start of the applicable Grandmasters Season: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, United States of America, Uruguay or Venezuela.
  - (ii) In order to participate in the Asia Pacific region, you must be a legal resident of one of the following countries or regions at the start of the applicable Grandmasters Season: Australia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, New Zealand, The Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, or Vietnam.
  - (iii) In order to participate in the European region, you must be a legal resident of one of the following countries or regions at the start of the applicable Grandmasters Season: Algeria, Austria, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, State of Qatar, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, or the United Kingdom.

### 3.2 Eligibility Subject to Local Law.

- (a) You may only participate in Grandmasters so long as your participation does not violate your applicable local laws. You are responsible for ensuring that your participation in Grandmasters is compliant with all laws of the jurisdiction(s) in which you are a resident, and you must take all steps necessary to ensure such compliance, including the federal, state and local laws of the United States applicable to jurisdictions outside the United States. You may only travel to participate in a Grandmasters event in-person if you hold a valid passport for your travel and participation. You must also obtain any necessary visa or other governmental authorization required for your participation in any such Grandmasters event, whether online

or in-person (including any travel required to or from any venue for the event). Blizzard does not take responsibility for your compliance with local laws and visa requirements.

### 3.3 Changes of Residency.

- (a) If you wish to change your residency during Grandmasters competition to a place outside of your Grandmasters region (as described in Sections 3.1(a)(i) through (iii) above), you must request a region change from Blizzard in writing before the start of the next Grandmaster qualification period (as described in Section 4.7(d) below). Blizzard reserves the right to approve or deny region changes in its sole discretion. If approved by Blizzard, you will be removed from your current region at the conclusion of the current Grandmasters Season, and any Masters Tour points earned from that qualifying period onwards will count for qualification into your new region of residence.
- (b) If you change your residency during Grandmasters competition to a country that is not on the list of your applicable Grandmaster region (as described in Sections 3.1(a)(i) through (iii) above) without Blizzard's approval, or a country which is not listed in **Section 3.1(a)(i) through (iii)**, Blizzard reserves the right to remove you from Grandmasters or change your competition region at its sole discretion at any time.

## 4. TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE

### 4.1 Tournament Rules.

- (a) Grandmasters is governed by these Official Rules and the terms contained in the Handbook.
- (b) For all tournament matches, each player will use *Hearthstone* card decks that they have created using special Tournament Play Accounts provided by Blizzard. Players will play matches in the region determined by Blizzard.

### 4.2 Grandmasters Seasons and Schedule.

- (a) The Grandmaster tournament is split into two seasons ("Season(s)"), with a *Hearthstone* World Championship ("World Championship") event to occur thereafter.
- (b) Season 1 shall commence on or about April 1, 2021 and is expected to conclude on or about May 30, 2021.
- (c) Season 2 shall commence on or about July 28, 2021 and is expected to conclude September

26, 2021.

- (d) The World Championship shall occur between October 12, 2021 and December 31, 2021 on dates to be determined by Blizzard.
- (e) Blizzard, in its sole discretion, will determine the dates and times of all Grandmasters matches (“Match Schedule”). The Match Schedule for each Season will be communicated to players no later than 2 weeks prior to the start of each Stage of the respective Season.
- (f) Players will submit deck lists to Blizzard’s designated tournament administrator for matches for the whole competition week prior to the deadline designated by the tournament administrator. Players will submit the same decklists for each of their matches during that week. Decklists in Grandmasters will be revealed to opponents prior to a match.

#### 4.3 Grandmasters Structure Generally.

- (a) All Tournament matches for Grandmasters will be held remotely online, apart from the World Championship which may take place at a live venue in Blizzard’s sole discretion.
- (b) Competition for each Grandmaster Season is split into three geographic regions based on player residency: Americas, Asia Pacific, or Europe.
- (c) Each Grandmaster region has a maximum of 16 participants.
- (d) Each Grandmaster Season consists of 7 weeks of individual Ro16 dual elimination groups into top 8 single elimination tournaments (referred to as “Regular Season”) and a Seasonal Playoff week.

