

Texas Chess Association

Bidding Guidelines

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Welcome Letter

Fellow chess enthusiast,

We are so grateful for your interest in bidding on a TCA state championship event! Organizers like you make chess possible throughout our great state, and we would greatly value your involvement in our bidding process.

As the US Chess state chapter for Texas, the Texas Chess Association (TCA) is responsible for coordinating all state championship events in this state. Over the years, the number and scope of these events have grown substantially, now including over two dozen annual events. TCA directly organizes the Southwest Open, State & Amateur, the State Scholastic Championships and our online events. Everything else, however, is available for bidding.

Bidders independently organize state championship events. While there are requirements to be met, these organizers have wide latitude to design events to serve the needs of their players as they see fit. We are also here to support you to make your event a success, so you are not entirely on your own either.

These bidding guidelines are designed to help you understand the opportunities of bidding on TCA events and what is expected of you as a successful bidder. Please note, however, that these guidelines do not apply to regional scholastic championships. If you are interested in a regional bid, contact your regional director.

In my role as Vice President, I am your primary point of contact related to state championship bids. Please let me know if you need more information or any assistance as you prepare your bid. I am here to help you however I can.

I hope you are excited! This is going to be amazing.

Sincerely,

Caleb S. Brown

Vice President of the Texas Chess Association

Why Bid on a TCA Event?

Organizing a state championship event is a unique experience. Unlike other events that may be targeted to a local or regional audience, you are seeking to serve the whole state by organizing a state championship and do so with the full support of the state chess association. It also involves a level of prestige and honor that you cannot self-generate, strengthening the reputation of your own chess organization.

Other benefits of organizing a state championship event include:

- ❖ Use of the TCA name and logo in event advertising
- ❖ Handing out a state championship title
- ❖ Existing player familiarity with the event
- ❖ State championship status recognition in the US Chess list of upcoming tournaments
- ❖ Publicity assistance from TCA (such as Facebook posts, website posts or emails to members)¹
- ❖ Eligibility to award qualifying points for the Texas Master title

All of these benefits combined give you a competitive advantage that will allow you to obtain more players and greater organizing success than would otherwise be possible. You also have access to experienced TDs and organizers on the TCA Board of Directors who are available to answer questions or connect you with resources as needed. We are here to help you succeed.

You truly do not want to miss out on this opportunity.

¹ Publicity assistance is not automatic. Bidders are responsible for submitting materials to be posted or distributed. Materials are also subject to review and approval.

Understanding the Bidding Process

General

The foundation of the bidding process is the bidding application. This is an online form where you explain your proposal for organizing the event and attach any necessary materials. You do not need to prepare a written bid document or presentation as was the case in times past.

The Board of Directors is the sole authority for approving state championship bids. If your bid is awarded, the bidding application you completed forms a contract between you and TCA, and the event must be held as promised. Any changes to event details listed in the application must be approved by TCA.

Depending on the timeline, the bidding process can take one of two forms: Competitive bidding or overdue bidding. You can find which one applies by checking the bidding spreadsheet.

Competitive Bidding

Generally, TCA will not award bids before the bidding deadline (other than to TCA itself). All bids received before the deadline will receive equal consideration, subject to the limitations herein discussed.

If only one bid is received before the deadline, the Board will determine if the bid is satisfactory. If it finds that the bid is satisfactory, it will be awarded. A bid is considered satisfactory if it conforms to the rules in these guidelines, the application is materially complete and the proposal is commercially reasonable.

If two or more bids are received before the deadline, the Board will first disqualify any bids that are deemed not to be satisfactory. If two or more bids remain, the following rules in the Bylaws will be applied:

One affiliate cannot host the same event two years in a row unless no other satisfactory bid has been received by the bidding deadline. An event shall not be held in the same city, county or region two years in a row unless there are no viable alternatives. [Art. X, Sec. 3, Subsection E]

...A director shall not be awarded a bid for a TCA event or any other contract unless there are no viable alternatives. These restrictions shall also apply to the spouse of a director and any entity in which a director owns an at least 25% beneficial interest... [Art. VI, Sec. 8]

For the purposes of the two years in a row rules, the calendar year is used, not the fiscal year. The restriction on awarding bids to directors only applies to members of the Board of Directors, not regional directors.

