

# LEAGUE, TOURNAMENT AND ASSOCIATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Public health directives related to the COVID-19 pandemic continue to evolve. USBC is sharing rules and governing topics in this document as a resource to members.

## **LEAGUES**

The following information is to assist leagues in making decisions about ending a league, postponing all or part of a league, league championships and payouts.

### **Definitions**

**League board of directors (The Board)** – The Board is comprised of the league officers and team captains. A team captain may designate another individual to represent the team.

**Majority vote** – Unless otherwise stated, a majority of the votes cast. Abstentions are not counted.

**Unanimous consent** – Every team captain or their designated representative must vote yes, and the vote must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

**NOTE: League officers cannot make the following decisions without approval of The Board or the team captains, as indicated below.**

### **Decisions made by majority vote of The Board:**

- Postponing a league schedule
- Ending a league schedule, including playoffs and sweepers. Champions or co-champions must be declared
- Ending the schedule for standings and postponing the playoffs or sweepers
- Adjustments to the prize money of the originally adopted prize list, including special individual and team awards, and championship money
- Split-season leagues with segmented prize lists:
  - Paying any completed segments in full and adjusting the prize money for segments not completed
  - Adjusting prize money for all segments, including those completed

### **Decisions requiring unanimous written consent of every team captain:**

- Changing the originally adopted prize list
- Eliminating designated championship money
- Elimination of any special individual or team prize money
- Refunding prize money paid
- Paying the prize fund equally to all teams
- Holding funds over for the following season
- Eliminating a partially bowled segment in a split-season league. (The games are included in final averages.)

#### **1. Can the bowling center decide to cancel leagues?**

Yes. Center management may cancel any league schedule.

#### **2. Can the The Board do an email vote to decide issues?**

In order to reduce the need for individuals to gather in one place to make these decisions, an email vote would be allowed as long as all board members can be contacted by email. Conducting meetings through text, phone poll, Zoom or GoToMeeting or any other program where everyone can meet in real-time also is acceptable.

**3. Our league plans to end the season early. There is a dispute between the league and the bowling center over money owed for the sessions we plan to cancel. What advice can USBC provide?**

USBC recognizes the bowling center owner's rights as a private business. In issues concerning an agreement/contract between a league and the center, USBC advises the parties to honor their agreements. When one, or both sides, want to change terms of the agreement, the parties will need to discuss the issues and negotiate in good faith. As USBC is not a party in these agreements/contracts, it cannot intervene on behalf of either party.

**4. How does the league determine league champions if the season ends early?**

The league would declare champions based on the standings as of the last date the league bowled. If there is a tie for first place, The Board decides by majority vote if a roll-off will be bowled to break the tie or if co-champions will be declared.

**5. What happens when a split-season league ends the season and full segments have not been bowled?**

The league standings end as of the last date the league bowled and are official for the season. The standings of any segments not complete when The Board voted to end the season also are final and are used to determine the teams eligible to participate in the playoff. All other segment winners and any other teams that would qualify for the championship playoffs (wildcards) are declared co-champions. Any designated prize money, after adjustments, is divided equally among all qualifying teams. There is no playoff qualifying team for any segment not started.

**6. If a league continues to bowl but members want to withdraw from the league, can the league hold them responsible for league fees?**

USBC holds that any member who withdraws from a league due to the coronavirus outbreak has sufficient cause for withdrawal in accordance with Rule 114a. The individual must give notice to the league and the league could hold him/her responsible for payment of those fees. However, USBC will not hold one accountable in paying the fees for the two-week notice requirement. Should the league proceed with Rule 115b proceedings, USBC would only hold the person responsible for payment of fees owed prior to the two-week notice.

As the player has sufficient cause for withdrawal, they would be entitled to a prorated share of prize money based on the number of league sessions paid for.

**7. How will ending the league early affect the league prize fund?**

This will result in the league having less than anticipated funds in any adopted prize list. To amend the adopted prize list based on the funds available, The Board meets and approves an amended prize list, which must follow the general outline of the current prize list.

