Justice System of Nexus

Overview

The justice system is designed to uphold the laws of Nexus. The laws of Nexus and the authority of the Justice System come from the Nexus Guild Council. The Sentinel's mission is to maintain these laws for the health and prosperity of all Nexus' citizens. Into its hands were given the tasks of investigation of crime, judgment of guilt or innocence, and punishment of the guilty.

Sentinels of Justice:

- Derwyn
- Rapheous
- Dan'duka

Officers of Justice:

- Grissom
- Pious
- Sennaria
- Kalron
- Arwyn
- Noranne
- Vragdish
- Danilo
- Vesper
- Cailan
- Lyrasel
- Anterio
- Cromwell
- Dante
- Darkblade
- Nigel
- Wicked

History of the Justice System of Nexus

The empire was originally ruled by the emperor and empress. With the knights of the empire entrusted with up holding the laws of the empire. Judgments where held within the "Hall of Justice" within the royal city of Tholm. After the city of Tholm fell the knights took their orders from the

Guild Council of Nexus. The original Sentinels of Justice were chosen by Tilnar, the Lord of Justice and given the Precepts of Justice to guide them. He left the creation of policy and the addition of new members to this original group. Seeing the wisdom of Tilnar's wishes, the Nexus Guild Council quickly officially sanctioned the Sentinels as the will of the people as well as the will of the Lord of Justice.

New Sentinels are appointed by the existing Sentinels when they find an individual with the combined qualities they think are necessary to be a fair and impartial Sentinel. With consensus being a necessary condition within the Sentinels, new members were only appointed by unanimous decision.

This consensus driven by equality has been incorporated into all their major decisions. Originally cases were judged by a tribunal of Sentinels. IN recent times this has been changed so that only a single Sentinel is now required. While only one Sentinel decides a case the policies and procedures are unanimously endorsed by all.

The Precepts of Justice

The "Precepts of Justice" come from a obelisk which Tilnar took from the ruined city of Tholm. The obelisk had rested within the "Hall of Justice". Tilnar, displeased with how the laws where being carried out, hid the obelisk and charged the paladins with finding it and reading the words of the law in its pure form before it was changed by politics. After much searching by all the paladins a group of paladins, lead by Wicked, found the obelisk deep within the Blood Swamp. To this day they continue to be the rudder by which Sentinels guide Justice within Nexus.

It is important to remember that like many of the messages that come from our gods, the true laws have been lost, or misunderstood. We choose everyday of our lives. And the laws themselves allow it. That's why they were made, you know. Because if we weren't able to choose, why would we need our gods at all? The laws are there so the consequences of our choices are clear.

1. Nobility is a measure of the soul, and not of one's rank in guild, wealth, or birth. Only those of a noble spirit may interpret these precepts, and only one marked by justice may pass judgment.
2. All intelligent beings share the same Basic Rights, regardless of the nature of their creation, which can only be removed as the Consequence of their own actions, as per the divine laws of Free Will.
3. Offense begins when an act influences another in a harmful way. One's lawful right to swing a sword ends where the flesh of another starts. A being should always act to others as they would be treated.
4. All intelligent beings have the right to defend their Basic Rights, by whatever means are necessary, and the right to aid, or enlist the aid of others, in doing so.
5. Enemies of the people at large have, by their actions, given up their Basic Rights. This loss of right can be applied to a group as a whole rather than an individual, so long the individual members of the group are acting as part of the group, and not on their own

merits.
6. Individuals acting on their own merits must only be judged on those merits.
7. One's actions can only be judged on the knowledge and perceptions that were available at the time of their action.
8. Justice is Swift and Harsh, tempered only by the flames of Mercy. It takes but one who is marked in the Flame of Justice to judge, though it cannot be the one who accuses.
9. One who is marked by the Flame of Justice will be consigned to burn within it if ever a judgment is made for reasons other than the cause of justice itself.
10. Justice is hard and cruel, and above petty bickering or political interests.
11. It is an invasion of the Basic Rights of the accused to wrongfully accuse or unnecessarily detain them; It is an invasion of the Basic Rights of the victim to allow the offender to go unpunished; It is an invasion of the Basic Rights of all intelligent beings to abuse or manipulate the system of justice.
12. It is beyond the power of any mortal being to set all wrongs to right, as such, those marked seek only to deliver justice, and not mediate every conflict in the realms.

Officers and Sentinels of the Justice System

Originally all paladin were granted the powers of arrest when they reached the status of Holy Warrior. This system was easily implemented, but poor in execution. Holy Warriors with little or no knowledge of the policies and procedures of Justice were being asked to do their duty. These Holy Warrior had their honor questioned simply as they did not know what they should do.

To rectify this two tiers were established within the Justice System and paladin in general lost the power to arrest.

Officers of Justice:

The Officers of Justice were created and given the power to arrest and investigate crime. Officers are trained in the law, policies, and procedures such that they can execute their duties without unneeded arrests. They are part of most discussions of the Justice System, being excluded only from membership discussions. While their input is welcome and encouraged in non-membership discussions, they do not have a vote.

Sentinels of Justice:

The Sentinels of Justice act as Officers when needed but their greater duty is to act as judges for the cases investigated. They alone may appoint new Officers, advance Officers to Sentinels, or make policy and procedural decisions for the Justice System. They also have the power to demote or relieve Officers or Sentinels of their duties.

