

ACBL RECORDER REGULATIONS

Section 1 - Definitions and Precedence

1. **Definitions.** Italicized terms are defined in the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations (*CDR*).
2. **Precedence.** In the event of any inconsistency between the *CDR* and these Recorder Regulations, the *CDR* shall take priority.

Section 2 – Recorder System

The ACBL Recorder System is a comprehensive framework comprised of human and technological resources that are designed to uphold the integrity and ethics of the game by focusing on education, investigation, enforcement of the regulations, and record-keeping. ACBL is dedicated to promoting ethical behavior and deterring inappropriate conduct in any *ACBL activity* through its Recorder System.

1. **Office of the National Recorder (ONR).** The ONR is the operational department which administers the ACBL Recorder System, ensuring ethical behavior and addressing misconduct. The office is vital in preserving the integrity of the game and fostering a fair and respectful environment for all members and non-members participating in any *ACBL activity*. This is accomplished by upholding the rules and regulations set out in these Recorder Regulations and in the *CDR*.
2. **National Recorder and Assistant Recorder.** The National Recorder is responsible for enforcing these Recorder Regulations and the *CDR*, and for oversight of the Recorder System. The National Recorder and the Assistant Recorder, both ACBL employees, together are central to implementing and integrating education, investigations, enforcement of the regulations, and record maintenance. Their primary objectives are to:
 - Develop and implement internal operating guidelines for the ONR, covering recording protocols, confidentiality standards, and investigation procedures.
 - Develop and implement educational programs promoting expected conduct in any *ACBL activity* and ethical bridge play.
 - Raise awareness about the importance of ethical conduct and the consequences of violations.
 - Enforce the ACBL disciplinary rules and regulations.
 - Develop a communication plan to ensure members are informed about changes in ACBL disciplinary rules and regulations.
 - Evaluate, investigate and record reported *Incidents*.
 - Prepare comprehensive cases, including thorough evidence preparation, to robustly support the ACBL in proving violations of the *CDR*.
 - Serve as ACBL's primary *Advocate* on cases before *Disciplinary Bodies*.

- Develop and maintain an archival system for historical records to ensure that all relevant documentation is appropriately filed and easily accessible for future reference.
 - Prepare and provide quarterly reporting of key metrics related to reported *Incidents* to ACBL Management and the Board of Directors.
3. **District Recorders.** A District may appoint a District Recorder to assist, at the discretion of the National Recorder, in education, investigations related to conduct matters and case preparation. A District Recorder should possess the following:
- Unimpeachable ethics, integrity, honesty, and demeanor.
 - Technological acumen.
 - Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
 - Ability to handle sensitive matters with discretion and diplomacy.
 - Familiarity with Laws of Duplicate Bridge, Recorder Regulations, and *CDR*.
4. **Temporary Recorder.** The Executive Director may designate a Temporary Recorder as needed, primarily when the National Recorder and Assistant Recorder recuse themselves from a matter due to a conflict of interest.

Section 3 - Procedures for Recorder System

This section outlines the procedures for *Incident* reporting, initial assessment, investigation, disciplinary case management, and the recording and archiving of all reports and outcomes. The internal operating guidelines established by the National Recorder should be strictly followed. Defined procedures ensure that all allegations of misconduct are handled with fairness.

1. Incident Reporting and Initial Assessment

- **Written Submission of Reported Incident.** *Incidents* involving an ACBL member or non-member participating in an *ACBL activity* are submitted to the ONR via *player memo*, or any other method of written reporting. Note that a reporter's request for anonymity will be respected, however, it may restrict the National Recorder from initiating an investigation.
- **Computer-Based Cheating Detection (CBCD).** All players who participate in any online *ACBL activity* will be examined by a *CBCD technique or tool*. Upon receipt of an examination report by a CBCD technique or tool, a player identified as possibly engaging in unethical conduct is automatically submitted to the ONR for further investigation, effectively treated as a reported *Incident*.
- **Timeliness and Jurisdiction Check.** The ONR verifies that the reports are received within the statute of limitations and confirms ACBL's jurisdiction as stated in the *CDR* or Codification. If the report is not received within the statute of limitations, it cannot lead to a Recorder *Complaint* and/or *Charge* for an alleged conduct violation.
- **Recording.** All reported *Incidents* are evaluated and recorded into one or more of the following categories based on the allegation or concern from the reporter: Administrative, Conduct, Ethical, No Jurisdiction, and/or Other.
- **Evaluation.** Consistency is essential to ensure fairness. The National Recorder should review the player's history of reported *Incidents* previously filed before taking one of the following actions:

- File. No action will be taken at this time.
- Educate/Counsel. The National Recorder has the discretion to educate or counsel the subject and/or reporter. This may include a written warning or reprimand with a notice that *Charges* will be pursued if future *Incidents* occur.
- Investigate. The matter will be investigated further to determine if a *prima facie* case can be established. If a *prima facie* case is established, the National Recorder files a *Recorder Complaint* with the *Charging Party* with a recommendation that *Charges* be filed for allegedly violating the *CDR*.

Note that all players reported for an ethical concern are subject to an automatic examination by a CBCD technique or tool.

2. **Investigation.** The investigation of reported *Incidents* is a critical component of maintaining ethical standards and integrity within our organization. This process involves a thorough and confidential examination of all allegations to ensure fair and impartial resolution. The ONR must uphold the highest standards of conduct while protecting the rights and confidentiality of all parties involved.

- **Investigators.** The National Recorder may utilize ONR staff, District Recorders and vetted volunteers to handle investigations related to conduct matters. The National Recorder and Assistant Recorder handle all investigations of ethical matters unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director.
- **Confidentiality.** Any individual assigned or designated to handle investigations must maintain strict confidentiality. This includes safeguarding all information related to the investigation and ensuring that details are only disclosed to authorized personnel as necessary for the investigation. Maintaining confidentiality is paramount to protecting the integrity of the process and the privacy of all involved parties.
- **History Check.** The investigator should review the player's history of previous *Incidents* reported.
- **Investigation Report.** The investigator should collect additional details from the reporter, subject, and any witnesses; obtain written statements when possible; and compile a detailed investigation report including notes, witness statements, and conclusions drawn from the investigation.
- **Recorder Complaint.** The National Recorder prepares the *Recorder Complaint* if a *prima facie* case is established as follows the procedures set out in the *CDR*.
- **File Management.** Retain all records of the investigation in an organized manner. Ensure all related correspondence and evidence are properly documented.

3. Disciplinary Case Management

- **Charges Filed.** Only the *Charging Party* has the authority to file *Charges*. When a *Charge* is filed, it is the responsibility of the *Charging Party* or their *Advocate* to prepare ACBL's case. Note that the National Recorder is designated as the *Charging Party* when *Charges* are initiated under *CDR* § 502. The *Charging Party* and *Advocate* must comply with the procedures set out in the *CDR*.

- **ACBL Advocate.** The National Recorder and Assistant Recorder are the designated and preferred staff to serve as the ACBL *Advocate*. Subject to approval by the Executive Director, the *Charging Party* retains the right to appoint other *Advocates*, when required.
 - **Case Development.** The *Charging Party* or the ACBL *Advocate* prepares the case that will be presented before the *Disciplinary Body*.
 - **CDR Compliance.** The *Advocate* must comply with the procedures set out in the *CDR*.
4. **Recording and Archiving.** All reports, investigations, and outcomes are documented to maintain a comprehensive history of member conduct. Only authorized personnel should have access to these records.