**8. If a league does not complete the season because of the coronavirus, how should it change the adopted prize list to accommodate the shortfall?**

USBC has put together a guide for leagues, which describes ways for leagues to adjust prize lists in a way that only requires a majority vote of The Board for approval. You can access this guide [here](#). The key issue to adjusting a prize list where only a majority vote of The Board is required for approval is maintaining the same structure of the previously approved prize list and only adjusting the prize values. Changing the structure of the prize list, such as eliminating categories or other prizes named in the league rules, would require the unanimous consent of all the team captains.

**9. We ended our league with several sessions to bowl. We think it is only fair to divide the prize money equally among all the teams. Can this be done?**

This changes the originally adopted prize list and would require unanimous written consent of all team captains or designated representative.

**10. Our league bowls a split-season and the winner of each segment, along with wildcard teams, advance to a playoff where they compete for an additional**

**prize list and determine the league champion. We ended our season early and are not going to be able to have the playoff. What should we do with the prize money dedicated for this playoff?**

First, the league needs to address the amount of money allocated for the playoff and adjust it to account for the league's early finish and resulting financial shortfall. When The Board voted to end the season, the standings became final as of the last date of competition. The standings of any segments not complete when The Board voted to end the season also are final and are used to determine the teams eligible to participate in the playoff. Based on the final standings, the league then declares co-champions and splits the playoff prize money equally among all teams eligible to bowl in the playoff.

**11. We canceled our league, including the playoffs. Our playoff determines the top eight places in the league prize list. How are these places paid?**

If the league is canceled, co-champions must be declared and the prize money for the top eight teams after adjustment is added together and divided equally among the eight qualifying teams.

[REOPENING OF BOWLING CENTERS FAQ](#) – Learn more about league and tournaments with the reopening of bowling centers.

## **TOURNAMENTS**

**1. Squads were cancelled because of concerns over the coronavirus. Can tournament management reschedule the squads?**

Tournament management may extend the tournament by contacting the USBC Rules Team. If the entry deadline has passed, only those individuals originally entered to bowl on the canceled squad(s) are permitted to bowl on the rescheduled date.

**2. If tournament management cancels the rest of the tournament, how are prizes to be awarded?**

Prizes would be based on the number of entries that participated prior to the cancellation of the tournament.

**3. If a tournament is canceled, are refunds required for those who did not participate?**

Yes, all fees paid by the bowlers for events in which they did not compete must be returned.

**4. If a tournament is not canceled and I decide not to participate, am I entitled to a refund?**

USBC is treating the coronavirus as an emergency situation and advising tournament management that they have the authority to issue refunds to any entrant(s) who chose(s) to withdraw from their event. Another option would be to have the entry fee forwarded to the next season's event.

## **ASSOCIATION OPERATIONS**

USBC state and local associations should follow state and local guidelines when considering how to handle events, meetings, and tournaments. The guidelines and requirements are evolving, but associations should be proactive in considering the well-being of their members and follow state mandates.

Also, in accordance with Article IV, Section E, Item 14 of the National Bylaws, the USBC Board adopted the following resolution effective April 13, 2020. This change will be presented to the 2021 USBC Delegation for their approval.

“Temporarily amend or suspend these Bylaws, State, Local and Affiliate Bylaws and the league rules and tournament rules in cases of government declared emergencies or disaster, pandemic, attack on the United States, or any nuclear or atomic disaster.”

1. **What is the difference between postponing or canceling our 2020 Annual Meeting?**

First, follow your state and local public health guidelines to determine if you can hold your local or state association Annual Meeting later in 2020. The current local/state board can vote, by majority, to:

a. **Postpone:** Conduct the meeting after Aug. 1, 2020

Your board continues to operate, and the expiring board member(s) remain in office or declare vacancies and appoint the positions (board decision, majority vote).

1) **If board does not have term limits**

Board members remain in their current position until an election is held for those positions.

2) **If board has term limits**

For terms that expire, let the current expiring board member(s) remain in office or declare vacancy (board decision, majority vote). If a vacancy is declared:

a) The board could work with vacancies until the postponed meeting can be held

b) If the vacancies are a hardship on the board, the president, with board approval, can fill the vacancies. At the postponed meeting, these positions would be up for election for the remainder of the term.

