

Lake County Duplicate Bridge Clubs, Inc.

510 W. Key Ave., Eustis, FL 32726 • 352.589.9589

Ethics Committee Procedures

Revised as of February 11, 2015

Section 1: Ethics Committee and Bridge Directors

The Lake County Duplicate Bridge Clubs, Inc. (LCDBC, Inc. or LCDBC) and its Ethics Committee has adopted the Zero Tolerance Policy as written by the ACBL to assist the bridge directors in maintaining a pleasant and enjoyable atmosphere. However, everything a director needs to administer effective disciplinary action resides in the Laws of Duplicate Bridge whether or not an Ethics Committee or a Zero Tolerance Policy has been adopted. The ACBL mandates that clubs apply each and every Law within. The four important Laws are: **Law 74–Conduct and Etiquette**; **Law 81–Director’s Duties and Powers**; **Law 90–Procedural Penalties**; and **Law 91–Penalize or Suspend**.

In those cases where the director believes the offense should be adjudicated by the Ethics Committee the director will send a written (may be an e-mail) and signed statement fully describing the incident with names of the people involved to the Ethics Committee. The course of action as outlined in **Section 2: Ethics Committee Process** (as shown below), will be followed.

Section 2: Ethics Committee Process

1. All complaints, requests for investigation rulings, etc., must be submitted in writing and signed. The document can be delivered to the Bridge Club Directors, a member of the Ethics Committee, or a member of the Board of Directors. All third-party complaints will only be accepted by the Ethics Committee if a Game Director was called to the table of the third party who is submitting the complaint and who then registered the third-party complaint with the Game Director. **Anonymous** letters will not be considered.
2. The Ethics Committee will notify the sender(s) that it will investigate the complaint or request. If it is determined that the issue is not appropriate for consideration, the complaint or request will be returned to the sender or the sender will be referred to the appropriate Committee or person.
3. If a complaint or issue involves other persons those persons will be promptly notified and requested to furnish a written explanation of their version. Copies of the sender’s letter will be provided to those persons named in the letter.
4. Any and all verbal, e-mail, or written correspondence will be kept **CONFIDENTIAL** and **PRIVATE**. Members of the Ethics Committee, Board of Directors and the Bridge Club Directors are **PROHIBITED** from talking to or conveying information about issues under consideration to anyone except those that have a need to know.

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Ethics Committee members **will not** conduct independent investigations on their own that have not been first discussed by and assigned by the Committee before hand.

5. The Ethics Committee will meet as expeditiously as possible to investigate, report and make recommendations to the Board of Directors. The report and recommendations are private and not to be divulged to anyone other than the Board of Directors, including the parties involved in the complaint or issue.
6. The Ethics Committee report and recommendations will be considered by the Board of Directors at their regularly scheduled meeting. If deemed necessary, the President of the Board, or in his/her absence the Vice-President, may call a special meeting of the Board to take action on only these issues.
7. The parties involved in the dispute or issue will be notified by letter (signed by the President or Vice-President if the President is absent) of the decision reached by the Board of Directors.
8. Appeals and reasons to modify or change the decision may be submitted in writing and addressed to the President of the Board of Directors. These appeals will follow the same procedure as the initial complaint or request.
9. It is **strongly recommended** that the disputing parties refrain from discussing or talking about their version of the complaint or issue to other Bridge Club members as it may jeopardize their case.
10. For additional reference information, immediately following the *Ethics Committee Procedures* is a copy of the Lake County Duplicate Bridge Clubs, Inc. *Table of Offenses and Penalties* Guide, and the *ACBL Club Discipline Regulations* (from the ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations, Chapter Four, Section Three, IV, H *Club Discipline*).

Respectfully submitted

Donald R. Kramer

Donald R. Kramer, Chairperson
Ethics Committee

Cc: Board of Directors:

Dick Tolpin, President
Debbie Leach, Vice President
Margaret Timpe, Secretary
Lindley d'Ouille, Treasurer
Bob Holdeman, Member
Larry Randolph, Member

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Cc: Ethics Committee:

Don Kramer, Chair
Toni Taylor, Vice Chair
Jo Deak
Jerry Elmore
Debbie Leach, Board Liaison

- Duly accepted by the Board of Directors at its March 12, 2008 meeting.
- Revision duly accepted by the Board of Directors at its Regular Meeting on April 10, 2013.
- Revision duly accepted by the Board of Directors at its Regular Meeting on March 12, 2014
- Revision duly accepted by the Board of Directors at its Regular Meeting on February 11, 2015

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Table of Offenses and Penalties

Offenses

MINOR OFFENSES	MAJOR OFFENSES	INTOLERABLE OFFENSES
Discourteous to players or Director	Extreme temper display	Stealing
Minor temper display	Public accusations of unethical conduct	Improper signaling or altering scores
Prolonged loud talking	Objectionable use of alcohol	Physical assault (shoving or striking)
	Strong verbal assault	

Penalties

MINOR OFFENSES	MAJOR OFFENSES	INTOLERABLE OFFENSES
1 st Offense: verbal notice	1 st Offense: 1 week suspension	Indefinite suspension, or as determined by the Board
2 nd Offense within 3 months: 1/4 board	2 nd Offense within 6 months: 6 week suspension	
3 rd Offense within 1 year: 1 week suspension	3 rd Offense within 12 months: 6 month suspension	

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CLUB DISCIPLINE REGULATIONS

The basic rules governing discipline by clubs have been changed very little. A club's disciplinary process is its own. ACBL only has jurisdiction and rules governing discipline imposed by a club in very limited circumstances. Please refer to the ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations (HB), Chapter Four, Section Three, IV, H *Club Discipline* for specifics. Following is the above section from the Handbook.