#### 4.4 Regular Season of Each Season.

- (a) The match and tournament format for Regular Season will be announced by Blizzard prior to the start of each Season. Formats will be selected by Blizzard between existing match formats which include but are not limited to Conquest, Specialist and Last Hero Standing.
- (b) The Regular Season of each Season will consist of 7 weeks of competition that will award “Grandmasters Points” towards placement in the Seasonal Playoffs or towards relegation. Each Regular Season tournament week will consist of 4 groups of dual elimination group pairings between all 16 players in the same region. The initial seeding for each week will be randomized and revealed after deck submission. The 8 players to advance out of the 4 dual

elimination group groups in each region will then compete in a Single Elimination bracket to determine the final standings for the tournament. Players will be awarded the following points each week based on the final standings of each Regular Season tournament:

Grandmaster Points	
1st place	5 points
2nd place	4 points
3rd-4th place	3 points
5th-8th place	2 points
9th-12th place	1 point
13th-16th place	0 points

- (c) Following the conclusion of the Regular Season, players will be ranked based on the number of points accumulated in all Regular Season tournaments that Season (“Grandmaster Points”). The 8 players in each region with the highest Grandmaster Points will be seeded into the Seasonal Playoffs (as described in Section 4.5(b)).
- (d) Grandmaster Points ties between final standings will be resolved by the following tiebreakers in the following order of priority starting from top to bottom:
- (i) The highest combined number of 1<sup>st</sup> place finishes achieved by a player during the Regular Season of the Season. The player with the highest total number of 1<sup>st</sup> place finishes in a tie will be ranked higher.
  - (ii) The highest combined number of 2<sup>nd</sup> place finishes achieved by a player during the Regular Season of the Season. The player with the highest total number of 2<sup>nd</sup> place finishes in a tie will be ranked higher.
  - (iii) The highest combined number of 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> place finishes achieved by a player during the Regular Season of the Season. The player with the highest total number of 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> place finishes in a tie will be ranked higher.
  - (iv) The highest combined number of 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> place finishes achieved by a player during the Regular Season of the Season. The player with the highest total number of 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> place finishes in a tie will be ranked higher.



(v) The highest combined number of 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> place finishes achieved by a player during the Regular Season of the Season. The player with the highest total number of 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> place finishes in a tie will be ranked higher.

(vi) If two or more players are tied for standings with meaningful differences (as designated by Blizzard), a special playoff bracket constructed to output the appropriate number of players to advance. The mechanics, construction, and seeding for this tiebreaker bracket will be determined in Blizzard's sole discretion.

#### 4.5 Seasonal Playoffs.

- (a) All matches in each Playoff will be best of 5 4-deck Conquest with a ban phase format as described in the Handbook.
- (a) After the conclusion of each Season, the top 8 players in each region will advance to that Season's Playoff. Each Playoff will consist of two Dual elimination group brackets that seed into a top 4 single elimination.
  - (b) In the first Dual elimination group: the 4<sup>th</sup> seed from the Regular Season plays 5<sup>th</sup> seed from the Regular Season in the Initial Match of the dual elimination group; the 8<sup>th</sup> seed from the Regular Season will be placed in the Elimination Match of the dual elimination group and 1<sup>st</sup> seed from the Regular Season placed in the Winner's Match of the dual elimination group.
  - (c) In the second Dual elimination group: the 3<sup>rd</sup> seed from the Regular Season plays 6<sup>th</sup> seed from the Regular Season in the Initial Match of the dual elimination group; the 7<sup>th</sup> seed from the Regular Season will be placed in the Elimination Match of the dual elimination group and 2<sup>nd</sup> seed from the Regular Season placed in the Winner's Match of the dual elimination group.
- (d) The remaining necessary matches in each Dual elimination group will play out as described in Section 4.7 of the Handbook.
- (e) The winner of the Winner's Match from the first dual elimination group plays against the winner of the Decider Match from the second dual elimination group; and the winner of the Winner's Match from the second dual elimination group playing against the winner of the Decider Match from the first dual elimination group. These are the semifinal matches in the 4-person single elimination bracket. The remaining 4 players in the single elimination bracket will then compete to determine the winner of the Playoff.

