

CHAPTER XI – SPECIAL EVENTS

A. RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Section 1 – Grand National Teams and North American Pairs

- 1.1 The Grand National Teams (GNT) and North American Pairs (NAP) were created initially with the expectation that players would play in and represent the Districts in which they lived.
- 1.2 For the GNTs, a member's principal physical residence as of September 1 of the year prior to the National final shall establish the District in which said member is eligible to participate beyond the club qualifying stage.
 - 1.2.1 All residency requirements and requests for exceptions shall also apply to players augmented onto GNT teams.
- 1.3 For the NAPs, a member's principal residence as of June 1 of the year prior to the National final shall establish the District in which said member is eligible to participate beyond the club qualifying stage.
- 1.4 In both events, changes in residence after such date shall not change the District in which the player is eligible to participate.
- 1.5 Guidelines for Exceptions
 - 1.5.1 A player seeking an exception must obtain permission in writing from the ACBL District Director representing the District in which the member has a principal residence and from the ACBL District Director representing the District in which the member wishes to play. Both District Directors must approve the request for the exception to be granted.
 - 1.5.2 Any exceptions in the highest flight of the event must also be approved by a Credentials Committee. ACBL management shall assume all duties of the Credentials Committee, including the assigning of the composition of such committee, and shall hear and adjudicate all matters pertaining to eligibility of person(s) and/or teams to participate in any stage of the GNT/NAP. **(Effective 7/14/2020)**
 - 1.5.3 Listed below are examples of situations where an exception might be considered. Others may arise and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

- 1.5.3.1 A “snowbird”, a member with seasonal residences who spends more than half of the GNT (September 1-February 28) or NAP (June 1-August 31) qualifying period in a District other than the District of his principal physical residence, may play beyond the club qualifying stage in his District of seasonal residence. If he chooses to do so, he may only play in the District level final of one District. He must play in that District’s District finals to be eligible to play in the National finals. Such a player will not be eligible to be added to a team from his other District. All necessary approvals must be obtained before play begins at the District level.
- 1.5.3.2 A player with multiple domiciles should apply to the Credentials Committee for a one-time choice of District in which he wishes to play. This application must be made before the start of the event’s qualifying period. This player may be asked to document his time in each of his residences. The player must spend at least three months each year in a District in order to have it considered as a domicile possibility. Once a player chooses a District in which to play, he must play only in that District until he no longer has a domicile in that District.
- 1.5.3.3 A participant who is a full-time student, a member of the armed forces or whose employment requires temporary relocation may play in the District in which he temporarily resides.
- 1.5.4 In rare cases, a player who is a member of a Unit in a District in which he does not reside may seek permission to play in the District in which he has a Unit membership. Such an exception will be considered only if the player meets all of the conditions below:
- a. Lives sufficiently close to the District borders;
 - b. Has been a member of the Unit in which he wishes to play for at least five (5) years, continuously, prior to the start of the competition in the year for which the exception is being requested;
 - c. Must not have played in the GNT or NAP in another District for that period of time; and

- d. Must have been actively involved as a volunteer in the Unit or District in which he wishes to play for at least two (2) years. Possibilities for such “active involvement” include, but are not limited to, Unit or District board member, chair of a NABC or major NABC committee, District or Unit Recorder, Tournament Chair, or club manager.

Note: Simply playing bridge in the other District/Unit or having a regular partner who resides in the other District is not considered sufficient reason for an exception to the “play where you live” rule.

- 1.5.4.1 Any player seeking an exception for this reason must document the reasons why an exception should be considered and send it to both District Directors involved, as described above. This application must be made before the start of the event's qualifying period. The District Director of the District in which the player is a member must confirm the fact that the player has been an active volunteer in the District (or Unit) where the player does not live before forwarding such requests to the Credentials Committee (Championship Flight only.)
 - 1.5.4.2 Should an exception be granted for this reason, the player is eligible to play only in that District and may not change Unit affiliation unless the player's principal physical residence changes.
- 1.6 The Credentials Committee is also responsible for clarifying in which District a player is allowed to play when said player's eligibility is in question. When a challenge to one's eligibility from a Unit final stage or later stage has been made, the Credentials Committee may request documentary evidence from the member whose eligibility is in question. If a member is unable to verify to the Credentials Committee's satisfaction that he or she is playing in the District of the member's principal residence, the Credentials Committee shall automatically disqualify the member and his teammates.
 - 1.7 When a member is disqualified by the Credentials Committee, the matter will be referred to the ACBL President who may choose to make charges to the ACBL Disciplinary Committee in accordance with section 2.2.3 (d) of the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations.

- 1.8 The Credentials Committee may consider exceptions under unusual circumstances for otherwise eligible players who change their District through a change in their physical domicile after September 1. The request must be made at least 30 days before the appropriate District-level final.
- 1.9 There is no appeal from the Credentials Committee decision.