Appointment, Advancement, & Demotion of Officers & Sentinels

The Sentinels periodically add new members to their ranks. Any citizen in good standing may become an Officer of Justice. New Sentinels of Justice are chosen from the Officers, having proven themselves ready for the increased duties and responsibility. In each case a unanimous vote of the current Sentinels of Justice is required.

Demotion of a Sentinel or Officer requires a unanimous vote of the Sentinel, save the one being voted upon.

Crime, Trial, & Appeal Procedures

Crime: If you feel someone has broken the law or wish to admit to breaking the law.

- If you fear for your life, find sanctuary in one of the temples.
- Find a member of the Justice System and contact them with your complaint. If none are available write everything down, as the details will be important.
- An Officer or Sentinel will come to you, it may not be the one you called. Officers of Sentinels involved in the case should excuse themselves from acting in any official capacity. The responding Officer will act as the investigator. He/she will ask you and all witnesses a number of questions to establish what happened. If they feel they have enough evidence they will attempt to place the suspect under arrest.
- Fleeing from arrest is considered a sign of guilt and will be taken into account in the trial.
- The arresting Officer will immediately broadcast a quick explanation to the realm. They will compile a report of the event and investigation and mail it to the Sentinels within a week (in the real world). Officers failing to perform these notifications will be punished with monetary fines, per the request of the Guild Master Council for expedient trials and an informed citizenry. The arresting Officer may opt to release the accused until trial, but in doing so accepts equal responsibility for any additional crimes the accused may commit while out.
- A Sentinel will review the report and set a date for a trial within two weeks (in the real world), based upon the availability of those involve. The Sentinel may opt to question any witnesses, set the criminal free until trial, or even void the charges based upon the report and questioning she/he may do. If the Sentinel opts to release the accused until trial, he/she accepts equal responsibility for any additional crimes the accused may commit while out.

Trial:

- In the trial phase the arresting Officer will act as prosecutor and call witnesses if the accused disputes the charges.
- A single Sentinel will act as judge.
- The trials are generally public, but loud or otherwise disruptive observers may be told to leave.
- The Sentinel may impose additional rules of conduct for those present in the courtroom. Examples include bearing no weapons, not speaking, and no singing/spellcasting.
- At the Sentinel's discretion the trial may be closed to the public.
- A defendant may choose someone to speak for them or act as council.
- The defense does not have the right to endless time or questions and may be cut off by the Sentinel at any time.
- Disruptive defendants or council, like observers, can be excluded from the trial, though they are given more leeway than the observers.
- When all evidence has been presented, the victim and accused will be allowed a short statement.
- The Sentinel will then render judgment based upon the facts of the case. *It is of note that some cases have been ruled justifiable homicide.*
- The Sentinel will set the punishment for the convicted.
- A summary of the case, including the verdict reached (innocent or guilty) and sentence (if any) imposed will be published within days (in the real world). The summary will also be sent to the Guild Master and/or Emissary of the accused.
- Those found guilty have the right to appeal the sentence or verdict to the Upper Court. They must voice that desire immediately after the sentence is read.

Appeal:

- While the case is being appealed the guilty will be returned to jail or set free as a criminal at the judge's discretion.
- Those returned to jail who escape have their appeal automatically declined with additional penalties.
- The Upper Court is a panel of three Sentinel.
- They will meet privately and review the case for fairness of the sentence or the validity of the verdict.
- They may or may not call witnesses, but will defiantly call the Sentinel who acted as judge.
- Their decisions will be posted within a two week time.
- Those appealing without merit may incur additional penalties, sentences of final death and banishment are automatically appealed to the Upper Court.
- At this time decisions of the Upper Court are final.

Summary Trial:

- The accuse may also decide to forego a Full Trial and opt for a Summary Trial.
- Once a decision regarding which trial the accused opts for is made it may not be changed.
- An Sentinel CAN make a summary Judgement in cases where they arrested the accused.

- A Sentinel will weigh the facts of the case by interviewing the accused, the victim (if possible), and any witnesses (again if possible) and then make a summary Judgment.
- There is NO appeal of this decision. It is final and binding.
- There is NO defense council.
- A summary of the case, including the verdict reached (innocent or guilty) and sentence (if any) imposed will be published within days (in the real world). The summary will also be sent to the Guild Master and/or Emissary of the accused.

The Law of Nexus

At this time there are few codified laws. The Justice System as a whole has requested a codified law from the Guildmaster Council. Without such a guideline, the Justice System has been handling the following crimes.

- Murder and Attempted Murder: This crime includes malicious teleporting, direct assault, malicious stunning in the presence of enemies, and other actions where the intent was to cause harm.
- Treason and Attempted Treason
- Violation of the Proclamation
- Wanton Destruction of Property: This crime includes arson, tossing other's equipment, and other actions which result in the loss of property.
- Theft: Accusations of theft of property by picking pockets, stealing from corpses, stealing from a group's drops, stealing from someone's room, etc., are investigated by the Justice System, but are considered a guild matter. If a resolution can not be found in the guild system, the Guildmaster's, or emissary for clerics and paladins, should bring the matter to the Justice System for resolution.

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