#### 4.6 Hearthstone World Championship.

- (a) The World Championship will take place between competitors on the date(s) and at the location(s) to be announced by Blizzard at least 4 weeks prior to the event, which event may be held online or at a live venue as determined by Blizzard in its sole discretion.
- (b) The winner from each Playoff in each region from both Season 1 and Season 2, together with 2 players invited from China's *Gold Series* program, will compete in the 2021 World Championship. The winner from the 2021 Season 1 Playoff in each region will be awarded 5 Points toward 2021 Season 2 in their respective regional Grandmasters Point structure.
  - (i) Should a player be relegated from Grandmasters, disqualified from participation or otherwise unavailable to compete in the World Championship, that player's invitation will be passed down to the next eligible player from the same region and season that the removed player qualified from starting with second place, then third place and so on in sequential order (E.g. If a player who qualifies to the World Championship is relegated in Season 1, the replacement player will be the next eligible player in that region from Season 1).
- (c) The tournament match format for the World Championship will be announced on playhearthstone.com and communicated to players no later than 4 weeks prior to the start of the World Championship. If no such announcement happens by the deadline, the format will default to the same format as Season 2 Playoffs.
- (d) World Championship matches will be best of 5 matches.
- (e) The World Championship will be a Dual elimination group into Single Elimination structure. The seeding for the two groups are
  - (i) Group 1: Season 1 - Americas player vs. Season 2 - China player and Season 1 - Asia-Pacific player vs. Season 2 - Europe player;
  - (ii) Group 2: Season 1 - China player vs. Season 2 - Asia-Pacific player and Season 1 - Europe player vs. Season 2 - Americas player.
- (f) For the single elimination portion of the tournament, players who exit out of the group with a 2-1 match win record will be paired against the player from the other group who exists the group with a 2-0 match win record.

- (g) Blizzard will provide travel and lodging accommodation for all players who participate in the World Championship, subject to the requirements described in Section 4.9 of the Handbook.

#### 4.7 Promotion and Relegation for 2021 Grandmasters.

- (a) Blizzard reserves the right to withhold, revoke, or terminate any invitation to compete in 2021 Grandmasters at any time should you: (i) commit any criminal offense; (ii) engage in any act that, in Blizzard's discretion, brings you into public disrepute, offends a portion or group of the public, or otherwise reflects unfavorably on Blizzard; (iii) stop playing in, be removed, become disqualified, or otherwise become ineligible from competing in 2021 Grandmasters; or (iv) become a resident of any country not listed in **Section 3** above.
- (b) Certain players may be at risk of removal from Grandmasters based on their performance in Grandmasters competition ("Player(s) At Risk of Relegation"). There will be 4 Players At Risk of Relegation in each region at the end of each Season.
- (c) Following the conclusion of the Regular Season of each Season, the players who finish in 13<sup>th</sup> , 14<sup>th</sup> , 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> place in Grandmaster Points in each region will automatically become Players At Risk of Relegation.
- (d) Following the conclusion of each Grandmasters Season, all Hearthstone players in each region who have earned Masters Tour Points will be ranked in descending order based on points which they have earned during the corresponding qualification period's Masters Tour tournaments ("Masters Tour Points").
  - (i) The qualification period for 2021 Grandmasters Season 1 has already been determined based on the 2020 Hearthstone Grandmasters Official Rules.
  - (ii) The qualification period for 2021 Grandmasters Season 2 will be determined based on Masters Tour Points earned during 2020 Masters Tour #4 - #6 and 2021 Masters Tour #1 - #3.
  - (iii) The qualification period for 2022 Grandmasters Season 1 will be determined based on Masters Tour Points earned during 2021 Masters Tour #1-6
- (e) The top 4 players by Masters Tour Points in each of the Americas, Europe, and Asia-Pacific regions (as defined in Section 3.1(a) above) will become eligible for selection

to participate in the following Season of Grandmasters (“Candidate(s) for Promotion”). Players from outside the Americas, Europe, and Asia-Pacific regions (as defined in Section 3.1(a) above) are not eligible to become Candidate(s) for Promotion unless otherwise notified by Blizzard. Player residency will be locked prior to competing in a Master Tour during a corresponding Grandmaster qualification period and any documented region changes must be communicated to Blizzard before the corresponding qualification period begins.

