

District 18 Regionals: Planning Policies & Guidelines

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Overview

District 18 schedules, organizes, and funds Regional tournaments each year within its district. This document outlines the guidelines and policies to follow when planning a Regional tournament.

Refer to the ACBL's 'Regional Tournament Planning Guide', available at:

<https://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/units/RegionalTournamentGuide.pdf>

Process

An important step in planning a Regional tournament is to contact the Tournament Coordinator around 18 months in advance of the tournament to obtain a sanction number. Once the sanction number is obtained, the Regional can be scheduled.

The District 18 representative where the host Unit is located will work with that host Unit to determine a Tournament Chairperson. There can be more than one Tournament Chairperson, if desired. The Tournament Chairperson(s) will assemble a Planning Committee to organize and execute the Regional on behalf of District 18.

The Tournament Chairperson(s) is/are awarded one (1) free play per session of the Regional tournament to be used at their discretion. For example, free plays could be distributed to the Planning Committee members for their time and efforts. Please contact the District 18 representative for the Regional for written vouchers. These vouchers must be turned in when registering for a session at the Regional tournament.

Tournament Venue

The District 18 representative, Tournament Chairperson(s), and Director-in-Charge are responsible for arranging a host hotel or venue approximately 18 months before the Regional is scheduled.

Factors in determining a suitable space are as follows:

- Room space, including feasibility of the space.
- Cost of rent
- Hospitality charges (e.g., food, clean up, equipment use)
- Safety, which includes parking, lighting, and location.

Work with the Director-in-Charge to determine feasibility of space for running a Regional efficiently and effectively.

Do not enter into an agreement with a host hotel or venue until all the factors above have been adequately addressed.

Once an agreement has been finalized, the Tournament Chairperson(s) should build the relationship with the host hotel or venue by establishing a main point of contact and clear line of communication throughout the planning process.

Additional considerations for prior to and during the Regional tournament:

- Tables for Directors (to sell entries and score results), refreshments, hospitality, and partnerships.
- Equipment such as microphones, projectors, and flip charts
- Supply room or sufficient storage space for Directors and caddies.
- Clean up in between sessions and at the end of each playing day.
- Arrangements for the playing site to be sufficiently secure when not in use.
- An emergency contact person for the host hotel or venue.
- If hotel, provide notice that their restaurants may be busier during peak hours (e.g., before and after sessions)

Only the District 18 representative, the Tournament Chairperson(s), or Director-in-Charge (after discussion with Tournament Chairperson(s)) have authority to provide direction to the host hotel or venue.

Planning Committee

The Tournament Chairperson(s) selects and appoints a Planning Committee. The Planning Committee is responsible for the following functions:

Tournament Structure and Schedule

Determine how many days the Regional should be, and on which days those should be. A minimum of 3 days with a maximum of 7 days is required. Regional tournaments must be no more than 2 sessions per day. In addition, determine whether session stratification will be determined based on the highest player's masterpoints or an average of the partnership or team's total masterpoints.

As of January 1, 2015, the stratifications for a Regional are as follows:

- Open events: 3000+ / 3000 / 1500
- Gold Rush events: 750 / 500 / 200
- Side games: 2000+ / 2000 / 750
- 199er games: 199 / 100 / 50

Hospitality

Hospitality and entertainment are exciting to both local and out-of-town residents during any Regional tournament. The key to success in this area is proper planning and budgeting. Working with the Director-in-Charge, a hospitality budget is set based on the estimated number of tables expected. This budget can be used as the Planning Committee sees fit. Any increases to this budget must be reviewed and approved by the District 18 representative for the Regional.

Some suggestions for hospitality:

- Plan for bigger events (e.g., a BBQ) during peak attendance such as the end of the week of the Regional.
- Plan your food and refreshments carefully according to your budget.

- Player registration may be helpful if there is a sudden need for someone to find a partner.

The Tournament Chairperson(s) shall work with the District 18 representative on financial decisions.

Lastly, District 18 has adopted ACBL's Zero Tolerance Policy for all tournaments. In addition, smoking and perfumes are not permitted in the playing area and within 10 yards or meters beyond the area leading into the playing site. Post signage, if possible.

Caddies

Caddies are non-playing individuals who are hired for Swiss Team and Knockout events to pass boards from one table to another in order to maintain integrity and increase efficiency of these events. The number of caddies required is based on factors such as type of game, configuration of the room, caddy experience, and Director's needs.

Caddies take direction from the Director-in-Charge and can be given additional tasks to complete (e.g., cleaning up, organizing tables, or dealing with supplies).

