

# HANDBOOK FOR MEMBERSHIP CHAIRS



**American Contract Bridge League**

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**Note:** Monetary references are in U.S. dollars

## **The Role of the Unit Membership Chair**

**GOAL:** The unit membership chair and the unit's membership committee seek new members and encourage present or former members to renew or reinstate their memberships.

### **IN and OUT REPORT**

The unit electronic contact (UEC) receives a monthly In and Out Report from the ACBL Club and Member Services Department that is to be given to the membership chair. This report contains the names of the unit's new members, address changes, rank changes, transfers out of the unit, transfers into the unit, the names of deleted or deceased members and the names of members who are being sent renewal notices. In addition, this report contains the names of the total membership of the unit by rank. The e-mail addresses that are contained in our database are included unless the member has specifically asked that their e-mail address remain confidential.

The unit membership chair should notify the Club and Member Services Department of any discrepancies found in these reports so that the ACBL's records may be corrected. The ACBL is also interested in adding to our database any e-mail addresses that we do not currently have.

Please note that there is a place on the In and Out Report for the membership chair to record why members are not renewing.

## FOLLOW-UP

The unit membership chair may use the In and Out Report to follow up with various groups in the unit.

**New Members.** The ACBL sends all new members a welcome packet with a New Member Guide (The ACBL from A to Z) and four issues of the New Member Newsletter, a quarterly publication. The unit's membership committee is asked to reinforce the ACBL's initial welcome. Please call and follow up with a letter within 30 days of receiving the new and relocated member information from ACBL. New members and transfers into the unit should be informed about unit activities, tournaments and club games in the area to make them feel welcome to the unit. Be sure to tell them about available web sites. Your unit may want to send its own welcome packet, too.

**Inactive Members.** Inactive members should be given another opportunity to pay their ACBL dues. The unit's Membership Committee is asked to call members whose membership has lapsed within 30 days of receiving information from ACBL. If three calls don't get a response, please send a letter. (See samples at the end of this booklet.) If you learn that the member does not intend to renew, please try to find out why and how the issue can be resolved. Sometimes the person's problem or issue can be resolved to his or her satisfaction and we keep a member! Remind inactive members that their dues support the future of bridge.

## REIMBURSEMENT REPORTS

Unit reimbursement reports and checks are provided on a quarterly basis when the minimum amount of \$1,000.00 has been met. In the event your unit does not meet the minimum amount during the year, the report and check will be mailed in January of the following year. The reports include names of members who renewed their membership or paid service fees. Students and new members are not included. The reimbursement amount is calculated at 11% of the amount paid by the member. Checks are mailed to the unit treasurer on record.

## **ANNUAL ROSTER**

In October of each year, the ACBL sends by e-mail a unit roster to each UEC (Unit Electronic Contact) to pass on to the unit membership chair, along with the October In and Out Report and the reimbursement report. The roster lists alphabetically all of the unit's active non-Life Masters and Life Masters. It includes the members' addresses, telephone numbers and total masterpoints on record at the time the roster is printed. In addition, it shows the paid-through dates for non-Life Master membership and Life Master service or membership fees.

A unit official may obtain unit rosters from their MyACBL portal page on the ACBL web site. The roster is available as an ACBLscore file or a printable report.

To ensure that the unit rosters are accurate, the ACBL asks the unit membership chair to advise the Club and Member Services Department of any inaccuracies. Notification should include the member's full name and player number.

The unit membership chair should distribute the information in the annual roster to any unit officers who may find it useful.

## **UNIT AWARDS FOR MEMBERSHIP RANKINGS**

In 1974, the ACBL Board of Directors voted to recognize the masterpoint achievements of all players, and the Mini-McKenney races were created. The winners at each level of achievement (ACBL-wide, unit-wide and now district-wide) are recognized each year.

Each unit receives a quarterly report from the ACBL with the standings of masterpoint winners in each masterpoint category. The final results are tabulated in February of the following year. The UEC receives a list of the top three winners in each ACBL masterpoint category.