- (f) If a Candidate for Promotion is unable, unwilling, or unfit based on past personal and/or competitive conduct (as determinable in Blizzard’s sole discretion) to join Grandmasters, the candidacy for promotion passes down to the fourth place player of the corresponding qualification period’s Masters Tour Points from the region, and so on until there exists three Candidates for Promotion in each region.
- (g) It is possible that a Player At Risk of Relegation is also a Candidate for Promotion. In this case, this player is simultaneously relegated and promoted.
- (h) Blizzard, in its sole discretion, will choose players to replace the Players At Risk of Relegation for Season 2 from the pool of Candidates for Promotion. Becoming a Candidate for Promotion does not automatically grant an invitation to compete in Grandmasters Season 2. All invitations for Grandmasters will be issued in Blizzard’s sole discretion and may be subject to additional terms and requirements.

#### 4.8 Promotion and Relegation for 2022 Grandmasters Should it Occur.

- (a) Blizzard may host a Grandmasters tournament in 2022 which is substantially similar to 2021 Grandmasters (“2022 Grandmasters”). In such an event, Blizzard will announce the promotion and relegation mechanics for 2022 Grandmasters at <http://playhearthstone.com> and will update these Official Rules accordingly.
- (b) In the event of a 2022 Grandmasters, Season 1 2022 Grandmaster promotion will take all six 2021 Masters Tour events into consideration for the purpose of Masters Tour Points. If 2022 Grandmasters is to occur, the deadline to change your region of residence for Season 1 Grandmasters 2022 promotion will be 2 weeks prior to the 2021 Hearthstone Masters Tour #4.

## 5. PRIZING

### 5.1 Grandmasters Prizing in General.

- (a) Prizes for Season 1 are not earned until the conclusion of the Season 1 Playoff, and are subject to the deductions set forth in **Section 6** below until such time. Prizes earned during Season 1 will be paid out after the conclusion of the Season 1 Playoff. Players are not entitled to any Season 1 prize until such time.
- (b) Prizes for Season 2 are not earned until the conclusion of the Season 2 Playoff and are subject to the deductions set forth in **Section 6** below until such time. Prizes earned during Season 2 will be paid out after the conclusion of the Season 2 Playoff. Players are not entitled to any Season 2 prize until such time.
- (c) Prizes for the World Championship are not earned until the end of the World Championship and are subject to the deductions set forth in **Section 6** below until such time. Prizes earned during the World Championship will be paid out after the conclusion of the World Championship. Players are not entitled to any World Championship prize until such time.
- (d) Prize totals cannot be reduced below \$0 USD, and may not be deducted from once paid out to a player.
- (e) All prizes are non-transferrable and are subject to the prize award terms contained in Section 4.8 of the Handbook. The awarding of prizes is void where prohibited or restricted. State and local taxes, including but not limited to VAT, which are associated with the receipt or use of any prizes, are the sole responsibility of the prize winner.

### 5.2 Regular Season Prize Awards.

- (a) Players will add the following amounts to their prize total based on their standings at the conclusion of each Regular Season tournament week in each Season:

Regular Season Tournament Prizes	
1st place	\$3,000 USD
2nd place	\$2,500 USD
3rd-4th place	\$2,000 USD
5th-8th place	\$1,500 USD

9th-12th place	\$1,000 USD
13th-16th place	\$500 USD

5.3 Playoff Prize Awards.

(a) The top finishers in each of the Playoffs will add the following to their prize total:

Playoffs Prizes	
1st place	\$2,500 USD
2nd place	\$2,000 USD
3rd-4th place	\$1,500 USD
5th-8th place	\$1,000 USD