3) **State delegates**

The 2020 delegate would represent the association at the State Annual Meeting. If that elected person cannot attend, the vacancy would be filled following in accordance with the local bylaws, Article IX, Section E.

4) **Proposed amendments**

Any amendment that was to go into effect Aug. 1, 2020 would be effective immediately upon adoption. This should be stated in the announcement informing the delegates/members of the postponement and prior to the legislative session.

If you have not sent the proposed legislation to the delegates/members, add “If approved, effective immediately” to each amendment.

b. **Cancel:** If the 2020 Annual Meeting cannot be reasonably rescheduled, the business from the 2020 meeting would be moved to 2021 Annual Meeting. Your board continues to operate, and the expiring board member(s) remain in office or declare a vacancy (board decision, majority vote). If a vacancy is declared:

1) **If board does not have term limits**

Board members remain in their current position until an election is held for those positions.

2) **If board has term limits**

For terms that expire, let the current expiring board member(s) remain in office or declare a vacancy (board decision, majority vote). The president, with board approval, can fill the vacancies.

At the 2021 Annual Meeting, these positions would be up for election for the remainder of the term. You also would hold the 2021 elections.

3) **State Delegates**

If a local association has not elected their 2021 delegates, then the 2020 delegates would attend the 2021 state annual meeting and handle the business. The state should request the credentials, as usual, for 2021 and accept those names submitted.

4) **Proposed amendments**

Any amendment that was to be voted on at the 2020 meeting automatically would go to the 2021 meeting unless the proposer withdraws the amendment. These proposals will be effective Aug. 1, 2021, unless otherwise stated on the amendment.

2. **If we canceled our 2020 Annual Meeting, how should we handle business at the 2021 meeting?**

When the 2021 Annual Meeting is conducted, the 2020 Annual Meeting approvals should be the first piece of business. The delegates/members would act to approve the actions

taken by the board. If the board members who were appointed are running unopposed, the slate would be presented to approve. If the elections are contested, an election would be held for those appointed positions to fulfill the remainder of the term. Then, the traditional 2021 Annual Meeting business would take place.

**3. If we handle both 2020 and 2021 business at the 2021 Annual Meeting, do the 2020 delegates handle their business and 2021 handle theirs?**

No, everything would be handled by the same delegation. Some local associations will have a delegate election; others will not. If a local association has not elected their 2021 delegates, then the 2020 delegates would attend the 2021 state annual meeting. The state should request the credentials, as usual, for 2021 and accept those names submitted.

**4. What happens to the proposed amendments if our Annual Meeting is postponed until after Aug. 1?**

Any amendment that was to go into effect Aug. 1, 2020 would be effective immediately upon adoption. This should be stated in the announcement informing the delegates/members of the postponement and prior to the legislative session. If you have not sent the proposed legislation to the delegates, add "If approved, effective immediately" to each amendment.

**5. If we hold our Annual Meeting after Aug. 1 and our delegates terms have ended, who represents the association at the State Annual Meeting?**

Those delegates terms would extend to this postponed Annual Meeting, since they were elected to represent the association for the 2019-2020 season.

**6. Can we cancel our Association Championship Tournament and/or State Pepsi Championships, or do we need to reschedule it this season to comply with USBC Bylaws?**

If an Association Championship Tournament or State Pepsi is canceled because of the coronavirus outbreak, USBC will not require the association to conduct one this season.

We would encourage the association to attempt to reschedule the tournament, but if accommodations cannot be made, USBC will not hold the board responsible for the requirement.

**7. How can we obtain two signatures on our checks?**

Two signatures are a requirement of USBC policy and procedures. Consequently, two signatures must be used. You could:

- a. USBC will allow the president (or other signatory) to approve an expense via email. We will consider this the second signatory. Consequently, your documentation is important, so keep the email approval with your documentation for the expense.
- b. Sign the check(s) and mail it to the other authorized signatory. Include a pre-addressed, stamped envelope. The other individual can sign and mail the check(s) out.
- c. Please check your state or local COVID-19 rules prior to using this method. Meet in the parking lot of the local bowling center or another convenient place. Once you are both there, you can put the documents on the hood of your car and get back in your car. The other person can then get out of their car sign the check(s). They would get back into their car, and you can retrieve the check(s).