H. CLUB DISCIPLINE

Club management should deal promptly and fairly with all cases of improper conduct that occur during an ACBL-sanctioned masterpoint game in the club, including cases of unethical practices. The club manager should either handle these situations personally or establish a standing committee to review all disciplinary problems. Clubs holding non-sanctioned games may deal with problems arising in these games as they see fit.

The club manager can handle many behavior problems by discussing them with the offenders, by issuing a warning, or declaring a period of probation. In extreme cases or cases of repeat offenses, the manager can bar an ACBL member from the club game for a stipulated period of time, or permanently.

No open club may bar an ACBL member or members as a class, based upon the player's race, creed, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation, national origin, and physical handicap or on his proficiency at bridge.

Unless a non ACBL member is currently suspended or expelled from participation in ACBL sanctioned events, permission to play in an ACBL sanctioned event at that club is at the sole discretion of the club management and ACBL has no jurisdiction. Therefore, except for a barring alleged to be for the above discriminatory reasons, these regulations do not apply (i.e. the ACBL requirements and rights enumerated in this section do not extend to non ACBL members).

Except as detailed in the previous paragraph, a club may bar an ACBL member for whatever reason it deems proper and consistent with ACBL Rules and Regulations and the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge. An obnoxious or incompatible partnership may be barred as a pair, but each may be permitted to play with other partners.

To bar an ACBL member, club management must notify the member in writing and send a copy of the notification to the ACBL Club Membership Department.

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The notification must include the member's name and player number and the reason for the barring. An open club can bar members from its regularly scheduled club masterpoint games, membership games, ACBL-wide games, club championships, charity and international fund club championships, and other special events specifically allocated to clubs as outlined above.

These regulations also apply to a club with an invitational sanction except that the club has the additional authority to refuse admittance to an invitational game to someone who does not meet the criteria upon which the invitational sanction is based (e.g. a member who has 500 masterpoints is denied admittance to an invitational game that is limited to members with less than 300 masterpoints).

If the member feels that his barring does not comply with these regulations prohibiting barring players as a class, religious or political affiliations, race, creed, sexual orientation, national origin, physical disability or proficiency at bridge, he or she may appeal the barring to the unit disciplinary committee. Appeals from the unit disciplinary committee may be filed in accordance with and under the authority of the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations. Until the appeal is lodged and heard, the player remains barred unless reinstated by the club unless a stay is granted by the Unit Disciplinary Chairperson.

A club may extend the barring of an ACBL member from Grand National teams, North American Pair events, STaCs, qualifying sessions of a progressive sectional, unit or district competitions, and/or unit-wide or district-wide championships held at the club. A member so barred may appeal the extension of the barring under the process described in the previous paragraph. In such cases, the written notice to the member barred must include the member's right to appeal the action to the Unit Disciplinary Committee in which the club is located within thirty days of the action taken by the club. Such written notice is required, otherwise the barring shall not be effective.

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Unless the discipline includes suspension or expulsion from the sanctioned game, ACBL rules and regulations regarding discipline imposed by the club do not apply. These “minor” sanctions are completely between the player and club Management. If the discipline imposed is barring (suspension for a specified time or lifetime expulsion), ACBL rules and regulations (per the JIB) come into play. See ² below for a short summary of these rules.

- (1) The following games at clubs are the current games to which the extension of the barring applies. If a game is not listed, it comes under the club barring.

NAP	Unit Championship
GNT	Unit-wide Game
STaC	Unit Extended Team Game
Progressive Qualifier	Unit Charity Game
District-wide Championship	Unit-wide Charity Game

(2)

ACTION	Notifications in writing	Notification Must Include	Appeal Rights	Appeal To What
Barring from club sponsored games	1. Barred person 2. ACBL Club Dept.	1. Barred person’s Name and ACBL number 2. Reason for barring	Only if the barring is alleged to be for religious or political affiliation, race, national origin, physical disability or bridge proficiency.	The Unit Disciplinary Committee of the unit in which the club is geographically located.
Barring from ACBL , unit or district sponsored games	1. Barred person 2. ACBL Club Dept.	1. Barred person’s Name and ACBL number. 2. Reason for barring. 3. Person’s right to appeal the action to the Unit Disciplinary Committee in which the club is located within thirty days of the action taken by the club.	No limitation on reasons but the appellant should include the reason why the appeal is being made. The appeal must be submitted within 30 days of the action taken by the club.	The Unit Disciplinary Committee.