5.4 Hearthstone World Championship Prize Awards.

(a) In addition to the above, the top finishers in the World Championship will add the following to their prize total:

Grandmasters World Championship Prizes	
1st place	\$200,000 USD
2nd place	\$100,000 USD
2 Semifinalists	\$50,000 USD each
4 players who do not advance past the group stage.	\$25,000 USD each

## 6. PLAYER CONDUCT AND PRIZE DEDUCTIONS

6.1 Prize Deductions and Standards of Conduct.

(a) Grandmasters players will be held to the highest standards of personal integrity and good sportsmanship. Grandmasters players are bound by the standards of Player Conduct outlined in Section 6 of the Handbook, and the rule infractions and penalties outlined in Section 7 of the Handbook. In addition to the foregoing, the following conduct will reduce Grandmaster player prize totals by the following amounts (prize totals cannot be reduced below \$0 USD). All prize deductions will be decided in Blizzard's sole discretion and are final and binding once communicated to the player receiving the deduction.

- (b) A Grandmasters player found to be in violation of sponsorship or background requirements in **Sections 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, or 7.6** below will have \$250 USD deducted from their prize total. This deduction doubles for each subsequent violation of any of the foregoing sections by the same player.
- (c) A Grandmasters player found to be in violation of the streaming Blackout Periods described in **Section 7.1** below will have \$500 USD deducted from their prize total. This deduction doubles for each subsequent violation by the same player.
- (d) A Grandmasters player found to be sharing a Battle.net Account with another person will have \$1,000 USD deducted from their prize total, in addition to other remedies which may be provided for under the Handbook and Blizzard's Website Terms. This deduction doubles for each subsequent violation by the same player.
- (e) A Grandmasters player found to be engaging in "account boosting" (e.g., assisting another person with artificially boosting their account stats or in-game rank except for as exempted below) or playing in a *Hearthstone* tournament impersonating another player will have \$1,000 USD deducted from their prize total, in addition to other remedies which may be provided for under the Handbook and Blizzard's Website Terms. This deduction doubles for each subsequent violation by the same player.
- (i) As long as such play otherwise complies with Blizzard's Website Terms, co-streaming, co-playing or coaching ranked play is acceptable when either:
- The player whose account is being used is already invited into the Master Tour for which there is a current qualifying period on ladder, or
  - Play is occurring more than 5 days before the end of the season ladder season.
- (f) A Grandmasters player found to be in violation of the in-game disruption or harassment standards described in the "License Limitation" section of the Blizzard End User License Agreement will have \$500 USD deducted from their prize total, in addition to other remedies which may be provided for under the Handbook and Blizzard's Website Terms. This deduction doubles for each subsequent violation by the same player.
- (g) A Grandmasters player found to be in violation of Section 7.2 of the Handbook, Failure to Submit Decklist, will forego the standard Game Loss penalty described in the Handbook, and

will instead have \$250 USD deducted from their prize total. This deduction does not escalate for subsequent violations by the same player.

- (h) A Grandmasters player found to be in violation of Section 7.6 of the Handbook (Failure to Check in on Time) during a broadcasted match, in addition to the penalty described in the Handbook, will have the following amounts deducted from their prize total:
  - i. \$250 USD for being late to a match as defined in Section 7.6 of the Handbook. This deduction does not escalate for subsequent violations by the same player.
  - ii. \$500 USD for failure to participate in a scheduled match as defined in Section 7.6 of the Handbook. This deduction does not escalate for subsequent violations by the same player. If a match occurs more than 3 hours before or after the scheduled match time, this penalty is waived.
- (i) A Grandmasters player who fails to utilize any travel or lodging benefit paid for and booked by Blizzard for any live Grandmasters-related event will have the actual cost of the unutilized travel or lodging benefit deducted from their prize total. This deduction does not escalate for subsequent violations by the same player.
- (j) A Grandmasters player who damages or otherwise harms any lodging accommodations paid for and booked by Blizzard in connection with any live Grandmasters-related event will have the actual cost of the damage charged to Blizzard deducted from their prize total. This deduction does not escalate for subsequent violations by the same player.
- (k) A Grandmasters player found to be in violation of Section 7.10 of the Handbook, Failure to Follow Specific Tournament Official Instructions, in addition to the penalty described in the Handbook, will have \$500 USD deducted from their prize total. This deduction does not escalate for subsequent violations by the same player.
- (l) A Grandmasters player found to be in violation of Section 7.12 of the Handbook, Unsporting Conduct Minor, in addition to the penalty described in the Handbook, will have the following amounts deducted from their prize total:
  - (i) \$250 USD for the first instance by the same player.
  - (ii) \$500 USD for the second instance by the same player.
  - (iii) \$1,000 USD for the third instance by the same player.