If two or more bids remain after applying the above rules, the Board will consider the following criteria:

1. Which bidder has the most experience and resources to organize a successful event?
2. Where was the event held last year, and which bid best promotes geographic diversity?
3. Which bid most clearly aligns with TCA's best practices for organizing events?
4. Which bid is likely to draw the most players?
5. Which bid has the lowest entry fees and the best financial terms for TCA?
6. Which bidder is the most innovative and growth-focused?
7. Which bid will best support the local chess community?

The criteria above is not exhaustive. The Board may consider other factors as well. Ultimately, the Board will make a decision that it deems in its sole discretion to be in the best interests of the Association and the chess players it serves.

Upon approval of a winning bid, bidders will be promptly notified. The event dates, location and organizer will be listed in the bidding spreadsheet.

Overdue Bidding

If no satisfactory bid is received before the bidding deadline, the bid is considered overdue. If an event does not have an organizer listed in the bidding spreadsheet and the bidding deadline has passed, it is probably overdue, but you can always contact the Vice President to verify whether any bids are pending.

If a bid is overdue, the Board will award the first satisfactory bid it receives. As a result, it is very important that you submit your bidding application as soon as possible if you are pursuing an overdue bid.

While we prefer certainty about dates and locations where possible, we recognize that identifying venues and negotiating terms can be time-consuming. As a result, we are willing to award overdue bids subject to the contingency of securing a venue. If this option is pursued and the bid is awarded, the bid will be voided unless the venue is secured within thirty days of the award date and the Vice President is promptly notified of the location.

Other

The Vice President sets bidding deadlines for all state championship events. These deadlines are subject to change and are posted in the bidding spreadsheet on the TCA website.

Bidders are not limited to the tournaments listed in these guidelines. If you have an innovative idea for a new state championship event, please contact the Vice President. Once your idea and the basic details have been approved, you can submit a bid using the overdue bidding process. You will have priority to organize the event for the first year. Afterwards, if the tournament was successful, it may be established as an official, annual TCA event and become available for bidding like other events.

Organizers should also be aware that US Chess awards bids for most of its national events. As the state chapter for Texas, we strongly support hosting more national events in Texas. We are willing to provide letters of support for national bids and may be interested in partnering with you to organize a successful national event. If you are exploring a national event bid, please contact the Vice President.

Please note that these guidelines are intended to describe how bidding usually works and provide helpful guidance to organizers. In exceptional cases, TCA may deviate from normal practices if opportunities arise that are beneficial to the organization, including self-organizing events available for bidding, awarding bids for events typically organized by TCA or awarding bids well in advance of the bidding deadline (such as multiple years at once). These guidelines do not create contract rights in any person and shall not limit the power of the Board of Directors to award bids to any person at any time for any reason.

General Requirements

The Bylaws and motions adopted at membership meetings form the basis for the general requirements for organizing a state championship event. Other expectations have informally developed over the years and are incorporated into these guidelines as board policy. While the Bylaws and membership meeting motions are authoritative, these guidelines are intended to be a comprehensive discussion of the rules.

One of the most important rules is that all players in a TCA event (including nonresidents) must be TCA members during the event. You can choose one of two options to meet this requirement:

1. Player Pays: Players purchase their own TCA memberships through the TCA website. You must verify that all of your players are TCA members. If you allow a non-member to play in the event, you must pay the full rate of dues for that player.
2. Organizer Pays: You pay a flat fee per player after the event. You also provide membership data to the Treasurer within two weeks after the event for all players. Anyone who is not a member already will receive a one-year membership. The fee is \$2.50 per player for scholastic, junior and collegiate events. The fee is \$4 per player for other events.

An online TLA must be submitted to US Chess at least one week after approval of the bid (or, if later, within one week after securing a venue). If the tournament has any residency requirements, this must be disclosed in the TLA.

Girls prizes are required in scholastic, junior and collegiate events. All participants in these events who are listed as female in US Chess rating records must be eligible. Organizers have discretion to determine what types of prizes to award (such as trophies, medals, books, scholarships, etc.). Girls prizes must be awarded based on performance and not merely given as participation prizes. Organizers of other TCA events may also award girls prizes, in which case female players under 16 years of age shall be eligible.