Units are offered the opportunity to purchase medallions for each of these winners and to present them to their members. The national winners at each level of achievement are recognized by the ACBL each year in the April issue of the Bridge Bulletin.

National, unit and district winners also are recognized on the ACBL web site.

The unit electronic contact receives information on ordering medallions for unit Mini-McKenney winners. If the unit decides to purchase these medallions, the membership chair should order them and work with other unit officials to plan the presentation of the awards.

## **UNIT CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES**

ACBL has allocated 24 unit games per calendar year to each unit. Games are scheduled at their discretion. Of these 24 games, each unit may hold up to three extended team games. Units prepare bridge competitions that are suitable for their membership size and for the size and location availability of their playing areas.

Clubs that conform with ACBL regulations that have proved reliable in submitting monthly report forms and fees, and have an adequate number of tables may participate in these unit championships. Clubs not sanctioned to meet at the times of unit events may be allowed to participate with unit approval.

## **TYPES OF EVENTS**

ACBL permits considerable latitude in scheduling unit championship sessions. For example, a unit could hold a one-session unit championship each month, thus utilizing 12 of its 24 sessions. The unit could hold a two-session game, such as an election party or a new members party, several times a year. Units could also schedule a portion of their unit championship allocation as four-session unit championships each calendar quarter. The various events may consist of any schedule of games that might

appeal to the unit membership. For example, the events could be mixed pairs, master pairs, open pairs, or Swiss teams.

### **UNIT-WIDE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

A unit-wide championship is a game with unit championship rating held simultaneously at three or more locations within the unit area, with a minimum of five tables at each site. Two or more units may combine to hold a unit-wide game, also at three or more locations but within the joint area of both units. This game is to be deducted from the allocation of twenty-four unit games for each unit.

The unit supervises all preparations for unit-wide championships. It must provide for the staff to run the championship and must furnish the necessary computer-dealt hands (provided by the ACBL Club Membership Department) and other supplies. The computer-dealt hands will only be sent electronically. The unit should arrange for the game sites to be in clubs. In every respect, the quality of the game must meet unit standards. The unit determines overall ranking and reports the results to ACBL.

### **ANNUAL EXTENDED TEAM GAMES**

In order to foster International Matchpoint (IMP) play, ACBL grants each unit the right to hold a maximum of three annual sectional-rated, extended round-robin or knockout team-of-four events. These three games are included in the allotment of twenty-four unit games that each unit is allocated per calendar year. The events must run for three or more sessions.

Units must submit proposed conditions of contest to ACBL for approval together with the sanction application.

For more information on unit games, please see Chapter 5 of the ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations.

## Types of ACBL Membership and Fees

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

It is not necessary to have a form to either join the ACBL or renew or reinstate membership. A new membership, renewal or reinstatement may be called in to the ACBL Club & Member Services Department using a credit card (the necessary information with a check may be mailed to ACBL, or a member may join, renew or reinstate via the ACBL's web site).

The ACBL provides instant membership applications with predetermined membership numbers printed with detachable temporary membership cards for first-time members. This allows a new member to use his or her ACBL player number immediately. These forms are sent to the managers of all ACBL-sanctioned games, directors-in-charge of sectional and regional tournaments and, on request, to teachers. New members also receive a player number immediately when they join on the web site.

**New Member Dues:** \$28 for the first year.

## **RECRUITMENT BENEFITS**

Clubs may earn extra games and club managers and teachers may earn monetary awards by recruiting new members. Unit membership chairs should work with them to sign up new members and to help them accumulate recruitment credits.

## **NEW MEMBERS**

The unit does not receive a portion of the membership dues for a first-time member. Unit rebates begin with a member's first renewal.

Many units opt to supplement the welcome packets that ACBL sends to all new members. The ACBL welcome packet contains a new member guide, the ACBL from A to Z, and a permanent ACBL membership card. This card with the new member's player number should be kept by the player for reference.

When recruiting new members, it's important to remember this incentive to join. New members may record a total of 20 masterpoints won at tournaments and/or club games 12 months prior to joining ACBL. Information regarding these masterpoints should be included with the instant membership application.