- (iv) Reduction of the player's prize total to \$0 USD for the fourth instance by the same player.
- (m) A Grandmasters player found in violation of **Section 7.5**, Streaming Requirements During Broadcast, will have \$100 USD deducted from their prize total. This deduction does not escalate for subsequent violations by the same player.
- (n) Any infraction described in the Handbook which carries a penalty of disqualification from a Tournament or suspension from competitive Tournament play will result in removal from Grandmasters and reduction of the player's prize total to \$0 USD, in addition to other remedies which may be provided for under the Handbook and Blizzard's Website Terms.
- (o) Being charged or convicted of committing a criminal offence by a state, local, or national government will result in removal from Grandmasters and reduction of the player's prize total to \$0 USD, in addition to other remedies which may be provided for under the Handbook and Blizzard's Website Terms.
- (p) Engaging in any act that, in Blizzard's sole discretion, brings you into public disrepute, offends a portion or group of the public, or otherwise damage's Blizzard image will result in removal from Grandmasters and reduction of the player's prize total to \$0 USD, in addition to other remedies which may be provided for under the Handbook and Blizzard's Website Terms.
- (q) Any prizing that is unawarded as a result of each prize deduction will be divided evenly and redistributed to all other eligible players in the same region.

## 6.2 Effects of a Disqualified/Removed Players.

- (a) If a player is disqualified or otherwise removed from Grandmasters prior to the completion of all matches during Season 1 or Season 2, the season will continue with less than 16 players. Seeding, including any byes, will still be randomized at the start of each week. Player rankings and points earned from current or previous weeks will not change. Any prize additions which resulted from match wins against the disqualified/removed player will remain in the applicable player's prize total.
- (b) If any region has less than sixteen (16) players during a Season, Blizzard will invite additional player(s) from the vacant position's region based on the corresponding qualification period's Masters Tour Points (as described in Section 4.7(d)) prior to the

following Season until each region has sixteen (16) players. Eligible players based on the corresponding qualification period's Masters Tour Points at the end of each Season will be considered "Midyear Candidate(s) for Promotion". If a Midyear Candidate for Promotion is unable, unwilling, or unfit based on past personal and/or competitive conduct (as determinable in Blizzard's sole discretion) to join Grandmasters, the candidacy for promotion passes down to the second place player in the corresponding qualification period's Masters Tour Points, and so on until there exists a suitable number of Midyear Candidates for Promotion to fill the vacant position(s).

## **7. SPONSOR, BRANDING, AND STREAMING REQUIREMENTS**

### **7.1 No Streaming During Matches in Your Region.**

- (a) During live broadcasts of your matches during Hearthstone Grandmasters, you may not:
- i. Livestream any form of video content on any platform or channel (other than as part of an official live Grandmaster broadcast); or
  - ii. Rebroadcast any recorded video content on any platform or channel, with the exception of video-on-demand content ("Blackout Period(s)"). Your personal livestream channel(s) must either be offline during Blackout Periods, or be "hosting" or "raiding" an official live Grandmasters broadcast. Blizzard will communicate all Blackout Periods to you in advance.