Other requirements include:

- ❖ The event must be US Chess rated
- ❖ The organizer must have a TCA affiliate membership
- ❖ All tournament directors and other event staff must be TCA members
- ❖ Organizers must submit a financial statement if requested
- ❖ Any TCA board members present must be allowed in the playing hall while rounds are ongoing
- ❖ Results and photos from the event must be promptly provided to the Facebook Administrator
- ❖ The Vice President and Ethics Committee Chair must be notified if a fair play violation occurs
- ❖ If the event is expected to draw more than 200 players, the organizer must conduct background checks of all tournament directors and staff (each person must be checked every three years)

It should also be noted that only residents of Texas will be recognized as state champions. All players who tie for first place are considered co-champions. The organizer may use tiebreaks or playoffs to determine the distribution of other prizes.

Best Practices

Bidders are not required to conform to these best practices. However, these best practices are based on our organizing experience and are used for events directly organized by TCA. You may find them useful to implement for your event as well.

Organizers should be customer service focused. They should be seeking ways to continuously improve the experience and should always communicate in a way that demonstrates respect, patience and gratitude.

Other best practices include:

- ❖ The forfeiture time should be 30 minutes (or, if less, the expiration of the first time control), with flexibility for the Chief TD to make exceptions for good cause
- ❖ Paper results slips should be avoided
- ❖ Standings and pairings should be made available electronically
- ❖ A change request form should be used as the exclusive means of submitting section changes, bye requests, standing corrections and withdrawals (other than requests in the initial registration)
- ❖ Only players whose games are in progress, tournament directors and staff, TCA officers and directors and members of the press should be allowed in the playing hall during rounds
- ❖ Except for water, food and drinks should not be allowed in the playing hall
- ❖ Notation sheets and pencils should be provided for players
- ❖ Electronic devices should not be allowed in the championship section and players violating this rule should be forfeited (medical devices and approved electronic notation devices are exempt)
- ❖ Side events should be offered where practicable

It should be noted that setting the forfeiture time at 30 minutes is a rules variation for US Chess purposes and should be clearly disclosed in advance publicity. The electronic device rule and the forfeiture penalty should also be frequently communicated, including in advance publicity and at the start of each round.

Specific Event Details

Texas Open

General: This tournament is incredibly flexible and can have many different formats. In recent years, it has been held as a three-day weekend tournament with seven rounds and cash prizes.

Eligibility: All players

Dates: Anytime of the year

Texas Postal Championship

General: This is a correspondence chess event and is conducted through regular mail.

Eligibility: All players. TCA memberships only need to be current on the first day of the event.

Dates: Anytime of the year

Texas Team Championship

General: This is a traditional team event, not an individual-team event. Swiss system is used.

Eligibility: All players. Four players comprise a team. An optional alternate is allowed. The team average rating must not exceed 2200.

Dates: Summer

Texas Armed Forces Championship

General: While this event can take many forms, it has historically been a two-day event and had separate sections for current military members and veterans.

Eligibility: Current and former members of the U.S. Armed Forces and state defense forces

Dates: Anytime of the year

Texas Senior Championship

General: This event is the Texas qualifier for the Irwin national state invitationals. TCA will provide a travel stipend to the Irwin representative. This is a two-day event.

Eligibility: Players who are at least 50 years of age as of the first day of the event.

Dates: January to April (March is customary)

Texas Action Championship

General: This event is typically a one-day event with cash prizes. The time control must be G/30. It may include a delay or increment not exceeding five seconds at the organizer's discretion.

Eligibility: All players

Dates: Anytime in the year

Texas Junior Open

General: This event is a junior-specific version of the Texas Open. As a junior event, the girls prizes rules apply.

Eligibility: Players under 21 years of age

Dates: Anytime in the year

Texas Junior Team Championship

General: This event is a junior-specific version of the Texas Teams Championship. It can use Swiss system, but other formats are also acceptable. The girls prizes rules apply.

Eligibility: Players under 21 years of age. Four players comprise a team. An optional alternate is allowed. The team average rating must not exceed 2200.