## **PATRON MEMBERSHIP**

The ACBL offers a special Patron Membership. Annual membership dues are \$250 for an individual or \$350 for two members of the same household. This membership offers the following benefits:

\$50 merchandise credit (\$75 for household members) redeemable through Baron Barclay Bridge Supply.

50% discount on the price of a ticket to the Hall of Fame Banquet.

Upon request, a set of NABC Daily Bulletins will be mailed to your home

Upon request, the World Bridge News will be mailed to your home

Free membership in Hertz #1 Club Gold program

Annual listing in the Bridge Bulletin

Personalized Patron Member badges

### **Benefits for Patron Members participating in NABCs:**

Guaranteed reservations at the host hotel when reserved by deadline

Personal delivery of the Daily Bulletin to your door each day (host hotel only)

Express service for purchasing entries

Invitation to Patron Member reception in the ACBL president's suite.

## **JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP**

Members age 25 and under are known as Juniors and are offered a one-year rate of \$15. If a Junior member elects to join the Canadian Bridge Federation, there is an additional fee of \$8 CN. A Junior membership may not be processed without the date of birth. Units do not receive rebates for Junior memberships.

In addition to the regular benefits of ACBL membership, Junior members receive NABC discounted entry coupons, eligibility to participate in student masterpoint races, the right to participate in the Junior Team Trials (an event to qualify players for world Junior competition), Junior events that award scholarship money to the winners and invitations to the NABC Junior Day festivities.

## **STUDENT MEMBERSHIPS**

Juniors age 19 and under living in the U.S., Bermuda, Canada or Mexico who have taken one of the ACBL school bridge lesson courses may join the ACBL for \$5. These student members do not receive the Bridge Bulletin.

## HOUSEHOLD MEMBERSHIPS

Two or more ACBL members living at the same address may purchase a household membership for one year for \$68. Only one magazine is sent to the household with these memberships. The fee for a three-year household membership is \$192. Please note that the optional CBF, USBF and Educational Foundation fees/donations are not included in the fee for this membership.

**Members paying in Canadian Funds:** Members living in Canada may pay in Canadian dollars (except through the web site) using the current exchange rate. The ACBL's current policy is that we evaluate the exchange rate the first five business days of each month. If that rate changes on average by more than 2 cents, we change the rate. The ACBL notifies all Canadian unit presidents and treasurers via a postcard with the updated rate and the membership rates are included. The new member exchange rate is established the last five business days of July for the following January through December. It remains unchanged throughout the calendar year.

**Optional Boxes on Membership Renewal:** Please note that there are optional check-off boxes on the membership renewal:

**ACBL Educational Foundation:** All members are encouraged to contribute to the ACBL Educational Foundation, an organization dedicated to support activities which benefit bridge.

**United States Bridge Federation (USBF):** U.S. members are also encouraged to make a donation to the United States Bridge Federation (USBF), which governs all international competition. The purpose of the USBF is to advance the interests of the United States in international bridge competition, including the selection and support of United States bridge teams and players in international competition. (\$1.95)

**Canadian Bridge Federation:** ACBL members living in Canada may elect to pay an additional \$12 CN per year to become a member of the Canadian Bridge Federation (CBF). Although Canada is a part of the ACBL, the nation has its own national bridge organization. The CBF represents all Canadian players vying for international competition, deals with its own national championships, its own charity organization and its own representation in world championships.

## Renewals, Reinstatements, LM Service Fees

### CURRENT MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Membership Dues	LM Service Fees	Household Membership Dues
1 year - \$37	\$34	\$ 68
3 years - \$105	\$96	\$192

### RENEWALS AND LIFE MASTER SERVICE FEES

ACBL sends membership renewal bills to each member (\$37) and Life Master service fee bills (\$35) to each Life Master about three months before the membership expires – but note below.

Members receiving the rank of Life Master who joined ACBL after Dec. 31, 1995 are not given life membership and are required to pay fees to remain members. The fee rate for Life Masters who joined ACBL after Dec. 31, 1995 but before June 1, 2000 is the same as the Life Master service fee. Life Masters who joined June 1, 2000 or later pay the regular ACBL membership fee (\$37) when renewing their membership.