### **7.2 No Implied Endorsements.**

- (a) Following the public announcement by Blizzard of the Grandmasters players rosters in your region, you are permitted to publicize the fact that you are participating in Grandmasters. However, you may not use Blizzard's brands or trademarks (including but not limited to Grandmasters, *Hearthstone* Masters, and *Hearthstone*) to promote or otherwise imply any endorsement or brand collaboration with any product or service not specifically authorized by Blizzard. You must comply with all of Blizzard's requirements when using Blizzard's brands or trademarks publicly, as well as comply with all applicable laws.

### **7.3 Reserved Sponsors In General.**

(a) Blizzard wants players to be successful in their efforts to build their own brand and sponsorship opportunities. However, Blizzard needs to reserve the right to have enterprise-wide sponsorships or sponsorships for particular game titles or particular events in order to fund the development and expansion of *Hearthstone* and *Hearthstone* Esports. Accordingly, Blizzard may from time to time designate certain products or services as a “Reserved Sponsor Category” by providing you with written notice. A Reserved Sponsor Category may include but are not limited to the examples listed in **Section 7.4** below. Should Blizzard exercise its right to declare certain products or services as a Reserved Sponsor Category, you will be prohibited from Actively Promoting (as defined below) any sponsor in such Reserved Category in connection with your participation in Blizzard’s *Hearthstone* esports other than the reserved sponsor(s) designated by Blizzard. You may Passively Promote (as defined below) sponsors in a Reserved Sponsor Category even after Blizzard exercises its right to reserve it. You are solely responsible for determining whether your compliance with the terms contained in these Official Rules and the Handbook conflict with any present or future sponsorship agreement which you have or may enter into. You agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Blizzard Group from and against any and all expenses, judgments, awards, fines, and fees (including reasonable attorneys’ fees) with respect to any claims or actions brought against any member of the Blizzard Group by third parties which arise out of any agreement for sponsored activity which you have or may enter into.

(b) “Actively Promoting” means drawing attention to a sponsor via intentional conduct, which includes but is not limited to: (i) verbally mentioning a sponsor during Grandmasters activities; (ii) pointing or otherwise gesturing in the direction of a sponsored logo on your clothing or otherwise; (iii) consuming a sponsored food or beverage while on camera during a Grandmasters broadcast or official interview; and (iv) displaying a sponsored logo, product, or material in the background or foreground of online video feeds which are incorporated into a Grandmasters broadcast (e.g., displaying a sponsored beverage, poster, or sponsor-branded refrigerator in the shot).

(c) “Passively Promote” means: (i) wearing a sponsored logo on your clothing; (ii) wearing a sponsored article of clothing or glasses; (iii) using a sponsored computer peripheral in the normal course of competition (other than headphones at live events, due to the nature of requiring player noise cancelling at live venues); and (iv) any other sponsored activities which Blizzard specifically permits.

#### 7.4 Examples of Possible Reserved Sponsor Categories.

(a) A Reserved Sponsor Category may include but are not limited to the following examples:

(i) Complete desktop computers.

(ii) Complete laptop computers.

(iii) Computer monitors.

(iv) Computer CPUs.

(v) Computer memory.

(vi) Non-alcoholic beverages, which includes but is not limited to: (i) anything consumed by drinking, whether or not such beverages contain nutritive, food, or dairy ingredients, or are in a frozen form; (ii) powders, syrups, grounds (such as for coffee), herbs (such as for tea), concentrates, beverage pods, and all other beverage bases from which beverages can be made; (iii) brands and products used for water purification or beverage making; (iv) “flavor enhancers” and “liquid water enhancers”; and (v) non-alcoholic beverages sold as “shots” or “supplements.” The definition of “Beverage” will apply without regard to a product’s labeling, marketing, or packaging.

(vii) Beer and other alcoholic beverages.

(viii) Payment services.

(ix) Travel services, which includes but not limited to: (i) air travel, (ii) ground transportation, (iv) lodging, and (iv) travel agencies.

(x) Any other product or service type which Blizzard declares in writing to you to be a “Reserved Sponsor Category.”

#### 7.5 Streaming Requirement During Broadcasts.

(a) All Grandmasters are required to have a live webcam feed of their faces transmitted to Blizzard whenever playing a match on broadcast. The webcam feed must comply with all format and shot composition requirements provided by Blizzard.