Dates: Anytime in the year

Texas Quick Championship

General: This event is typically a one-day event. It must be quick only rated for US Chess purposes. The primary time control cannot exceed 20 minutes. If a delay or increment is used, it cannot exceed five seconds.

Eligibility: All players

Dates: Anytime in the year

Texas Collegiate Championship

General: This is an individual-team event. It may be held as a standalone event or held concurrently with another event (such as the Texas Grade Championships). The girls prizes rules apply.

Eligibility: Full-time students enrolled in a postsecondary institution (including universities, trade schools, law schools, medical schools, etc.). Full-time status is determined by the institution (twelve credit hours typically for undergraduate students).

Dates: Anytime in the school year (defined as September to November and January to April)

Texas Grade Championships

General: This is a major event. There are separate tournaments for North/Central Texas and South Texas. There are sections for each grade from pre-K to twelfth grade. Sections may be combined if necessary, but individual prizes must be awarded for all grades represented. Team prizes are also awarded, but they do not necessarily need to be grade-based. The girls prizes rules apply.

Eligibility: Pre-K through 12th grade students residing or attending school in Texas. Teams are composed of students from the same school. The scores from the top three players from each school are used for team standings.

Dates: Fall (October or November is customary)

Texas Women's Championship

General: This event is typically a two-day event. Integrating social activities for participants into the schedule is strongly encouraged.

Eligibility: Female players who are at least 16 years of age as of the first day of the event. Players with a Woman FIDE Master title or any higher title are exempt from the age requirement.

Dates: Anytime in the year

Texas Girls Championship

General: This event is a qualifier for the girls section of the Texas Junior Invitational. Customarily, this event has grade-based sections (such as High School, Middle School, Elementary, etc.).

Eligibility: Female Pre-K through 12th grade players residing or attending school in Texas. Teams are composed of students from the same school. The scores from the top three players from each school are used for team standings.

Dates: Fall (September or October is customary)

Texas Women's Open

General: This is an individual-team event. It is divided into the following age sections: U13, 13-19, 20-49 and 50+. These sections may be further subdivided at the organizer's discretion. If possible, we will rotate the Texas Girls Championship and Texas Women's Open between North and South, so that one event is held in each area every year.

Eligibility: All female players

Dates: Anytime in the year

Texas Blitz Championship

General: This event is typically held in conjunction with another event, but it can also be awarded as a standalone event. The time control must be G/5 with no delay or increment. The US Chess blitz rules apply.

Eligibility: All players

Dates: Anytime in the year

Texas Masters Championship

General: This event should last multiple days and be FIDE rated.

Eligibility: Players with a master title conferred by FIDE, US Chess or TCA or a peak FIDE/foreign rating equivalent to a US Chess rating of 2200.

Dates: Anytime in the year

Texas Chess Triathlon

General: TCA thanks the Poison Pawns Chess Club for developing this idea. It includes at least ten rounds in a single day with varying time controls. Originally, this meant six blitz rounds at G/5, four quick rounds at G/20 and two classical rounds at G/90;d5. Victories at different time controls may be worth a different number of points for prize purposes.

Eligibility: All players

Dates: Anytime in the year

Texas Leaders Championship

General: This event should include social or educational activities for participants. It may be used as a fundraising event for a deserving local charity or TCA.

Eligibility: Organizers, chess club officers, US Chess Delegates, tournament directors at the level of Senior TD or above, official TCA volunteers (board members, committee members, staff, regional directors, etc.), TCA Life Patron Members, Jim Hollingsworth Memorial scholarship recipients and anyone granted a special invitation by the Board of Directors.

Dates: Anytime in the year

Texas Amateur Team Championship

General: There will be four super-regional championships, with the winning team from each super-region competing in an online playoff organized by TCA. This is considered a state championship event and is not subject to the regional bidding process.

Eligibility: All players. Three players comprise a team. An optional alternate is allowed. The team average rating must not exceed 2000.

Super-Regions: Regions I, IV and IX shall be the West super-region. Regions II and III shall be the North super-region. Regions V and VI shall be the Central super-region. Regions VII, VIII and X shall be the South super-region.

Dates: Anytime in the year