About eight weeks after the first notice, the ACBL mails a second bill to any member or Life Master who has not yet paid his or her dues or service fee. One month after their membership has expired, a final notice is mailed. The unit receives notices of all of these billings on its monthly In and Out Report.

The ACBL stops mailing magazines to Life Members who do not pay the service fee. Life Members who do not pay a service fee remain members in good standing in most other aspects. They may hold office at any ACBL level, vote in unit elections and vote on all issues that require a membership vote. If they do not pay their service fees, they must pay an additional fee to play in most tournaments. They are not included on any masterpoint race list, and they are not eligible for qualified reimbursement to an NABC (for certain grassroots events).

## **REINSTATEMENTS**

From time to time, a former member rejoins the ACBL. Please do not use an instant membership form to reinstate such a member because the ACBL may already have a player number on file for that person. If you use a membership application (rather than call in the reinstatement), please print the complete name, player number (if known) and address of the reinstating member on the form. It is important to note on the application that the member is reinstating an inactive membership number.

When a reinstated member pays his or her dues, the ACBL automatically updates the member's masterpoint record at no additional charge and sends a permanent membership card. All masterpoints on record as of the date the member became inactive are credited to the reinstated member's account. If the reinstating member earned any masterpoints while delinquent, those points were stored in "unrecorded status." A reinstating member may pay a fee to have masterpoints stored in "unrecorded status" added to their account. Check with the Club and Member Services Department for appropriate fees for this service.

## Member Recruitment and Retention

### ACBL'S COOPERATIVE ADVERTISING PROGRAM

You do the advertising. We'll help pay!

It's a simple formula: The future of our game depends on the number of people we teach how to play and welcome into our newcomer programs. Where do we find these newcomers? Many of our clubs and teachers have had great success through their advertising campaigns. The ACBL wants to help you expand those campaigns.

The ACBL Cooperative Advertising Program will reimburse you 75% of eligible advertising expenses up to \$1000 per ad campaign specifically for beginner bridge lessons, newcomer programs and ACBL member recruitment. That's a \$750 reimbursement for \$1000 or more in advertising costs. All reimbursements will be paid in U.S. dollars. Check the ACBL web site for more details at [www.acbl.org/marketing/coopAdvertising.html](http://www.acbl.org/marketing/coopAdvertising.html).

## The ACBL Ranking System

[www.acbl.org/about/honorTitles.html](http://www.acbl.org/about/honorTitles.html)

[www.acbl.org/about/honortitles2010.html](http://www.acbl.org/about/honortitles2010.html)

## Contacting Your Members

### Sample Telephone Script for Contacting New Members and Members Relocating into Your Unit

Hello, is this (member's name)?

This is \_\_\_\_\_, membership chair for our ACBL Unit  
\_\_\_\_\_. I wanted to call and welcome you to our unit and  
let you know that a packet full of information about the activities  
our unit offers for bridge players is being mailed to you. One of  
the items in this packet is information about the various clubs and  
games in this area.

After you have had a chance to look over the material we are  
sending, please give me a call if you have any questions. My phone  
number is \_\_\_\_\_.

I realize it will take you a while to get settled. Would you like our  
partnership chair to give you a call about finding you a partner?  
\_\_\_\_\_

*in  
letter?*

I've enjoyed talking with you. I look forward to meeting you and  
seeing you at our local bridge games.

## Sample Telephone Script for Members Who Have not Renewed Their Membership

Q1 letter?

**NOTE:** Whenever possible, a unit member who knows the lapsed member should make the call to give it a personal touch.

Hello, is this (member's name)?

This is \_\_\_\_\_ calling. I'm the membership chair for our ACBL Unit \_\_\_\_\_. I just received a report listing the members of our unit whose ACBL memberships have lapsed. Your name was on the list. You've been a member for a long time. We were concerned that you might not have received your renewal notice or that something had happened. Is there anything I can help you with? \_\_\_\_\_

The remainder of this call depends on the reason given. Some suggestions follow:

1. If it was an oversight, suggest that they can call 800264-2743) or renew/reinstate at the web site. (Click on "Renew Membership" in the Join section of the home page at [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org).) The ACBL takes VISA, Discover, MasterCard and personal checks.
2. If there is a problem with the ACBL, please offer your assistance.