#### 7.6 Background Requirements During Broadcasts.

- (a) Due to the nature of broadcast distribution, Blizzard cannot have unlicensed materials visible during Grandmasters broadcasts. Because of this, all Grandmasters players must remove or cover up all logos, pictures, posters, artwork, sculptures, figurines, and other copyrighted material which is otherwise visible in the background while remotely participating in Grandmasters broadcasts, with the sole exception of Blizzard-owned or produced materials which have been cleared by Blizzard. Additionally, no person other than Grandmasters players may be visible on remote player video feeds during Grandmasters broadcasts (including photographs of people). All Grandmaster's players must comply with Blizzard's instructions regarding visible background materials during Grandmasters broadcasts. Blizzard may provide a background cover for use during online matches, which players must use if instructed to do so by Blizzard. Such background may contain *Hearthstone* and/or Blizzard elements only, but will not contain the logos of Blizzard's sponsors.

## **8. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **8.1 No Employment Relationship.**

- (a) You agree that you are not an employee or contractor of Blizzard or any other Blizzard Group member and are not entitled to employee or fringe benefits.
- (b) Nothing in this document or the Handbook shall be deemed or construed to create a partnership, joint venture or similar relationship or create fiduciary duties or responsibilities on the part of Blizzard or any other member of the Blizzard Group.

### **8.2 Changes to these Official Rules.**

- (a) These Official Rules and the Handbook contain the rules, policies and practices of the Blizzard for the Grandmasters that are in effect at the time of their publication. All previously issued rules, policies and practices (other than the Website Terms), whether in print, online, or in individual communications with players relating to the Grandmasters are superseded.
- (b) Blizzard reserves the right to revise, modify, change, delete or add to these Official Rules at any time, in its sole discretion, and to suspend, cancel or modify the Grandmasters or any player's participation in the Grandmasters should viruses, bugs, unauthorized human intervention, hacks or other causes beyond Blizzard's control affect the administration, security or proper play of the Grandmasters, or Blizzard otherwise becomes (as determined in its sole discretion) incapable of running the Grandmasters as planned.

8.3 Communications.

- (a) We both agree that these Official Rules and the Handbook together constitute a written agreement signed by both you and Blizzard under applicable law.
- (b) To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, these Official Rules, and any other notices, requests and other communications provided for herein, may be provided to you electronically, and you agree to receive all such communications from Blizzard electronic form. Electronic communications will be delivered to you at the email address listed on your Battle.net Account.
- (c) If you have any questions or comments about these Official Rules or Qualifiers, please email them to [hsadmin@eslgaming.com](mailto:hsadmin@eslgaming.com) or send written questions to: **2021 Hearthstone Grandmasters c/o Blizzard Entertainment Esports, P.O. Box 18979, Irvine, CA 93623.**

## 9. GLOSSARY

“**Battle.net Account**” means a full Battle.net account registered on Blizzard’s Battle.net service that is in good standing and that remains in good standing throughout Tournament competition. “Battle.net Account” does not refer to a Battle.net lite account; a lite account is not sufficient for participation in any Tournament.

“**Battle.net lite account**” means a version of Battle.net that mobile users can create without accepting the Battle.net End User License Agreement.

“**Blizzard**”, “**we**” or “**us**” means Blizzard Entertainment, Inc. and its affiliates.

“**Blizzard Group**” means Blizzard, its parent and any of their respective affiliate companies and subsidiaries.

“**Official Rules**” means these 2021 Hearthstone Grandmasters Official Competition Rules as amended from time to time in Blizzard’s sole discretion.

“**Handbook**” means the Hearthstone Tournament Player Handbook, as may be amended, supplemented, or otherwise modified from time to time.

“**Website Terms**” means the Blizzard End User License Agreement applicable to your use of the *Hearthstone* game client and Blizzard’s Battle.net service, the Blizzard Entertainment Online Privacy Policy applicable to your use of Blizzard’s games, services, and websites, and the other terms and conditions governing use of Blizzard’s games, services, and websites.