Partnerships

A Partnership Chairperson should be appointed by the Planning Committee. At the Regional, the partnership desk should be staffed at least one hour prior to game time. An optional virtual partnership sign-up (e.g., via a website or email address) can also be established. Standbys can also be available in the event of last-minute urgencies such as a player life event or illness. Standbys receive a free play for that session if they are required to play.

Publicity

Publicity is an important step for successfully marketing any Regional. The Tournament Chairperson(s) is/are responsible for sending the schedule (once approved by the District 18 representative and Director-in-Charge) to the ACBL at least one year prior to the Regional. Printed flyers are optional and can be made available at the playing site during the Regional or available throughout the host Unit leading up to the Regional (e.g., at local bridge clubs or at sectional tournaments).

The following details are required on the flyer, both printed and electronic:

- Location of the Regional (city, state/province, host hotel or venue name and address).
- Dates of the Regional
- ACBL sanction number
- Name of the Director-in-Charge
- Name and email of Tournament Chairperson(s)
- Name and email of Partnership Chairperson
- Hotel room rates, if applicable, with the phone number to book
- Schedule of events (date, time, session specifics) in a clean, easy-to-read format
- Swiss team scoring method and stratifications (indicate whether based on highest player's masterpoints or an average of the partnership or team's total masterpoints)

- Entry fee per session
- Any tournament event (e.g., BBQ) should be highlighted on the flyer.

Once approved by the District 18 representative and Director-in-Charge, a finalized copy is forwarded for posting to the ACBL website and to the Tournament Coordinator.

Advertising Regional tournaments are done via Pianola around 9 months prior to the Regional and again around 1 month prior to the Regional.

Entry Fees

Entry fees are established by the District 18 Board. Entry fees should largely be determined by the cost of the host hotel or venue, and the cost of the Director(s). **Non and unpaid ACBL members are charged an additional \$4.00 US/CAD per session (see Note 1 below).**

Note 1: Effective January 1, 2027, paid ACBL memberships will be required at all regional tournaments unless the game is a 0-20 masterpoint event.

Note 2: Regional tournaments are now cashless – debit/credit only.

The Tournament Chairperson(s) will consult with the District 18 representative to set the entry fee.

Junior player entry fees (under the age of 26) follow the ACBL policy for discounted play at NABCs:

I/N Regional events: Free play

All other events: Ages 21 to 26 full-time students is \$5.00/session, under 21 plays for free.

Ensure that the player identifies as such to the Director each session. It is at the discretion of the Planning Committee to advertise the Junior rate accordingly.

Equipment and Supplies

The District 18 representative or Tournament Chairperson(s) will establish an agreement with a 3rd party to provide necessary supplies to the Regional. This includes tables (delivery, usage, pickup, storage), tablecloths (if needed), bidding boxes, boards, playing cards, Bridgemates, table markers, pencils, regular and Swiss team scoring sheets, regular and Swiss team entry forms, Swiss team reporting slips, and Swiss team matchup racks.

If possible, work with a local bridge club to save on costs or rent from the host Unit.

Coordinate with the Director-in-Charge on supplies required. The Tournament Chairperson(s) is/are responsible for arranging a crew that can set up tables prior to the first session of the Regional and take them down after the final session of the Regional.

Financial Guide

This guide assists with the financial decision-making process of a Regional tournament. All those

involved in this process should fully understand their budget and financial situation before committing to any expense. The financial success of a Regional is determined by spending less than revenue received.

Revenue: Total amount of money received

Expenses: Total amount of money spent

The district's goal is to generate 10% more revenue than expenses.

The revenue of the Regional depends largely on the number of tables sold and the revenue per player. For example, 30 tables per session (2 sessions per day) over 6 days would be 360 tables. Each table is 4 players. The Regional entry fee in this example is \$20.00 per player per session. This would result in the following calculation: $360 \text{ tables} \times 4 \text{ players} \times \$20.00 = \$28,800$. This is your total revenue.

Other revenue could be donations provided by individuals or businesses or the host Unit. Any situation where money is coming in for the Regional is considered revenue.

