

CONDUCT AND ETHICS

GOALS

To establish a friendly, non-threatening environment for the enjoyment of good bridge.
To apply sanctions as necessary in a consistent manner for all players.
To provide a process for appeal that is swift and fair.

ZERO TOLERANCE

“A **zero tolerance** policy imposes automatic punishment for infractions of a stated rule, with the intention of eliminating undesirable conduct. Zero-tolerance policies forbid persons in positions of authority from exercising discretion or changing punishments to fit the circumstances subjectively; they are required to impose a pre-determined punishment regardless of individual culpability, extenuating circumstances, or history. This pre-determined punishment need not be severe, but **it is always meted out.**”

The success of any zero tolerance policy requires the players to believe in and to respect not only the process but the directors and their fellow players. Allowing for difference in temperament and personality, there must be mutual respect, and it is up to all of us to appreciate that good sportsmanship is as much a part of this game as skill and experience. Under no circumstances, regardless of the level of skill of any player, or the seeming impossibility of a table result, will shouting or profanity be tolerated.

We have printed up bidding box cards which hopefully serve as a gentle reminder that we are initiating a new enforcement regime. We have also provided handouts, website postings, and oral announcements.

With respect to ethics, there are no acceptable excuses for violations of the rules and regulations laid out by the ACBL. The sanctions and penalties are likewise clear and rigorous. The difficulty in enforcement often comes when players are uninformed as to what procedures are expected, and this ignorance may affect not only newer players but long-time players lacking in-depth bridge knowledge. The directors will take into account the implied knowledge and experience of the players involved. Simply, there are some players who “should know better,” and their actions should be presumed to have a higher level of intent than the novice venturing for the first time into the Big Room.

The Monday lessons include an introduction to proper bridge etiquette. In the main room, handouts are available and all of the materials are posted online in a dedicated Zero Tolerance portion of our website.

PLAYER MEMOS

We discourage an atmosphere that fosters on-going complaints while at the same time leaves legitimate issues unresolved. To that end, there is now a system in place to safely respond to players’ concerns, and all such concerns if brought to the forefront will in fact have a resolution. For example, with respect to ethics, at times a player may believe an instance of unethical behavior has occurred but is uncertain how to proceed. Likewise, he or she may feel uncomfortable about calling a director about unsportsmanlike conduct or general rudeness. The Player Memo can be used in these instances, the directors should encourage their use, and the Manager will follow up with any player who submits

one in order to obtain specific information about an incident. These Player Memos are available online or from any director at the Club.

DAILY LOG

A daily precis of irregular or disruptive events during each game shall be maintained by the director in a log. All incidents of which the director becomes aware but that have not resulted (for some good reason) in the imposition of penalties shall likewise be maintained in a daily log. The Manager will review this log regularly, and will consult and counsel both the directors and the players involved to assure that proper penalties were imposed, and to attempt to dissuade future infractions.

APPEALS COMMITTEE

We will be using the ACBL guidelines (Appendix B of the Code of Disciplinary Regulations <http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/CDR.pdf> to assess the penalties for infractions of all types. **(The word “Reprimand” will be replaced by immediate imposition of a ZT matchpoint penalty.** These MP penalties are not appealable.)

After following the procedure established in the By-Laws, a quorum of no less than 3 of the 5 Committee members will meet at the soonest possible time after collection of all evidence and statements. The player under sanction shall be allowed to state his/her case. The director or manager imposing the suspension, probation or expulsion shall likewise be present. Any collaborative witnesses shall have been interviewed prior to the meeting by the Recorder and their statements made part of the proceedings. The Committee will then confer in private, and their decision made public in writing. Their decision is final. Repeated violations in the same game or a pattern of repeated violations over time will result in probation and suspension, per the ACBL guidelines, which may be appealed per the procedures specified in the By-Laws. The suspension will begin immediately, and it will be up to the player to appeal it timely in order to have it removed or reduced.