"I'll have a staff member from ACBL call you. When is a convenient time for you?"

Call ACBL with this information and arrange for a staff member to follow up.

membership

Links to teachers.

1. If it's because of rudeness at the table, ask if the member would consider giving it another try. Offer to play with the member at the local club or to find a pleasant partner for the member to play with.
2. The membership chair is asked to code the In and Out report with any reasons gathered in making these follow-up calls. Please list the reason code for the non-renewing member on the In and Out Report and send the information back to ACBL Headquarters.

**Final Comment:** Always express the unit's sorrow at losing such a loyal member of our organization if the person declines to renew.

**Sample Welcome Letter to Members Who Have Moved into the Unit**

Date

Name

Address

Address

Dear First Name:

The members of the Memphis Unit 138 wish to welcome you to the area and to the excitement of our duplicate bridge games and tournaments. We encourage you to visit (and play!) at one of these clubs near you:

(List clubs and game times)

? contact info  
director name

clubs, activities

The clubs in our area are known for friendliness and sociability. If you don't have a partner, the club staff will help you find one that fits your level of play and your personality. So call the club of your choice today and get ready to meet interesting people and make new friendships that can last a lifetime!

contact Jan Smith

We've added your name and address to the unit roster, and you will soon begin receiving regular mailings of our unit newsletter, the Trump It. For your enjoyment and to stimulate your interest, we've enclosed a copy of the last issue. We hope you will enjoy reading the local bridge news and tournament announcements contained in the Trump It. You're invited to attend the Memphis Regional Tournament (date and place) where the Hospitality Committee will be sure to make you feel welcome.

? invited to attend sectional and regional tournament activities

We're glad you moved to Memphis because that decision automatically includes you as a member of the Memphis unit, one of the friendliest chapters within the ACBL family. Please let us know if there is any way we can assist you in establishing a more enjoyable and fun bridge life here. We are only a phone call or e-mail away!

Cordially,

President

Memphis Unit 138

Phone

E-mail

## Sample Welcome Letter from the Unit to New Members

Date

Name

Address

Address

Dear First Name:

The members of the ACBL's Memphis Unit 144 extend a warm welcome to you.

We hope you plan to take advantage of all the exciting opportunities you have as a member of both the American Contract Bridge League and the unit. The ACBL headquarters staff has already mailed an informative package of materials to you that includes the ACBL A to Z Member Guide, a booklet which explains the benefits of membership in the ACBL and provides you with some fascinating facts about the parent organization. The New Member Guide outlines the masterpoint system and ranking requirements, so you'll have a quick and easy reference as you progress through the various levels of achievement in duplicate bridge.

We are proud of the club facilities in Memphis. Please visit (and play!) at one of these clubs near you. We look forward to meeting you.

(List clubs and game times.)

The clubs in our area are known for friendliness and sociability, and we are confident you will find the bridge games relaxing and mentally stimulating. If you don't have a partner, the club staff will help you find one who fits your level of play and your

personality. So call the club of your choice today and get ready to meet interesting people and make new friendships that can last a lifetime!

We've added your name and address to the unit roster and you will soon begin receiving regular mailings of our newsletter, the Trump It. For your enjoyment and to stimulate your interest, we've enclosed a copy of the last issue. We hope you will enjoy reading the local bridge news and tournament announcements contained in the Trump It. You are invited to attend the Memphis Regional Tournament (date and place) where the Hospitality Committee will be sure to make you feel welcome.

We are glad you became a member of the American Contract Bridge League because that decision automatically includes you as a member of the Memphis unit, one of the friendliest chapters within the ACBL family. Please let us know if there is any way we can assist you in establishing a more enjoyable and fun bridge life here. We are only a phone call or e-mail away!

Cordially,

President

Memphis Unit 138

Phone

E-mail

encls.