The expenses of the Regional are harder to estimate but can be reasonably planned for. Consider the following:

- Cost of host hotel or venue: hotels tend to be more expensive than other venues such as community centers and churches. Always tour the space and discuss the feasibility of the space with the Director-in-Charge prior to executing an agreement. In most situations, it is better to have too much space than not enough. That being said, if 30 tables are expected each day do not book a venue for 60 tables per day unless the venue cost is exceptionally good.
- Hospitality: hotels will require you to use their food/refreshments and their staff. Some community centers have unionized kitchens and therefore you are required to use their food/refreshments and staff. This will add to costs.
- Director costs: determined by the Director-in-Charge and based on the schedule and the venue. For example, running simultaneous games or running a Regional tournament with two or more rooms will increase the number of Directors required.
- ACBL sanction fees
- Advertising
- Supplies
- Bridgmate and dealer rentals
- Hand duplication
- Caddies
- Hand records
- Free plays: each free play is expensed at the cost of an entry fee.

The Tournament Chairperson(s), Planning Committee, and District 18 representative should work together to develop and execute the budget. This will ensure the best chance at a successful Regional tournament.

Refer to [Appendix A](#) for expense limits.

Insurance

The ACBL has a Comprehensive Liability Insurance Policy that covers all Regionals (and Sectionals) it sanctions. Proof of insurance coverage is available from the District 18 Financial Representative.

General Information, Recognition, and Feedback

The Tournament Chairperson(s), or delegate, should manage and maintain a board for posting information of interest to tournament players. This could include tournament results, rank achievements (e.g., reaching Life Master), upcoming special events, and any other information deemed appropriate. Tournament results are posted on ACBL Live.

Recognition is an important part of the Regional. Volunteers, from the Tournament Chairperson to the Planning Committee and all those who contributed to the success of the Regional should be recognized. Where possible, recognition should be given in-person as well as through a tournament wrap-up sent to members via Pianola.

If feasible, the Tournament Chairperson(s), or delegate, should take photos of new Life Masters and event winners and other major milestones. A set of photos should be emailed to your District 18 representative for inclusion on our website.

Lastly, any feedback or recommendations for future Regional tournaments can be sent to the District 18 representative.

Definitions

Director-in-Charge: Oversees other Directors and is largely responsible for the operation of each session of the Regional which may include scheduling, scoring, and addressing player concerns.

District 18 representative: the representative of the area that is hosting the Regional. The representative is a member of the District 18 Board.

Partnership Chairperson: Appointed by the Planning Committee to arrange partnerships, as requested, and to operate the partnership desk.

Pianola: <https://www.pianola.net/> - used to advertise Regionals and for other communications, as needed.

Planning Committee: The committee responsible for planning, organizing, and managing the Regional

Tournament Chairperson: Appointed by the District 18 representative. Often this is a representative of the host Unit. This position is responsible for assisting in the selection of a host hotel or venue for the Regional, assembling a Planning Committee, and overseeing the Regional from start to finish.

Tournament Coordinator: Appointed by the District 18 Board. They are responsible for obtaining sanction numbers for Regionals and working with the District 18 representative, Tournament Chairperson, and Director-in-Charge, as needed.

Appendix A – Expense Limits

ACBL sanction fees: As set by the ACBL.

Advertising: \$100.00 USD (Regionals in the US) and \$100.00 CAD (for Regionals in Canada)

Bridgmate and dealer rentals: To be determined for each Regional

Caddies: \$40.00 USD per session (Regionals in the US) and \$50.00 CAD per session (for Regionals in Canada).

Director costs: As determined by the ACBL and the Director in Charge

Equipment and supplies: Variable amount, based on the location of Regional. The amount is per achieved table per session. This covers consumable supplies such as convention cards, entry slips, and pencils. The District will cover any overages where necessary.

Hand duplication: \$10.00 USD per set (Regionals in the US) and \$12.00 CAD per set (for Regionals in Canada). *The Director-in-Charge will often complete the hand duplication, which provides maximum security and integrity. Consulting with the Director-in-Charge to determine costs.*

Hand records: \$180.00 USD (\$250.00 CAD)

Hospitality: \$7.00 USD per table (Regionals in the US) and \$8.00 CAD per table (for Regionals in Canada). Hospitality funds will be advanced at 75%, based on the Director-in-Charge estimated table count.

Appendix B – Change Management

Review and Approval

The District 18 Regionals: Planning Policies & Guidelines shall be reviewed by the District 18 Board annually or whenever a major change is necessary.

First Approved: July 1, 2025

Last Reviewed:

Change Management

Version	Date of Change	Details of Change
1.0	July 1, 2025	Initial version
1.1	January 8, 2026	Referenced the change to cashless tournaments
1.2	February 12, 2026	Under the section 'Entry Fees' referred to change to non-current ACBL memberships effective 2027.